

SPEAKER CREATION IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

by

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We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.

DEDICATION

To my family, past, present and future.
My mom. My dad. My Aunts and Uncles.
and

In loving memory of the Sauk speakers Maxine Cobb and Christine Williamson
Two heroes who loved their people, fought for their language, and showed me through example
the kind of elder I want to be.

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Abstract

This dissertation is written for people that want to see Indigenous North American languages add new speakers to their speaking communities. It is my hope that community practitioner-educators as well as academic linguists will gain insight into speaker creation as I have facilitated it in my career as a language worker. This dissertation aims to link academia and practical implementation to collaboratively address the distinction between language reclamation and language revitalization, avenues of collaboration between indigenous communities and linguists, and the roles and responsibilities of people working to revitalize North American Indigenous languages with few remaining first language speakers.

The discourse of this dissertation is intended to be accessible to both seasoned linguists, budding linguists, and non-linguists alike. The concepts are presented in a manner that respects the cultural nuances and lived experiences of Indigenous communities and prioritizes my personal experiences and perceptions of language work. Also, the privileging of community-centric examples is paramount in this work as it not only makes the content of this dissertation accessible but also relatable to people working in language revitalization of North American Indigenous languages with few remaining first language speakers.

While an academic audience may appreciate theoretical frameworks and comprehensive literature reviews, the community audience will find value in practical examples, success stories, and step-by-step guides. The discourse of this dissertation is intended to resonate with both audiences, ensuring that the research remains academically rigorous while remaining directly applicable to those actively engaged in language revitalization.

This dissertation explores the methodology of and notion of *speaker creation* in the context of Indigenous language revitalization by detailing the use of whole language immersion for accelerated language acquisition. Chapter One takes an in-depth look at the nature of the problem and the need for a meta-analysis and synthesis of the existing literature and my lived experience. Chapter Two is a literature review that summarizes the published work on successful speaker creation methods used in Indigenous communities and second language acquisition experiments. The literature review is written to give primacy to my lived experiences of creating speakers of the under-resourced, highly endangered Indigenous language. In Chapter Three, I discuss the methodologies often employed by Indigenous language workers who most times come from the backgrounds of linguistics, American Indian Studies, second language acquisition and teaching, and community-level revitalization. In Chapter Four, I introduce the notion of *speaker creation* in Indigenous North American communities. That is the process of bringing learners from zero heritage language speaking ability to being conversational enough to understand and express themselves to fluent first language speakers.

Included in this work is a walk-through of a proposed template curriculum to be used by language workers wishing to gain accelerated speaking ability in any North American Indigenous language with few remaining first language speakers. In Chapter Five, I discuss the intersection of indigeneity, linguistics, and second language acquisition theory in the context of language acquisition and language education programming. I provide a discussion on the nuts and bolts of language assessment and policy implications for tribal programs that want to facilitate conversational speaking ability in their community. I follow up with concluding thoughts and recommendations for future research in the subject area of speaker creation in North American Indigenous language communities.

Introduction

The field of Indigenous language revitalization is a critical area of study that houses immense significance in preserving the cultural and linguistic heritage of under-resourced Indigenous language communities. For the purposes of this dissertation, I define under-resourced Indigenous language communities as Native American Communities that are revitalizing their languages without the luxury of materials and resources such as countless hours of sitcom tv shows, podcasts, or children's shows in their language, in which tribal members can luxuriate for large spans of time in and around the spoken language. Sometimes these communities don't have updated pedagogical grammars or the grammars they do have are old, outdated, and often may necessitate a linguistics degree just to decipher what is being expressed. By working together, Indigenous communities and linguists can collaborate to effectively create new speakers, with the intention of ensuring the revitalization of endangered languages. This dissertation seeks to explore the collaborative roles and responsibilities of community members and linguists in creating speakers for under-resourced Indigenous North American languages. More significantly, this dissertation describes how community members who are emerging linguists themselves are engaging in this process with a focused analysis of successful methodologies for creating speakers in a short amount of time to uncover the commonalities found in these approaches supported by empirical evidence. This specific case study is informed by and from my own lived experience as an Indigenous community language teacher-linguist.

This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge in the field of language revitalization and provides valuable insights into accelerating speaker creation for under-resourced Indigenous languages in presenting a method for accelerated speaker creation for language communities that have only a handful of L1 speakers left. This dissertation aims to answer these five questions:

1. What distinguishes language *reclamation* from language *revitalization* efforts in under-resourced communities?
2. How can Indigenous communities and linguists collaboratively create new speakers of under-resourced languages?
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of community members and linguists in revitalizing under-resourced Indigenous languages?
4. What methodologies have proven successful in creating speakers in short amounts of time?
5. What are the commonalities found in successful speaker creation methodologies, and what is the evidence behind those commonalities?

This dissertation will make a much-needed distinction between *language reclamation*—the awakening of sleeping languages—and *language revitalization* of languages with only a few remaining elderly L1 speakers. This distinction is critical as the language acquisition methodology described in this dissertation is geared towards communities with remaining speakers. The distinction is necessary because these two types of communities have different needs and success can be measured differently for each one.

There are language communities that are reclaiming their languages by reawakening languages that haven't been spoken fluently aloud for generations (Baird, 2016; Leonard 2023); this dissertation defines 'reclamation' as an effort to reawaken *sleeping* languages. There are also language communities that are fighting to revitalize their languages that are still spoken but by fewer and fewer people in diminishing domains every day; an effort focusing on a language with only a handful of elderly L1 speakers remaining. It is this second group I hope to support with this work: Language revitalization communities working against the clock to move language from elderly L1 speakers to proficient L2 speakers. Every move that language department directors and their staff make must count. Wasted movements could cost them the battle to

revitalize their languages. Clearly, a successful language department working towards revitalization needs both resources for capacity building *and* effective language acquisition methodology. Additionally, an important caveat is that a successful language department working towards ‘reclamation’ can have success with capacity building alone, because their measures of success often differ from those of revitalization efforts.

There is a dearth of literature on accelerated speaker creation for Indigenous communities that are down to their last elderly speaker. This will be further discussed in the literature review section of this dissertation. Too often, revitalization communities are allowing themselves to be led by documentation-minded and preservation-informed language workers that are inadvertently only preparing groups with elderly L1’s to survive in a post L1 speaker world. This dissertation aims to shed light on second language acquisition methodologies that work for under-resourced North American Indigenous communities such as the Sauk, Cheyenne, Cahuilla, and Kickapoo communities and move revitalization efforts away from the swan songs of inevitable language and culture apocalypse and towards highly attainable speaker creation.

This dissertation aims to distinguish the needs of under-resourced language communities that do not have podcasts, movies, television programming, language learning apps, textbooks, pedagogical grammars or even radio for learners and linguists to glean data from for more robust revitalization work and input to supplement language acquisition, from well-resourced world languages such as English, Japanese, Spanish, etc. For example, my own Kickapoo language community has only just started to allow creation and dissemination of language learning materials. In 2016 the Kickapoo language department of Oklahoma established an official writing system, started materials creation and dissemination, and even started creating multimedia such as audio and video to help aid Kickapoo language learners. However, the

Kickapoo language is still behind, and we are only one of numerous sovereign Nations that are lacking TV programs, radio programs, podcasts, YouTube content, dubbed movies, dubbed cartoons, and a plethora of original multimedia content that the larger world languages can offer to their learners. Every single self-proclaimed polyglot on YouTube has or will at some point talk about their language learning method. Most of their methods include exposure to the target language through the plethora of multimedia that under-resourced languages simply do not have.

Decades of community language efforts in Oklahoma have also failed to create new speakers. I attended the Oklahoma Native Language Association conference in 2011 and heard many language workers lament at how they haven't created any speakers. I also watched the Oklahoma-based show 'Wordpath' that can be found on YouTube. Wordpath features language workers from the late 90's talking about their hopes and aspirations for where they would like native languages to be in 10 or 20 years. I was a child when those language workers were in the field. Sadly, despite the best intentions, most of the languages represented in Wordpath have not created any new speakers since the 90's. However, there have been a few language departments that have cracked the code on speaker creation. I draw on these examples of success in my discussion below.

This dissertation is an analysis of successful language acquisition methodologies used by those Indigenous communities and individuals. These methodologies are supported by experiments grounded in second language acquisition theory. This dissertation intends to highlight the methodologies of effective second language acquisition, bringing them into the foreground for language revitalization workers, and detail the importance of a sustainable model of new speaker creation that depends on long-term capacity building, training, community-based

research, and collaborations across various sectors, including tribal, academic, and regional partners.

Chapter 1: Speaker Creation

1.1 Positionality and the “Why” of this Dissertation

I approach this research on Indigenous language revitalization and speaker creation as an Indigenous person who has lived the experience of language acquisition and teaching. The Kickapoo language is my first language. Despite having monolingual speakers under the age of 60 and bilinguals under the age of 30, Kickapoo is still an endangered language. I started the Kickapoo Language Development Program in Mcloud, Oklahoma in 2016. The role of program director allows me to directly engage with the documentation, revitalization, and teaching of my community’s language, a responsibility I approach with both personal and professional dedication.

In addition to my work with Kickapoo, I learned to speak the Sauk language as an adult through the Group Mentor Apprentice Program in Stroud Oklahoma from fall 2010 to fall 2011. In the spring of 2012, I started leading Group Mentor Apprentice session as a GMA lead. During my time acquiring the Sauk language from elderly first-language speakers, I gained firsthand experience of the challenges and successes of learning a highly endangered language with limited language learning resources. At the Sauk language department, we were working against the clock to create new speakers of the Sauk language as our speakers were elderly. We used immersion-based methodology. Basically, we used little mini lessons based on the concept of comprehensible input+1, lessons that used structured repetition of high frequency words and phrases to elicit whole language use between the speakers and learners. I not only achieved fluency but also successfully implemented these methods to teach my own apprentice. This experience has given me deep insight into the process of language acquisition and the effectiveness of specific pedagogical approaches in endangered language contexts.

Since beginning this work at the age of 19, I have spent over 17 years as a language worker, an immersion teacher in high schools and communities, and now as a trainer, helping other tribes build their capacity for language revitalization. My role has also involved creating language programs and procuring funding to support these efforts, giving me a comprehensive view of the logistical and practical challenges faced by Indigenous communities working to reclaim their languages. As someone who intimately understands the struggles and triumphs of Indigenous language learners and workers, I recognize how my own brain processes language and how this informs my teaching methods. This personal insight allows me to connect with others in similar situations and offer practical, empathetic support. My positionality as an Indigenous language learner, teacher, and program leader shapes my approach to this research, and my work is grounded in a commitment to decolonizing language instruction and revitalizing the languages that are the lifeblood of our cultures.

The ideology of “Why” this dissertation exists is driven by the urgent need to address the survival of Indigenous languages through successful speaker creation. I am an Indigenous person who has both acquired a critically endangered Indigenous language and facilitated the acquisition of a critically endangered Indigenous language within others. In other words, I’ve acquired and passed on the Sauk language to others, I’m a L1 speaker of my own Kickapoo language, and I’ve been a learner and teacher of the Shawnee language which is currently down to its last L1 elderly speaker at the time of this dissertation being written. I have experienced firsthand the profound impact of language loss on cultural identity, community cohesion, and self-determination. I have been involved in both language revitalization successes and also language revitalization losses, that I have since learned from. The need for this dissertation arises from a personal and collective responsibility to not only help preserve Indigenous languages, but to also facilitate the creation

of new speakers who will carry their heritage languages forward for future generations. While documentation efforts are valuable, they are not enough to create new speakers. Successful language revitalization requires new speaker creation, and the focus of this dissertation is on the methodologies that most effectively create those speakers in Indigenous North American communities.

The content of this dissertation reflects a deliberate choice to center the methods that have proven successful in speaker creation, particularly those grounded in immersion and various mentor-apprentice models. My decision to focus on these methods stems from my own lived experience of acquiring the Sauk language as an adult through immersion sets. Immersion sets is another term for the mini-lessons I mentioned above. Immersion sets are discussed in more detail in section 4.1.3. Immersion sets at The Sauk language department were facilitated under the supervision of elderly first-language speakers. These methods are not only effective but are aligned with the values of many Indigenous communities, which prioritize oral tradition, relational learning, and community-driven approaches to revitalization. These methods often find success in Indigenous communities because immersion and facilitated interaction between learner and master speaker create spaces for authentic communication that can be used in the real world (King & Hermes, 2014). I have also implemented these methods to teach my own apprentice, further reinforcing my belief in their efficacy.

The assertion that language and culture are inseparable from each other is foundational to many people involved in Indigenous language revitalization. For example, many Indigenous languages structure their grammar and vocabulary based on culturally significant concepts, such as animacy. In Algonquian languages like Kickapoo or Sauk the animacy marking on the subject reflects a worldview that distinguishes between animate and inanimate entities. Similarly, many

languages descended from Latin divide nouns and adjectives into masculine and feminine, a grammatical echo of the social constructions embedded in those societies. In my lived experience during the years that I was training to be a language teacher, many of the Indigenous language workers that trained me worked from a basic conception of language and culture as being inseparable from each other. For many language workers I've been privileged to know and work with, both language and culture are often kept at the forefront of instruction to ensure that learners not only learn their heritage language but also reconnect with the broader cultural and spiritual frameworks in which these languages are rooted. Although this approach is beneficial in many ways, it presents a series of challenges that must be addressed for language revitalization to be truly inclusive and effective in the modern world.

I have personal heroes in the area of Indigenous language revitalization that work in this way, starting from the concept of language and culture being inseparable from each other. These Indigenous language instructors often advocate for a critical framework for revitalizing and reclaiming endangered Indigenous languages of North America through an emphasis on traditional oral traditions. They feel that by focusing on storytelling, ceremonies, and other communal cultural practices, their approaches can underscore the importance of cultural context in language learning. They believe that this approach not only facilitates language acquisition but also reinforces cultural identity and community cohesion. They advocate for integrating oral traditions into language education to facilitate immersive and authentic learning environments where language and culture are inseparable. Holistic immersion lessons, that center cultural practices such as planting or harvesting particular foods, ensure that language revitalization efforts are deeply rooted in the lived experiences and practices of indigenous communities.

The integration of cultural and spiritual activities into language curricula seems appropriate on paper. However, in my lived experience as a native language immersion teacher I have found that it is not that simple. Kickapoo, Sauk, and Shawnee identity is very fluid. A pedagogical method that stems from the belief that learning one's ancestral language is not merely about vocabulary and syntax, but also about understanding a single static cultural worldview can be problematic for some tribal members, who no longer fit the mold of what a traditional life would ask of them. For instance, lessons may center around sacred rituals, spiritual teachings, or other culturally significant practices such as planting, harvesting, or preparing traditional foods. The assumption is that heritage language learners will share a deep interest in the culture, traditions, and spiritual beliefs of their ancestors. For many this may be true, but it is not true for all. Nonetheless, we do not want to deny language to learners who do not have a deep personal connection to or interest in key cultural traditions, or teach the language to them in such a way that it will not be useful in its primary role as a medium of communication and a core mode of self-expression, embedded in the everyday activities of daily life.

Language revitalization can be a means of reconnecting with lost or fragmented cultural identities. Learning one's heritage language can serve as a pathway back to ancestral ways of being, knowing, and relating to the world. However, there are many such as myself who would rather live language not as a path backwards and inwards but forwards and out. The assumption that all heritage language learners seek this cultural immersion creates a complex and potentially exclusionary learning environment. While some learners may desire a deep connection with cultural traditions, others may feel alienated or marginalized if certain aspects of the culture contradict their own beliefs or values. For example, some tribal spiritual beliefs and practices may be interpreted as xenophobic or exclusionary, particularly in the context of sexuality, gender

identity, or religious affiliation. In some Indigenous cultures, teachings that may be perceived as anti-LGBTQ+, anti-Christian, or otherwise exclusionary can be problematic, especially for learners who are LGBTQ+, Christian, or have other intersecting identities. As a result, language curricula built primarily around cultural or spiritual activities run the risk of alienating certain learners, limiting the reach and effectiveness of revitalization efforts.

To address these complexities, it is important for Indigenous language revitalization programs to evolve in ways that acknowledge and celebrate cultural heritage while also creating space for inclusivity and modern relevance. One way to achieve this balance is by developing language immersion exercises that are rooted in contemporary, real-world contexts. Rather than centering lessons solely on traditional or spiritual activities, language programs can expand their focus to include modern life scenarios. For instance, immersion sets can be developed around everyday situations such as going on a long road trip, navigating healthcare systems, or caring for elderly relatives or young children. These scenarios are universally relevant, non-exclusionary, and provide practical linguistic skills that learners can immediately apply in their daily lives.

This shift in focus toward more modern, real-world immersion exercises not only makes language learning more accessible and inclusive but also supports the ongoing development and vitality of Indigenous languages. As learners encounter new contexts and experiences, they are encouraged to engage in the creative process of coining new words, or neologisms, to describe concepts that may not have existed in traditional vocabularies. For example, words for “internet,” “computer,” or “social media” may need to be developed in languages where these technologies did not previously exist. The practice of creating new words is not just a response to modernity but is a continuation of the dynamic and adaptive nature of all languages. For me, my memories

of hanging out with my monolingual grandmother who only spoke the Kickapoo language, were not of tanning deer hide or planting food. They are of road trips and watching sci-fi and action movies on VHS. They were her favorite and the vocabulary that could be built from the memory of those formative years are words and phrases like “Rewind it”, “Lets watch it again!” “Pause it”, and “If Predator won’t attack unarmed people, then why don’t they just put down their weapons and peacefully walk to the helicopter?”

In addition to fostering inclusivity and creativity, focusing on modern immersion exercises addresses a key challenge facing many Indigenous language revitalization programs: the generational gap in language knowledge. In many communities, there are few fluent speakers left, and many learners are adults who are reconnecting with the language later in life. For these learners, it can be difficult to relate to language lessons based solely on traditional activities with which they may not have a strong personal connection. By introducing scenarios relevant to contemporary life—such as transportation, medical care, or even recreational activities—language programs can better meet learners where they are, offering them practical linguistic tools that make the learning process more engaging and relevant, and make the language they learn useable in everyday situations.

Moreover, this approach still aligns with the broader movement toward decolonizing language instruction. When the layman thinks of language pedagogy, they often think of language pedagogy that has been rooted in Eurocentric models that emphasize grammatical structure and memorization over lived experience and practical application. By focusing on modern immersion and promoting neologism, language revitalization efforts can continue to move away from colonial frameworks and empower learners to engage with the language in ways that are meaningful to their everyday lives. This approach also encourages a more dynamic,

participatory learning process, where learners actively shape the language as they use it in new contexts, rather than passively absorbing knowledge from a top-down model. There are many reasons why community classes seem to always dwindle from 100 students to a core seven or eight but making this change could possibly help with keeping more students engaged for the long haul. While it is true that language and culture are deeply intertwined, it is crucial for Indigenous language revitalization programs to find a balance between cultural tradition and contemporary relevance. By creating language immersion exercises that reflect modern life, language workers can ensure that revitalization efforts are inclusive, accessible, and adaptable to the needs of diverse learners. This approach not only helps to preserve the cultural richness of Indigenous languages but also supports their continued natural evolution, ensuring that they remain vibrant and relevant in an ever-changing world.

In addition, the choice to focus on speaker creation rather than other aspects of language revitalization, such as documentation or policy reform, is informed by the understanding that without speakers, a language cannot truly be considered “awakened”. While policy and documentation play important roles and are referenced briefly throughout this dissertation, this dissertation seeks to fill a gap in the literature by focusing on practical, community-based methods for creating new speakers. New speakers are people who can pass the language on to future generations. The ideology that underscores this research is based on the understanding that Indigenous North American communities hold the keys to success for their own language revitalization, and that successful methods must be adaptable to their unique cultural contexts and needs. This dissertation is intended to not only contribute to the field of linguistics with respect to language revitalization but also serve as a resource for Indigenous communities who are actively working to revitalize their languages. The content of this dissertation is guided by a

commitment to decolonize language instruction by centering Indigenous voices and experiences within strategies for Indigenous language revitalization.

1.1.1 Personal Background

In my years as a language worker, I've had contact with numerous Indigenous communities striving to revitalize their languages. In my role as a consultant, I've seen almost every situation imaginable for a language community and I've experienced several roles at the 'boots on the ground' level of language worker. I've been an insider with influence in my Kickapoo community. I've been an outsider trying to help where I can within the Sauk community. I've been a descendent/non-enrolled in the Shawnee community and in all these roles I've utilized the tools I've picked up in being a linguist, archivist, activist, and filmmaker.

The name on all my official documents is MOSIAH BLUECLOUD. However, my real name, the name that connects me to my Kickapoo people, my clan, my family, my ancestors and nature itself is KEWEA. I'm an enrolled member of the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma. I grew up in central Oklahoma, hearing Kickapoo since birth and knowing it as a vibrant language that will always be. It wasn't until I was 14 that I realized that other native languages, specifically at the time, Shawnee and then Sauk languages, have not been as fortunate as the Kickapoo language. I realized this when I started going to Shawnee language classes with my mom at Brendel Corner just outside of Norman, Oklahoma. There were probably about 30 or so Shawnee speakers at that time. I did my best to memorize the vocab and phrase lists that George and Sue Blanchard provided at those evening community classes. I knew Shawnee could possibly need more attention one day but in 2004, to teenage me, that time felt like lightyears into the future. Community classes with words and phrases seemed like the right direction.

In the spring of 2009 when I was in the middle of my undergrad program at the University of Oklahoma, I heard the Sauk language for the first time. I thought it sounded like flavorful Kickapoo. It was so similar yet so delightfully and interestingly different. Olivia Sammons, a linguist working with the Sauk language would often speak Sauk to my Grandma Pauline Wahpepah. My grandma Pauline is now passed on, but she spoke fluent Shawnee and Kickapoo, two related central Algonquin languages. I told Olivia that I must hear and be exposed to more of this amazing language. So, Olivia sent me to a Sauk story telling at the Shawnee public library. That led to me consuming what Sauk language I could find on YouTube and even attending some Sauk language classes. I eventually made my way to Jacob Manatowa-Bailey, the director of the Sauk language program. I expressed my interest in wanting to work at the Sauk Language department. Jacob handed me a foot tall stack of papers and a bundle of CD's. He told me 'I'll give you a month to learn everything you can from this language packet. Then I'll administer an oral language test and if you pass, we'll begin the process of getting you an internship here at Sauk language.' I studied like a madman for the whole month. I listened to Sauk approximately 8 hours a day. The only time I didn't listen to Sauk were during lectures for my classes. I even listened to Sauk on low volume while I read and did homework in English.

When it came time for the oral exam, I flew through it. I understood everything Jacob asked and answered back in Sauk. He asked me questions about little animal figurines. The questions were about their color, number, and to point out the biggest and smallest of the figurines. He showed me some pictures of people that elicited various verbs in the Sauk language. The final question was a trick question about what colors are on the MESKWAKI flag. There was a small portrait of the Meskwaki flag behind me, but at that time in life, I was just barely learning about the Sauk tribe and the Meskwaki people of Tama, Iowa were nowhere near my radar. I think that

was the first time I had ever even heard of the Meskwaki people. That question kept me from a perfect score on the oral exam but didn't keep me from moving on to the next stage of internship preparation.

The final hurdle would be for 19-year-old me to host a five-hour language event for Sauk children. So, I posted fliers, I created a lesson plan, I bought materials to facilitate the language games and my hand drum for Sauk language songs I learned during my month-long self-study. The language event took place at the Sac&Fox multipurpose building in Shawnee Oklahoma. There were about 20 children from ages 7 to 15 and I kept them occupied with language games, songs, and there was even a snack time. Jacob sat and quietly observed from the corner of the room, with a clipboard and a pen. After it was all over, I reported back to Jacob the following Monday and I was told that I would start my internship on the first week of June 2009. I spent that summer editing audio and video under the tutelage of Arlan Manatowa. I truly loved every minute of it.

1.1.2 Acquiring the Sauk Language

In the spring of 2010, I decided to leave my undergrad program at the University of Oklahoma to start working full time at the Sauk Language Department. At that time, the Sauk language had four L1 speakers left. I knew that if I wanted to make a difference in helping the Sauk language, I needed to jump in headfirst and learn the language to fluency. I moved from audio video editing with Arlan to being a member of the Sauk language program's modified mentor-apprentice program.

It took me a year and two months to achieve speakerhood in the Sauk language. At the Sauk language program, we defined speakerhood as the ability to stay and live in the language with ease. This also means being able to learn the language through the language. After

achieving speakerhood, If the first language elder speakers ever said a word I didn't understand, I was able to ask in the language for clarification and hear the explanation in the language about any new word or concept that would arise. Speakerhood is the ability to function as a contributing member within a speaking community. There were many assessments Jacob would do along my Sauk language acquisition journey. On Immersion trips he would often have me translate for him or one of the elder Sauk speakers. I would translate and obtain clarification on unfamiliar vocab in the language. These types of demonstrations often allowed non-speakers to witness Sauk language acquisition in real time.

Learning the Sauk language was initially a challenging endeavor. At first, I struggled to comprehend much of the language, but I was determined to work hard, pushing myself every day to understand more. The patience and guidance of the fluent speakers, along with the support of Jacob, our master-apprentice lead, were instrumental in my growth. When my turn came to participate in the immersion sets, I could feel my brain being stretched, pushed to its limits in ways that both challenged and engaged me.

Each immersion session was intense, but this intensity was beneficial. The balance between stress and engagement kept my affective filter low enough to prevent overwhelming anxiety, yet high enough to drive me forward. The affective filter will be discussed further in chapter 2 but for now suffice it to say that the affective filter is a measure of stress level within a learner. Had my stress while acquiring the Sauk language within a particular immersion set been too great, my ability to acquire the language would have been hindered. Instead, I was able to remain highly motivated and fully engaged, with just enough tension to fuel my desire to improve. My goal was not only to overcome the initial difficulty of language learning but to make it an enjoyable experience.

The fact that I was being compensated to learn the Sauk language added an extra layer of motivation. I wanted the process to feel rewarding and fun, not merely arduous. To achieve this, I put in effort both inside and outside of our sessions. The combination of this hard work and the immersive environment ultimately led to rapid progress. Before long, I found myself able to hold full conversations and express anything I felt or wanted to say entirely in Sauk. The immersion sets that were hands-on in nature were some of my favorites, being able to manipulate realia such as action figures or toy cars kept language acquisition lighthearted and fun. The fun, coupled with the constant support and guidance, transformed me from a learner into a confident speaker. After I reached the point of being able to function in the language for any length of time with ease, Jacob started making the duties of ‘MA lead’ part of my job description. That point of expressing myself with ease in the language is called intermediate-mid on the ACTFL scale.

The Sauk language program used the ACTFL scale for assessment and declared me at intermediate-mid fluency on their grant reports to ANA. Intermediate-mid level fluency is the first major benchmark of speaker creation. Intermediate-mid refers to a specific level within the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Speakers at this level can handle uncomplicated communicative tasks in simple social situations. They talk about everyday topics like family, home, and activities, as well as basic needs such as food and travel. They mainly react to questions or requests but can ask simple questions too. Their utterances may include the occasional pause and self-correction as they search for the right words (ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES 2012). While speakers at the Intermediate-mid level are usually understood by patient listeners that are used to communicating with beginning speakers, they may have trouble speaking with L1 speakers on more advanced topics, and with using more complex language structures, so conversing with non-participating L1’s outside of the program may still feel daunting.

It's important to prioritize reaching this proficiency level when creating new speakers for languages with few native speakers left as this level helps lay a strong groundwork for future language growth and potential advancement to higher proficiency levels later on. In 2014, I attended a conference in Oklahoma for language workers. The facilitator asked everyone to indicate how many people they successfully passed the language on to. I was the only one at the time that had passed the language on to someone else. This was also an awkward awakening for me because I was the youngest language worker in attendance. It was then I realized there was a very serious oversight in the way language work is done. There have simply been far too many language teachers spinning their wheels for decades and getting nowhere in regard to creating new speakers. They didn't know to aim for intermediate-mid speaking ability for their students. The intermediate mid-level signifies an individual's ability to participate in simple social interactions and convey their personal thoughts, which is crucial for preserving the language and cultural heritage of these communities. It may also be of some comfort for mentees to know that after achieving intermediate mid, everything about immersion sessions mellows out. Sessions do not feel as draining, confidence skyrockets and any lingering self-doubt or imposter syndrome is more easily blasted away into the darkness from whence it came.

After achieving intermediate-mid in the Sauk language, life started to get busy for me. I logged 668 hours of professional development trainings for language documentation and language immersion methodology for the classroom. Jacob immediately started having me practice immersion teaching for community classes in Stroud so I could become ready to teach Sauk at Shawnee High School in Shawnee Oklahoma. Sometimes trainers would come to the Sauk language headquarters in Stroud, Oklahoma; sometimes I would travel to other states for training. I started teaching community Sauk language classes, as well as high school classes, and

I even taught a college-level Sauk language course at Bacone College. The Sauk language department started to host language workers from other tribes: the Cherokee Nation, the Chickasaw Nation, and the Seminole nation sent representatives to learn how to replicate the Sauk language department's ability to create speakers in under two years' time. I was not the last person to learn Sauk during the Sauk language department's golden era of 2010-2015.

Alas, all good things must come to an end. After my time at the Sauk Language Department, I went back to the University of Oklahoma and finished my bachelor's degree in Linguistics in 2016. That same year, I created a language department for the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma. I created a teacher training program with the Kickapoo Tribe of Kansas. I standardized the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma learner's orthography and developed a home curriculum for families to use at their own pace. I've never stopped working with tribes from coast to coast. I kept doing consultations, on the modified master apprentice/group mentor apprentice model, multimedia for language revitalization, and language department development.

1.2 Significance of Speaker Creation Research

The focus of this dissertation is on Indigenous languages with only a handful of elderly L1 speakers remaining. The need for *accelerated* speaker creation arises from the imminent threat of language loss in Indigenous communities with few first language speakers remaining. So, what becomes paramount in this context is the distinction between community language efforts that are language reclamation, i.e. the reclaiming of dormant languages, and revitalization, those revitalizing languages with only a few elderly L1 speakers. Within the current body of second language acquisition research, there is a dearth of language acquisition strategies geared towards Indigenous languages with few speakers and limited documentation. An example of a concrete language acquisition strategy would be a lesson that uses immersion

techniques that facilitate a full language immersion environment. The lesson could include visual aids, interactive activities, and even real-life context through role-play to target either a specific set of vocabulary such as fruit names or target grammatical structures such as negation or *would*, *could*, *should* statements. Furthermore, the common approaches are often influenced by ideologies of endangerment that promote passive learning approaches (King & Hermes, 2014). In a passive learning approach, the focus shifts from applicable everyday language use to documentation and preservation. The main question every Indigenous language department I've worked with wants answered is 'how do we create more speakers?'. Language workers want concrete plans and immediately applicable templates. However, second language acquisition research is mostly focused on analyzing the complex social and cognitive processes involved in language learning (Lamb, 2023). Tribes have tried to reach out to linguists, but most linguists have never successfully facilitated speaker creation in an under-resourced language before. Second language acquisition research is most often geared towards world languages with whole countries full of speakers and resources. Indigenous languages around the world face the critical challenge of endangerment, many communities having only a handful of elderly L1 speakers remaining, but most second-language acquisition research does not include this kind of context.

The urgency to preserve and revitalize endangered Indigenous languages necessitates innovative approaches to *accelerating* the creation of new speakers. This dissertation focuses on exploring accelerated language learning through whole language immersion as a method to address this challenge. Despite the historical and legislative challenges faced by Native American languages, there has been a rise in attitudes promoting their worthiness. This can be seen through the mobilization of Native American educators, leaders, and academic professionals in the late 1980s, culminating in the passing of the Native American Languages

Act in 1990. (Urla, 2007) This act officially recognized Native American languages as vital to Indigenous cultures and identities and emphasized their role in transmitting and preserving Native American cultures, literatures, histories, and values. The act also acknowledged that languages are crucial for communication and the survival of cultural and political integrity. This recognition of the importance of Native American languages was further supported by the passage of another Native American Languages Act in 1992, which allocated funds for community-based language programs and initiatives. These acts have provided opportunities for the development of literature and teaching materials, teacher training, fostering collaboration between speakers and non-speakers, and the documentation of oral history and stories. These initiatives reflect a growing understanding of the significance of Native American languages and a commitment to their revitalization and preservation (Warhol, 2011).

Acquiring a language is a skill. Anyone can make incremental improvements on that skill with practice. Furthermore, taking part in immersion does not only mean being a passive participant but that it is also possible to lead others in immersion environments, even as a beginner. Both passive participants and those that are leading in immersion environments must understand that immersion environments must constantly change to combat boredom. Immersion sets are like contextualized vocabulary mini-lessons that build upon each other and steadily grow in complexity. Each mini lesson is focused on specific vocabulary that can be acquired quickly when placed in meaningful context. This aligns with Stephen Krashen's theory of comprehensible input, which will be discussed further in Chapter 2. Immersion sets should be diverse. Immersion sets can focus on active participation of the apprentice learners. Some focus on having the apprentice learners just listen to fluent language and add to their language exposure. Immersion sets can also focus on having the apprentice move or manipulate objects,

like talking themselves through the steps of making coffee, for example. These immersion set types will be discussed further in section 4.1.3 of this dissertation.

Language acquisition through structured immersion sets requires consistent effort, and with the right resources and support, individuals can successfully acquire new languages and develop bilingual or multilingual speaking ability. One can improve the skill of acquiring a new language through practice, dedication, and exposure to the target language. Language learning comes down to finding a way to enjoy language learning and make it a regular part of one's daily routine by bombarding your brain with exposure and trusting that your brain will acquire. It's important to limit stress about being able to speak and understand the language because stress raises the affective filter. The affective filter is thoroughly discussed in section 2.2 of this dissertation. The more languages one can be exposed to the more flexible the brain will become at learning to speak and understand a particular target language. It's important to dispel the fear of learning any language that one can be exposed to on the journey to understand and speak a particular target language. The desire to understand a particular message is what primarily drives language acquisition (Krashen, 2017), not the metalinguistic goal of simply wanting to learn a language.

1.3 The Importance of Speaker Creation in Revitalization

The creation of new speakers is a separate job that is often overlooked within revitalization efforts. If one is wondering if a particular duty or responsibility is 'New speaker creation' they must simply ask the age-old adage 'will it create speakers?'. There are many important roles within a successful Indigenous language revitalization movement. A jack-of-all-trades individual can be good when a program is first starting out but eventually work needs to be delegated and specialists need to rise to the occasion. Some people best serve in the capacity

of archivist, documenting mentor apprentice immersion sessions for future language mentees and community members. Additionally, the need for good public relations cannot be overlooked. In most Indigenous communities a language group leading the language revitalization movement can be overthrown due to bad PR. Being a 'tribal member' only gets one so far especially with the delicate subject of language and culture. The communities' 'wants' cannot be overlooked. Often the average community member expects and wants to see events and activities that do not create speakers. These activities must still be offered and maintained. The community must feel invited and happy about revitalization progress no matter how big or small. Good PR is a job for everyone. Speaker creation must still happen though. Eventually the general community will lift their heads up from their community classes, dictionaries, grammars and language festivals and ask, 'is anyone speaking yet?'. If an outsider ever finds their way into a community and they're giving the community what they ask for, the outsider would do well to remember that eventually they may be blamed for the lack of new speakers. So, they should try to advocate for trainings and professional development by people that have successfully created speakers in their Indigenous communities. There is a growing number of people skilled in immersion methods that work for Indigenous people and the research is steadily growing; there is the real possibility that one day linguistics and SLA research will be able to fully meet the needs of Indigenous communities.

Community language classes are where people go to learn *about* the language. If you take a peek into most community language classes you will find a lot of rote memorization, listen and repeat, and lectures on grammar. These activities feel good, generate bonds within the community, and are a great way to find gifted language learners that are willing to go to the next level of becoming a new speaker of the language. However, no one can acquire a language from

community classes alone. There are a great many Indigenous folk that have attended language classes for three or more decades but do not speak the language conversationally. Community classes tend to restart and recycle beginner curriculum every six months or so. There will be the occasional die hard that goes despite that. The vast majority of students leave and get bored. The community language teacher's classes usually have low turnout and class sizes dwindle down to two or three people before they fizzle out altogether, only to be rekindled again by a new interested party so the cycle can continue.

Speaker creation does happen across North America. The mechanics of speaker creation are often shrouded in mystery. People often look to polyglots for advice on learning languages quickly. Polyglots are gifted language learners, and they'll often be found spouting platitudes about not giving up and persevering no matter the obstacle to an audience consisting of avid language learners that never miss a language event and have collected every dictionary and grammar in existence on their language. They haven't given up, they're in the middle of persevering, but they're in their seventh year of persevering, yet the gifted language learner acquired their language in just over a year. *'What is the secret?'* is the frustrated scream seared into the hearts of frustrated language workers across turtle island.

There simply isn't enough research on speaker creation in Indigenous communities. We need more than a workshop on one particular immersion method. We need more than a study on the effects of referent token variability on L2 vocabulary learning that most Indigenous community members will never hear about. We need more than a dictionary or sketch grammar. We need scholars who've facilitated speaker creation to detail the method they've used. We need to know the number of hours spent in structured and unstructured immersion a week. We need detailed walkthroughs of each planned hour of the mentor apprentice sessions. We need to know

the mixtures of immersion types. We need to know about the problems that arose and how they were overcome. We need to know about all the mentor apprentice supplementals. We need to know how many immersion trips were taken. What were the activities employed on these immersion trips? Above all we also need to know that these methods can be backed up by the science of second language acquisition theory and linguistics, so we have evidence-based approaches to show to the funders of these speaker creation endeavors.

1.4 Centering Indigenous Language in Second Language Acquisition Theory, Linguistics and Documentation

The primary objective of this dissertation is to center indigeneity as the lens with which to view second language acquisition theory, linguistics and documentation. For Indigenous people such as myself, language is identity. For example, I know that as a Kickapoo person the only true binary for me is life and non-life. This is represented in my Kickapoo language, so that I know on a spiritual level that anyone I speak Kickapoo with also understands that binary, even if their understanding is implicit. From that simple yet deep truth, the meaning that a Kickapoo listener and a Kickapoo speaker create and agree on ties us to generations past and generations yet to come—these generations who have and will in the future view everything in this world as either alive or non-alive. In linguistic terms we call this grammatical binary 'animacy'. In the Kickapoo language, animacy rules dictate how nouns in Kickapoo are inflected for number and possession depending on whether the noun is animate or inanimate (Bluecloud, 2020). Animate nouns are alive, have been alive or are sacred items. Everything else is inanimate. Therefore, the Kickapoo and many other indigenous people view all animate things as existing on the same equal animate plane of existence. So, a deer is alive and the Kickapoo word for deer is *pesekithia*. The animate ending '-a' is the same animate ending as for the Kickapoo word for 'human', *metotheoninia*. Like many Indigenous people of this land, the Kickapoo gives respect to

this fellow animate being. When we take the *pesikithia*'s life, we do so in reverence and respect. Even if a Kickapoo is raised away from the culture, the Language will eventually remind the Kickapoo of this fundamental binary. This is one example of how language is identity.

Language is also history. The name that we Kickapoo call ourselves is *Kiweekaapaa*. That means 'the one who stands here and now there'. Encoded in this word is the history of the Kickapoo of existing in multiple places at once. There are many reasons and benefits to exist this way. It's easier on the land and resources, and also it's a good way to keep safe from potential enemies. All Kickapoo words can tell a story of the history of why things are the way they are. This illustrates how language is culture. For example, the Kickapoo words for 'nail' and the white area at the base of the fingernail, 'lunula' connect to the winter story of why humans must eventually all leave their mortal physical bodies. The story of why humans are mortal is meant to instill gratefulness for each day; one tiny brick in the grand scheme of Kickapoo ontology.

Grandfathers, grandmothers, fathers and mothers communicate through the Kickapoo language ways of being that maintain and develop Kickapoo culture. There are nuances of understanding that are unique to every language. These nuances give rise to mannerisms, opinions on right and wrong, and even what makes one laugh or cry or be mad. For example, a monolingual Kickapoo speaker and I were talking about how I needed to get a deer. The monolingual speaker pointed to an old, dilapidated windmill and said, 'you could sit up there'. Everyone that was listening laughed. If that conversation had been read on a transcript by a non-Kickapoo, they might wonder why such an odd observation got way more than just a slight chuckle out of the Kickapoo in attendance. This is because a monolingual Kickapoo speaker has many different words to choose from to describe a human in a sitting position. Of all the words to choose from he chose *chikapia*. In the Kickapoo dictionary one might see the translation 'sits

up straight' and still may wonder why the joke got the raucous laughter it did. Only a Kickapoo raised in the culture can paint a mental picture of the whole scene: 'A person sitting way too seriously in such a ridiculous place'. In that moment of raucous shared Kickapoo humor, Kickapoo culture and the bond between friends and colleagues was invigorated. Word play has always been a part of the human experience. Through this unique play with words that have echoed across North America for generations, it goes almost without saying that language is a bridge between past present and future. These are a few of the ways and examples of how language is vital to the efficacy of an Indigenous being. Language gives us the knowledge of our ancestors so that we can understand where they have been and use that knowledge to better inform where we are going. Language is not used solely as a means of communication but rather it encompasses intricate complexities of our identity.

Language work is more than just saving a means of communication. Language work is the fight for the collective soul of a people. There is a lot riding on the survival of our Indigenous cultures. We're working towards a future of reflections we'll never see, and it is delicate work. In the book titled 'Braiding Sweetgrass' by Robin Wall Kimmerer, Robin talks about a community in strife over the proper way to harvest the ever-disappearing sweetgrass in their area. One group harvests by pulling the sweetgrass by the root, and the other harvests by cutting above the roots. Both sides blame each other's methods for the endangerment of the sacred plant. However, an experiment was performed that showed that both methods of harvest are equally successful at further propagation of the plant, and it was the control sweetgrass that received zero human intervention that shrank in number. The sweetgrass endangerment was correlated with less harvesters to do the work, not with the manner of harvest. This story applies to Indigenous communities and language work. The little details of "how" we facilitate spaces for language to

be spoken in does not matter so much as the whole act of creating a space for language to be spoken. Disputes over orthography, disputes over how native words should translate to English, disputes over pronunciation, word order, and discourse markers are like the sweetgrass harvesters bickering over who harvests the correct way. The dispute over the details isn't what's slowing revitalization of our Indigenous languages. The fact is that both sides of any dispute over language are right. Both sides are on the same side and allied to the same language. I believe that the most squabbling happens amid stagnation. When there's no perceived progress blame is doled out haphazardly.

1.4.1 What are Explicit and Implicit Learning Methods?

My role in language work centers around speaker creation. As described above, I've acquired the Sauk language as an L2, and I used the modified master apprentice method to create speakers after me. An outsider may be surprised at how few of us speaker-creators there are. The sad truth is most Indigenous language teachers haven't passed the language on to others. They often spend decades mired in western pedagogies that emphasize explicit teaching methodologies. Stephen Krashen originally proposed the dichotomy of the implicit and explicit language teaching methods in 1978. Explicit teaching approaches are instructional techniques that offer direct and structured guidance on learning objectives and concepts. Explicit language pedagogy involves conscious, systematic learning where rules and grammar are explicitly taught. This method is often what I experienced in all my formal language classes through high school and undergraduate school. Explicit teaching methods include formal instruction, drills, and explanations in English. The goal of explicit teaching methods is to help learners understand the structure and usage of the language enough to perform well on a standardized test. These methods involve clear explanations of rules or skills, teacher-led demonstrations, guided practice

with feedback, and independent practice (Hulstijn, 2015). The teacher breaks down the material into manageable parts to teach each component systematically while frequently checking for understanding. Examples of explicit teaching approaches include direct instruction, modeling, drill and repetition, think-alouds, and systematic phonics instruction for reading. The aim is to provide students with a clear path to learning to reduce confusion and promote mastery of the subject matter. The original intent was that the use of these methodologies could effectively support student learning by providing clear instruction, modeling, and practice opportunities. However, we see these methods implemented in Indigenous communities in the form of word lists, grammar lessons, grammar worksheets, and written tests. Someone that has been learning the language through grammar exercises and community classes for 15 years may also be able to tell why a sentence is ill-formed and they may even be able to point to a specific grammar rule that has been violated, but they might have a hard time staying in the language for longer than a minute.

In the mainstream world Explicit methods are the gold standard, and yet most non-natives can vouch for how their four years of Spanish or French amounted to little more than being able to name some numbers and colors and some useful phrases. Explicit teaching methodologies have been employed at some point or another by all Indigenous language revitalization communities and we have found that these methods simply do not create speakers. They create people that get really good at talking about the language and around the language in English.

1.4.2 The Advantages of an Implicit Teaching Method

In my personal experience, a person that has acquired language through implicit language pedagogy is comfortable and capable of staying in the language all day long and never tires. This is because they don't have to constantly translate their every thought from English into their

target language. Furthermore, under ideal teaching conditions, after about a year a new speaker will develop the ability to perform speaker judgments. They can pick out an ill-formed utterance and give the correct form. The new speaker who has acquired the language through implicit methods may not be able to explain exactly 'why' the sentence is ungrammatical but instead just be able to say, 'it just doesn't sound right'.

Implicit methodologies are definitely more successful for speaker creation. Implicit teaching methods are a more indirect way of helping students learn. These methods involve exposing students to concepts and learning materials without giving them specific instructions on what to do. The idea is for learners to figure out rules or principles through engagement, observation, discovery, and practice in real-life situations (Krashen, 1978). Implicit teaching tends to be less structured than explicit teaching and relies on the learner's natural ability to pick up knowledge through experience. Some examples of implicit teaching methods include inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, and experiential learning. These approaches encourage students to actively engage with the material, connect prior knowledge with new information, and develop critical thinking skills (Hulstijn, 2015).

Speaker creation is the acquisition of language for fluent conversation. It is more useful than learning about a language. Acquisition leads to revitalization and reclamation and language learning leads to people being able to talk about the language in English. Language acquisition is achieved by application of implicit teaching pedagogy. Implicit teaching pedagogy emphasizes natural, subconscious learning, often mirroring how children learn their first language (Ellis, 2011). This method relies on achieving comprehensible input through exposure, context, and interaction, allowing learners to absorb linguistic structures without direct instruction (Ellis,

2008). People that have acquired language through implicit language instruction often have strong metalinguistic knowledge.

1.4.3 A Combination for Success

At the end of this dissertation, I will have explained and demonstrated how both explicit and implicit teaching methods can be used to facilitate comprehensive mentee learning. Explicit learning is best for self-study outside of immersion mentor-apprentice sessions while implicit methods must make up the entirety of the mentor-apprentice sessions. The idea of implicit and explicit language learning being implemented on a spectrum instead of a pedagogy following strictly one or the other method is widely shared among researchers in language acquisition. This view recognizes that there's often overlap between implicit and explicit processes when learning a new language. Many learning experiences involve elements of both, where learners may pick up grammar naturally through exposure but also benefit from specific rule-based instruction. It's thus more accurate to see these systems as points along a continuum where conscious awareness and intentionality in learning can coexist and interact (Hulstijn, 2015).

Both Explicit and Implicit methods of language instruction have their advantages, and I have found that a combination often yields the best results. I advocate that implicit methods be used in immersion environments and explicit methods be used outside of immersion environments to supplement Immersion sessions. Utilizing explicit language learning on the periphery can help foster high quality immersion sessions.

1.4.4 Cultivating Adaptability in our Language Learning Environments

In regard to speaker creation, we should be wary of any language worker that doesn't believe our languages can adapt to the present and the future. We should be wary of any language worker that isn't trying to work their way out of a job. Language work takes as long as

it needs to. However, I would like to point out that if a language program has the advantage of a fluent first language speaker or speakers, there is no reason they shouldn't be at least creating one new speaker at least every two years. I've worked with language departments that weren't creating new speakers. I demonstrated the methods employed by the modified mentor apprentice approach and helped them find the techniques that work for their groups, and I've witnessed new speaker creation happening in those communities in under a year. The modified mentor apprentice methods that I will demonstrate and explain in this dissertation were developed through trial and error over the course of decades informed by previous language workers who have since passed as well as the developing and emerging research.

My mentor Jacob Manatowa-Bailey started language work when he was 19. He learned from many colleagues that have since long passed and eventually created a system that works. I learned Sauk through the modified mentor apprentice approach and used the approach to teach another language learner that came after me. The method was meant to be a revolving door mechanism that turns out new speakers; one new speaker creating another behind them and so and so forth. The beauty of it is that a language worker can put in time as a language worker and then have a choice to stay in language work in other capacities such as teacher, librarian, archivist, or linguist or they can move on guilt-free to other life passions and pursuits such as filmmaking or academia.

The modified mentor apprentice method I describe below is comprised of multiple tested techniques derived from linguistics, Second language acquisition theory, and documentation. Every community I run GMA trainings for makes tweaks that better fit their own community. However, the goal is what always remains consistent. The goal is speaker creation within a time constraint. It is the hope that language workers that are looking for the missing ingredient in their

endeavors will find it here in this dissertation. I do not expect them to say that they copy and pasted the curriculum suggested in this dissertation for success but instead that they will be able to mold and change the curriculum and use it as an outline that works for their communities' specific needs and situation. I'm not offering a one-size fits all model. While keeping Indigenous worldviews at the center, I provide a detailed walk through of how new speaker creation has been found across north America and of the common principles employed in each method.

1.5 Effects of Language Loss and Language Reclamation

This section will discuss the effects of language loss and language reclamation, but it is important to preface that in facilitating the acquisition of Indigenous languages, it is crucial to balance language Immersion within the implicit cultural context it embodies, without overemphasizing specific cultural content or participation in particular cultural practices. While language and culture are deeply intertwined, language acquisition can still embody and affirm Indigenous identity implicitly, allowing learners to reconnect with their heritage and worldview without feeling pressured to engage with sacred or private cultural knowledge. This approach is not only beneficial for tribal members that are of other religious faiths, but it is also particularly important for communities that have historically protected their traditions and cultural practices from outsiders. By focusing on language acquisition as an inherently cultural act, language revitalization efforts can help foster Indigenous identity and worldview in a manner that respects the boundaries of cultural privacy, ensuring that sacred traditions are not put on display. This method can create a safer space for communities to embrace language work without compromising their cultural sovereignty.

The use of Indigenous languages has declined due to a range of factors, primarily stemming from historical acts of colonization. During colonization, Indigenous peoples were

often subject to genocide, ethnocide, and forced assimilation, which included policies and practices designed to suppress the use of Indigenous languages (Whalen et. al, 2022). This could involve government entities ignoring language use, punishment for speaking Indigenous languages in schools, and the forced adoption of the English language. This followed with the socio-economic factor of the near absolute need to speak a dominant language for work or to pursue an education. These are just some of the factors that have played a role in the decline of Indigenous languages.

The loss of Indigenous language and culture has far-reaching implications, including significant effects on health and well-being (McIvor et al, 2013). Language and cultural identity are deeply intertwined, and when these elements are depleted, it often leads to the deterioration of all aspects of life, including physical and mental health (Khawaja, 2021). I taught Sauk in the high school and every year I was there I would get letters from parents expressing their gratitude. They wrote about how the Sauk language class had instilled a sense of purpose and confidence. That even as young adults they could have a real and present impact on the continuance of language. They believed that the facilitation of reconnection to Indigenous identity helped their children's behavioral issues and mental health issues. Studies have shown that the loss of Indigenous language and culture can contribute to increased rates of chronic diseases, mental health issues, substance abuse, and overall poorer health outcomes (Whalen et al, 2022). Additionally, the loss of Indigenous language and culture can cause individuals to feel disconnected and torn between two cultures, leading to a sense of loss, identity crisis, and social isolation. These psychosocial factors can further contribute to negative health outcomes and decreased overall well-being among Indigenous populations. Furthermore, the intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge and practices related to health and healing is often tied to

Indigenous language and culture. Therefore, when Indigenous languages and cultures are eroded or lost, important healing practices and traditional knowledge may also be lost, negatively impacting the overall health of Indigenous communities. Accelerated speaker creation and language revitalization efforts can play a crucial role in mitigating the health effects of the loss of Indigenous language and culture (McIvor et al, 2013). By empowering Indigenous communities to reclaim and revitalize their languages, these efforts provide a foundation for cultural continuity and holistic health (Gonzalez et al, 2017). Furthermore, they facilitate the transfer of important health knowledge and practices across generations that can even extend beyond just physical wellbeing.

Knowledge of Indigenous languages can play a significant role in reclaiming land stewardship. Indigenous languages contain a deep ecological knowledge and historical record of how to manage and interact with the land in respectful and responsible ways. Because language embodies the cultural practices, beliefs, and relationships that Indigenous people have with their environment language revitalization is crucial for effective stewardship of the lands on which Indigenous people reside or come from. Understanding and using Indigenous languages can help transmit critical information about sustainable practices, traditional ecological knowledge, and the importance of preserving the land for future generations. For many Indigenous communities, a sense of responsibility and custodianship over natural resources is closely tied to their cultural identity and language, influencing how they manage and care for these environments. The sense of responsibility can start with the simple realization that a certain ceremony requires access to a clean body of water. That small realization often leads to a wide understanding of the web of life that Indigenous people are just one tiny part of.

Chapter 2: Synthesizing Research on Pedagogy and Language Learning in North American Indigenous Communities

This chapter provides a framework for contextualizing adult immersion language learning of Indigenous languages or what I refer to as new speaker creation in the field of Indigenous language revitalization. I discuss new speaker creation in the context of revitalization, documentation, reclamation, Indigenous language immersion, and second language acquisition theory and teaching. I focus on how immersion pedagogy has been applied and used in the past by Indigenous people working in revitalization and establish the need for more literature on speaker creation in Indigenous communities.

First, it is important to first define the difference between ‘Revitalization’ and ‘Reclamation’. Revitalization refers to the effort of bringing new life to language that is still present but in decline. Reclamation involves taking back or reclaiming language that has been lost or taken away. If a language goes to ‘sleep’, or in the archaic sense, “dies”, it is because it is no longer spoken within the community. The ‘sleeping’ or ‘dead’ language is replaced by English or Spanish and therefore, the language can be considered “lost” or “taken away” from the community. This dissertation aims to help language workers facilitate new speaker creation from the utilization of help from existing speakers. That is not to say that communities that are working from documentation won’t be able to also find use in this dissertation, but new speaker creation may not be seen as fast, or reclamation communities may redefine speakerhood all together to fit their purposes.

2.1 Revitalization, Documentation, Reclamation, and Reawakening Languages

In 1990, the United States government passed the Native American Languages Act, aimed at protecting, preserving, and promoting the rights and freedoms of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop their heritage languages. This act was much needed as it symbolized a change from Capt. Richard Pratt's vision of "Killing the Indian and saving the man" through stripping native children of their language and culture (Peterson, 2013).

In 2019, the United Nations recognized the crisis of Indigenous language endangerment by declaring 2019 be The International Year of Indigenous Languages to raise awareness about their significance in enriching our world's cultural diversity. In 2022 the United Nations launched the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. This came about because the research of the early 2010's indicated that 46% of the world's 7000 language communities were in danger of experiencing whole disruption of language transmission by the end of the century (Hale et al, 1992; Wiecha, 2013; Rouvier et al, 2017). This is a crisis for Indigenous communities because their languages are not only crucial for tribal infrastructure development but also for peacebuilding within Indigenous communities towards reconciliation of historical and modern trauma. Indigenous languages have served in such crucial capacity since time immemorial and so embody the unique identity and cultural history of every tribal nation.

Indigenous people engaged in language revitalization and reclamation often refer to their efforts as *language work*. Language work is the teaching, learning, and production of materials for doing research related to the empowerment of Indigenous communities (Leonard, 2023). Language work is also characterized "as an umbrella expression to include language documentation, description, teaching, advocacy, and resource development" (Leonard, 2017).

When doing Indigenous language work, it is crucial to facilitate conversations within the community about the issues of Indigenous nationhood and data sovereignty. Indigenous nations have the right to decide how data about their language is used or shared. These considerations can guide the field in important ways. Training and incorporating these issues into research and its application are vital. Applied linguists generally understand that their field always occurs within a political context; however, in the context of Indigenous language reclamation, this becomes even more significant (Leonard, 2023).

Supporting Indigenous languages within academia is a complex goal, but it is achievable. It's important to note that the first challenge is in understanding and properly connecting directly with the needs of Indigenous communities that are working to revitalize their heritage languages. Linguists and community members have historically contrasting methods for preserving native languages, despite sharing the same goal. In Elena Benedicto and Elizabeth Salomón's presentation titled "Documentation does not revitalize" given at ICLDC 6 in 2019, they elaborate on how academic efforts tend to focus on producing lexicons and grammars for either scholarly publications or because funding agencies often have an obsessive insistence on archiving language material as top priority (Benedicto & Salomón, 2019). These productions are not often found to be very helpful for communities in the late stages of language loss with few resources and only a few elderly speakers desperately trying to pass on their languages to younger generations (Grounds, 2008).

Imagine handing a dictionary and grammar to a 23-year-old that is trying to learn their heritage language from their elderly grandparent. They sit in their living room with documentation on their language trying to figure out next steps. In my experience, I have seen learners reinvent the wheel with their last speaker by rewriting the dictionary to fit the last

speaker's dialect and reading aloud the grammar hoping against hope that the grammar rules will magically make them conversational. This situation has happened, is happening, and will happen again unless linguists and community members get on the same page about how to maximize language transmission between last speakers and language learners. Time with 'last speakers' is best spent in working through immersion sets that facilitate time in the language, listening to the language, speaking the language, and 'doing' in the language.

The primary focus of language revitalization is the creation of new speakers, not on the production of documentary materials (Hinton, 2021). The lack of ancestral language transmission in Indigenous communities may partially stem from a misunderstanding about what kind of environment is needed for children to learn languages (Hinton, 2009). Bilingual or multilingual parents who effortlessly acquired two or more languages at a young age often assume that their children will do the same, without realizing that their home and community environment is now different than what they had during their own childhood. Children learning their first language typically hear about a million sentences in that language every year (Miller, 1987). The community environment of children from communities of endangered language speakers seldom come close to this level of input in contemporary reality.

2.1.1 The Bilingual Education Era

In the 1970's language revitalization first took the form of bilingual education (Hinton, 2009). During the bilingual education era, the boarding school policies that stripped Indigenous communities of their languages were reversed. Due to bilingual education policy, Indigenous languages were back in the schools for the first time in the 20th century. This gave rise to a generation of kids who were allowed to have positive feelings about their heritage languages. Hinton notes in her 2009 plenary talk given in Hawaii, that many of today's language activists

come from backgrounds where they received bilingual education in their communities. However, bilingual education's potential to reverse language shift for Indigenous people was ultimately undermined due to bilingual education's intended design of helping non-English fluent children learn English. Despite the existence of some bilingual education programs today, the era of bilingual education in the United States was essentially declared over during the Bush administration when the president renamed the Office of Bilingual Education the "Office of English Language Acquisition" (Boyle et al, 2010).

The major shortcoming of bilingual education in a revitalization context stemmed from its inability to reverse language loss. For Indigenous people it failed to halt the decline of languages being spoken at home. Bilingual education also failed to create speakers who would actively use their language daily. According to Hinton (2009) while children were being educated in two languages at school, their endangered language was disappearing from their home environment. Some parents even used bilingual education as a reason for not using the language at home. They believed that bilingual education would ensure their children's success in acquiring their heritage language, but it didn't (Lewis, 2022). Parents placing the responsibility of revitalization in schools led to the perception that the language was for school and English was for the home because that's what the parents were speaking in the homes.

As bilingual education was on its way out, immersion schools were on their way in. Numerous Indigenous language immersion schools have flourished across North America. These Immersion schools as we know them today all started out as revolutionary grassroots movements inspired by the work done in New Zealand by the Maori, Hawai'i by the Hawaiians, and the Mohawks in New York and Canada (Hinton, 2009). Similarly, there has also been a push to

bring languages back into the home by families where much success has been found (Hinton 1997; 2013; 2018; Abraham 2010; King 2014; Baird, 2016).

The newest era is the era of adult learning. Adult learning has been successfully facilitated by a host of methods and techniques that this dissertation will discuss in detail in chapter 3. Throughout the bilingual education era and the immersion school era children were at the heart of language revitalization efforts. More recently, Indigenous communities with an ever-shrinking population of elderly L1 speakers gave rise to this new era where the focus is on adult language learning. As explained in the previous chapter, I distinguish two categories of adult language learners: those who emerge from communities with elderly L1s such as the Sauk community of Oklahoma or the Agua Caliente band of Cahuilla of Palm springs California, and those who emerged from communities with no speakers, and learned how to speak their languages from documentation, such as Jessie Little Doe-Baird from the Wampanoag community in Massachusetts. The impetus for adult language learning comes from a lack of capacity to create child speakers. Adults are crucial for staffing immersion schools, and funding is essential for not only their creation but for maintenance and sustainability of the immersion schools. The simple fact is that immersion schools typically require an amount of funding and language staff and language resources that smaller Indigenous communities do not have available. These smaller Indigenous communities may only have a few elderly L1 speakers or none at all. This is why smaller communities like the Sauk community decided that they must first create a pool of adult speakers of which some could be trained to be teachers with the intent to build capacity.

2.1.1 Capacity Building

I entered the field of Language revitalization professionally in 2009. Since then, I have been to many a conference talk and read many articles that mention the notion of capacity building or building capacity in Indigenous language work (Fitzgerald, 2018; Leonard, 2023). Capacity building involves the enhancement and development of skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources essential for organizations and communities to not only survive but also adapt and prosper in an ever-changing environment (Craig, 2007). Capacity building for language revitalization should overall aim to engender widespread interest in language revitalization. The best way to garner widespread interest and draw the community in is by creating materials that are immediately applicable to communities' wants and needs for bringing language into their homes (Greymorning, 1999).

Stephen Greymorning in his article "Running the Gauntlet of an Indigenous Language Program" suggests making learning fun by developing stories, songs, and videos in the language (Greymorning, 1999). Language programs should aim to create effective learning materials that won't just sit on a shelf to collect dust but instead inspire individuals and groups to want to take on bigger roles in the revitalization effort. Indigenous language groups must take initiative themselves to address their own unique needs because time and time again, external programming has proved less effective than programs developed by the community (Stiles, 1997). Community members are more apt to advocate for assessment tools that reflect unique curricular foci emphasizing Indigenous worldview and philosophy. Most Indigenous communities are going to want oral language skills and negotiation of meaning assessment over grammar and language structure assessment (Borgia, 2009). Also, professional development trainings that can re-energize program staff must not be overlooked. Language revitalization can

be hard because sometimes people in the community might not be very committed, have differing ideas about how important the language work is, and often there's a lack of available resources (Greymorning, 1999).

In the article "Creating sustainable models of language documentation and revitalization," the author, Colleen M. Fitzgerald, observes that despite the development of many programs to support language maintenance and revitalization, many of these programs do not survive. The primary reason for this, as outlined by Fitzgerald, is the lack of sustainable and successful approaches. This comment goes well with Greymorning's observation that it is important for language programs to set goals that fit with what is actually possible in the community (Greymorning, 1999). Sustainable models depend on long-term capacity building and training, community-based research, and collaborations across various sectors, including tribal, academic, and regional partners (Fitzgerald, 2018). The establishment of these networks and collaborations creates a human infrastructure that is pivotal for the sustainability of language programs. Success has been observed in cases where there is ample multilevel government support borne of said collaborations (Stiles, 1997). Fitzgerald emphasizes the collaborative research model used by the Hualapai academic-tribal partnership in Arizona, which provided community members with opportunities to take on roles as researchers. This collaboration set the stage for similar approaches in Oklahoma (Fitzgerald, 2018).

Training community members in best practices for language revitalization and reclamation is essential for the sustainability of these efforts. The collaboration between linguist Akira Yamamoto, the Hualapai tribe, and community members such as Jane Honga and Lucille Watahomigie led to the establishment of the Yuman Language Institute, which later evolved into the American Indian Language Development Institute (Fitzgerald, 2018). The institute was

created to empower bilingual teachers in the community and showcases how capacity building can lead to lasting benefits for language revitalization. In Oklahoma, tribal support for Yamamoto's cooperative efforts with the Kickapoo tribe in the late 80's (Bluecloud, 2020) resulted in partnerships with the Euchee language community and Loyal Shawnee tribe, among others (Fitzgerald, 2018). These initiatives facilitated connections between graduate students and Indigenous language communities, further reinforcing a model based on training and cooperation for sustainable language revitalization. Also, non-native specialists can find success when they commit to the community by investing time and effort in learning the language themselves, enhancing their effectiveness and credibility within the community (Jancewicz et al, 2002).

2.1.2 Documentation

Language documentation, also known as documentary linguistics, has emerged as a crucial subfield of linguistics dedicated to preserving and recording endangered languages. This field aims to create a long lasting, multipurpose and comprehensive record of Indigenous languages with few remaining speakers (Himmelman, 2006; Austin & Sallabank, 2018). In the context of language revitalization, documentation refers to the process of systematically recording samples of spoken language that can later be used to analyze linguistic information or produce educational materials such as teaching guides, textbooks, and language courses (Rehg, 2014).

The corpus of archivable audio, video, textual recordings can be translated and should be annotated with special attention paid to metadata (Austin, 2013). Videos, for example, can be used as pronunciation tools and for research into the language's prosody, benefiting both the academic study of the language and the community's language revitalization efforts (Fitzgerald, 2018). Comprehensive documentation goes beyond just the language patterns and includes the

broader context of language usage, including cultural norms, social interactions, and various communication scenarios. This kind of record is crucial for anyone looking to revitalize the language in years to come as it provides valuable perspectives on how the language was utilized by its speakers (Grenoble, 2010). It guarantees that all facets of the language are maintained, serving not only research needs but also as a resource for educating future generations of speakers.

I have collected recordings made by linguists over my years working with Kickapoo, Sauk, and Shawnee. Some of the recordings of Sauk and Shawnee elicitation are sometimes hard to listen to as they're done in a superficial collaboration style, with L1 speakers that have long since passed on. There is a recording of a man telling a story in the language. He gets to a part about cultural protocol and starts to go into a tangent. The elder speaker code switches to English but is cut short and commanded by the linguist 'back into the language!'. The elder speaker resumes the story where he left off before code switching and we the listeners are left forever wondering what more the elder speaker was going to say. Comprehensive documentation is more in line with how Indigenous people learn from Elders. We give a gift, maybe sometimes some tobacco, and then we listen. We do not dictate how we want to be told because for us that would be rude. It's important for future generations that genuine connection is established between linguist and community.

Arienne M. Dwyer in her article "Models of successful collaboration" explains that a superficial collaboration occurs when linguists work independently, only interacting with speakers during data-collection interviews. While this approach may meet ethical standards broadly, it falls short of genuine collaboration's characteristic joint effort and shared goals. Although superficial collaborations used to be common in linguistic research, they are now

considered insufficient due to the absence of collective agreement and effort toward particular research objectives (Dwyer, 2010). In contrast, true collaborative research involves multiple involved parties working together in planning the project, transparent goal-setting, and mutual training, all aimed towards the creation and enhancement of Indigenous capacity (Dwyer, 2010).

2.1.3 Reclamation, Decolonization, and Collaboration

Throughout the bilingual era and into the immersion school era, languages with speakers had been the only focus of language revitalization. Since the late 2000's there has been an added focus on language revitalization of languages without speakers. I will refer to this process as *reclamation*. These languages used to be called *extinct*; now we say that they were *sleeping* and, as is the case in the Miami community, when they come to be used again, we say they have been *reawakened* (Leonard, 2023). It must be noted that that misnomer 'extinct' is offensive to many of these sleeping language communities just as 'moribund' or 'bound for death' was offensive to the Sauk community. Reawakening language communities such as the Wampanoag and Miami peoples used documentation to reawaken their languages (Baird, 2016; Leonard, 2023).

For the purposes of my work and this dissertation it is important that I contextualize my preferred definitions of *revitalization* and *reclamation*. Language revitalization refers to the efforts to support and increase the use of a language that is at risk of falling fully silent. These efforts include new speaker creation, creating new domains for the language to exist in, and developing resources for the languages study and further use (Olko & Sallabank, 2021). Many scholars prior to 2012 used the word 'revitalization' to describe 'the process by which a language comes back into use or into increased use through some sort of purposeful intervention' (Leonard 2012). The most useful recent terminological addition to the field is Wesley Leonard's definition of language *reclamation*. I prefer Wesley Leonard's definition of reclamation, which goes

beyond the standard notion of revitalization by emphasizing an Indigenous community's right and ability to assert control over learning, using, categorizing, and establishing goals for their language (Leonard, 2023).

Language reclamation is an approach grounded in *decolonization*. It is often adopted by Indigenous scholars that seek to reverse the assimilatory impacts of colonization on Indigenous languages and lifeways (Montoya et al, 2020). Firstly, decolonization involves restoring prestige to an Indigenous community's traditions, language, and Indigenous systems of knowledge. This is not to be confused with a community thinking or feeling that their language is better than any other, but simply it intends to establish that Indigenous languages in general have prestige. Ideally, the goal is to restore the linguistic diversity that was commonplace amongst tribal nations precontact with settler colonialists. Secondly, decolonization aims to recognize and dismantle the structures and practices that have historically prioritized the English language and mainstream American culture while devaluing and suppressing others (Wesley et al, 2017), thus, empowering communities to develop language practices that reflect their own values rather than those imposed by colonial powers. Decolonization is facilitation of linguistic justice. Linguistic justice, per Wes Leonard's interpretation (2023), means access to education, media, and government/tribal government services in one's own Indigenous language. Language decolonization means creating more effective language learning materials and programs that are centered around the community's distinct worldviews that reaffirm identity and culture. Decolonization ensures that language work aligns with community needs rather than external agendas, as well as reclaiming languages based on community goals and needs. Ultimately, it's about affirming Indigenous self-governance, traditions, and active languages within their communities (Leonard, 2023) and changing the 'endangered languages narrative' that has caused

harm to language communities by treating Indigenous languages like objects for the wider society's consumption. The 'endangered languages narrative' also often deemphasizes or omits entirely, the extreme injustices that lead Indigenous peoples toward language endangerment (Leonard, 2023).

There has been a lot of discussion amongst linguists and community language workers about how and why linguists and Indigenous community members often butt heads and how this can be resolved by linguists simply acknowledging and legitimizing Indigenous notions of what language is. (Leonard, 2017; 20). A decolonized approach to language work means that Indigenous perspectives and ways of life should be central to research practices, allowing for the sharing of knowledge instead of just information. Leonard describes the difference between the sharing of information and the sharing of knowledge. Sharing of information is the giving of surface facts and conclusions and the sharing of knowledge involves theories, analyses, and informed perspectives that construct and represent those facts and conclusions (Leonard, 2021). This approach is more in line with honoring Indigenous ways of knowing and promoting reciprocity. In summary, collaboration with linguists and researchers must respect Indigenous communities' right to self-determination and cultural norms as well as address the historical impacts of colonization.

2.2 Second Language Acquisition Theory and Second Language Acquisition Teaching

Second language acquisition theory refers to the scientific study and understanding of how an individual learns a second language or more broadly a language that isn't their first language (Selinker et al. 2008). SLA encompasses a variety of hypotheses and models that explain the processes involved in learning a second language, such as the stages of acquisition,

the role of the native language, the influence of cognitive and psychological factors, and the impact of age, environment, and motivation and attitude on learning results. (Vanpatten, 2020). As such, SLA theory is influenced by a wide range of fields including linguistics, cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and education. All of these can be applied to language teaching and learning. (Shek, 2020). SLA theories attempt to explain the processes involved in learning a new language, including how learners develop knowledge and skills in that language, as well as the variables that contribute to or hinder that learning process. In recent years SLA has turned attention to the learning of Indigenous languages with the intent of reversing language shift (Berlin, 2020).

Second language acquisition teaching is the application of SLA theory that can be used to inform effective teaching practices (Berlin, 2020; Shek 2020). It involves the development of curricula, teaching methods, and educational materials that are based on the understanding of how languages are learned which I provide later in this discussion. SLAT aims to facilitate the acquisition of a second language through structured instruction that may integrate insights from SLA theory, such as communicative language teaching, task-based learning, and the use of authentic materials (Berlin 2020; Shek, 2020).

In Berlin's article titled "The benefits of second language acquisition and teaching for Indigenous language educators", Berlin puts forth some very helpful ideas that I have borrowed to help contextualize best practices for speaker creation through the mentor-apprentice approach. Although the focus is on language educators and the classroom, it's easy to see how these SLAT notions can be applied to the group mentor apprentice method or a community class that wants to focus on immersion. Although, Berlin does not specify when SLAT started to add reversing language shift in Indigenous communities to its field as a focus point, his article does make it

clear that there has been a shift in focus to recognize and accommodate the unique needs of Indigenous communities.

In reversing language shift in Indigenous communities, it is important to recognize and adapt to the different learning styles of individual students. This approach emphasizes the importance of altering classroom practices to fit the diverse needs and interests of the learners, ensuring that instruction is both flexible and accommodating (Berlin, 2020). Also, instead of focusing solely on grammar and translation methods, SLAT strives to develop learners' ability to use the language effectively in appropriate contexts. For Indigenous languages, SLAT proposes practices that align with cultural traditions, such as prioritizing oral communication for communities with strong oral traditions. Also, SLAT recommends flexibility in pedagogy. Educators must be prepared to modify classroom practices to best serve the diverse needs of their learners. They must also make sure their lessons facilitate contextual use of language—that is, that learners be encouraged to think and communicate using the target language in its natural, cultural, and social contexts (Berlin, 2020). These approaches create a more dynamic and contextually relevant environment for language learning that can help support the revitalization of Indigenous languages and accommodate the diversity of learners' backgrounds.

Finally, to fully contextualize this dissertation's meta-analysis of speaker creation in Indigenous communities, here I include a brief discussion about Stephen Krashen's theory of second language acquisition. Stephen Krashen's well known and accepted theory of second language acquisition has impacted many areas of second language research and teaching since the 1980's (Schütz, 2007). There are five hypotheses that make up Krashen's SLA theory:

1. The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis: Learning is formal instruction; Acquisition is a subconscious process.
2. The Monitor Hypothesis: The 'monitor' acts in editing and correcting utterances.

3. The Natural Order Hypothesis: The acquisition of grammatical structures follows a predictable order.
4. The Input Hypothesis: Second language learners must receive challenging input that is one step above their current stage of linguistic competence.
5. The Affective Filter Hypothesis: Too much stress impedes language acquisition.

(Schütz, 2007)

However, three of these five hypotheses, are of the utmost importance in regard to my personal experience as a language worker in Indigenous communities helping to facilitate speaker creation. The three hypotheses are the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis.

Krashen's acquisition-learning hypothesis is related to psychologist Arthur Reber's (1976) terminology for implicit and explicit learning. Acquisition is the natural and involuntary development of language proficiency. It facilitates the brain's absorption of a language through immersion and whole communication. Children acquire their first language without structured teaching. Language 'acquisition' in this sense stands opposite to language 'learning', which is framed as knowledge gained through deliberate, explicit comprehension and awareness of a language, often acquired through formal schooling or study (Schütz, 2007). In theories of second-language acquisition like those put forth by Stephen Krashen, acquisition is a crucial element in attaining linguistic fluency (Krashen, 2017). When helping communities build curriculum for adult language mastery it's important to be able to discern between activities and immersion sets that either facilitate acquisition or are more geared towards learning. This will be discussed and shown in praxis in the following chapters of this dissertation.

Language 'input' refers to language that a learner is exposed to in any environment where either acquisition or learning of the language is being facilitated (Ramahlo, 2019). This can be spoken or written language that the learner hears or sees and must comprehend (Ellis, 2011).

According to Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis, language acquisition occurs when learners receive input that is slightly above their current level of competence, often referred to as input plus one or "i + 1," where the material is understandable but still contains some elements of language that are just beyond the learner's current grasp (Hulstijn, 2015; Lichtman, 2013; Ramahlo, 2019). This comprehensible input is crucial for learning as it helps learners to gradually increase their language proficiency (Schütz, 2005).

The final idea from Krashen's framework that I use and refer to often in my work is the affective filter hypothesis. This is crucially important especially when working with Indigenous people learning their heritage language as language itself is connected to personal identity and very deep feelings. The affective filter hypothesis, developed by Stephen Krashen, outlines how emotional factors such as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety can affect second language acquisition (Schütz, 2005). These emotional states of the learner can influence the success of acquiring a new language and the effectiveness of language learning strategies (Shek, 2020). The "affective filter" is a metaphorical barrier that can either facilitate or obstruct language input from being processed and converted into learning. When learners really want to comprehend and produce language, are confident in their ability, and their anxiety is low, the affective filter is low. A lowered affective filter allows for better language absorption and integration of language input into the long-term memory. Conversely, high levels of anxiety or low self-esteem can raise the filter, creating a mental block that impedes the acquisition of the new language. Positive emotions and attitudes, therefore, are important elements for successful language acquisition.

2.3 Indigenous Language Immersion

In the literature on immersion, we find that there are three types of immersion pedagogy. The three types are 'one way' (foreign language), 'two-way' (bilingual) immersion, and

Indigenous immersion (Tedick et al, 2011). Indigenous immersion, in contrast to the other two immersion types, aims to revitalize endangered Indigenous languages by imparting cultural and linguistic knowledge to new speakers (Peter et al, 2011).

When conversations about revitalizing the Kickapoo language occur in Oklahoma there is usually always a tribal member there to yell out '*it must start with the children*'. This sentiment is reflected in the literature as most of the literature about immersion is about immersion in preK-12 schools and the education of children (Peter et al, 2011; Wilson & Kamana, 2001; King, 2001). Overall, adult Indigenous language learning has not been a priority within the revitalization movement (McIvor, 2015). Malcolm Knowles breathed new life into the term 'andragogy' in 1973 titled his book "The adult learner: A neglected species". In the whole of human history 1973 is not that long ago, so even in the mainstream, adult learning hasn't been a focus for a terribly long time. Suffice it to say that the literature on adult Indigenous language learning and immersion is sparse. In addition, the literature that does exist, doesn't go into close examination of the successful approaches used (Maracle, 2002; Gordon, 2009; McIvor, 2015).

The three main approaches found in the literature regarding adult Indigenous language learning are language classes, group-based immersion, and individually-focused self-directed approaches (McIvor, 2015). Although language classes have the potential to generate interest, increase cultural pride, renew a sense of identity and strengthen community relationships (Hinton, 2001; McIvor, 2015), community classes do not create new speakers (Blair et al, 2002; Hinton, 2001; Maracle et al, 2002; McIvor, 2015). Students often retain less, and most community class environments have a hard time keeping students from asking for translations and explanations in English (Maracle et al, 2002). Unfortunately, as seen in the Native Language

Immersion program for adults in Southern Ontario, “the students who did best were those who had rich English usage and considerable academic background” (Maracle et al, 2002).

I specialize in group-based adult immersion. My whole professional career for the past 15 years has been centered around group-based adult immersion so to me it feels like it’s all there is. The Sauk language program was the first language program in Oklahoma to finally get the approach working optimally around 2009. I was there as a Sauk language apprentice when other tribes and nations would come and sit in on our sessions and afterwards ask us and my boss Jacob Manatowa-Bailey questions so they could replicate our success. However, 15 years is not very long in academia. There are only two groups that have academic literature written about their efforts with this method. (McIvor, 2009): the Mohawk (Maracle et al, 2002) and the Anishinaabe (Gordon, 2009).

The Anishinaabe have adult immersion classes where the instructor tells stories in the language and does comprehension checks in the language to make sure students are understanding. Observations conducted by Christopher Gordon for his 2009 dissertation indicated that that students in the final year heard the same content as students in their first year. Students were not pressured to speak and when they did speak, they were allowed to speak in English. This was to keep the students comfortable and not stressed. The guiding principles that the instructors in the Anishinaabe adult immersion program utilized were based on Krashen’s natural approach to second language acquisition discussed earlier. The assumption is that if the affective filter is kept low then the learner can better acquire the language they are listening to. However, none of the curriculum source documents that listed the objectives and goals of the adult Anishinaabe language immersion program specified speaking as the ultimate goal. This was reflected in the interviews done by Christopher Gordon in his 2009 dissertation. The

interviewees in the final year of the program were still not producing language. One interviewee, *Ihkwe-bezhig*, expressed frustration that the curriculum and expectations weren't facilitating language production (Gordon, 2009).

The immersion literature on the Mohawk adult language immersion programs focuses on adult learner students' motivations for joining the programs and the instructors' experiences, with the goal of informing group based adult immersion approaches (McIvor, 2015; Maracle et al, 2002). In David Maracle and Merle Richard's work titled "A Native Language Immersion program for adults Reflections on year 1" they discussed in detail the struggle of maintaining an immersion environment with adults that are uncomfortable with not having English translations for everything that goes on. The sessions were spent with grammar descriptions on a blackboard, asking the elder speakers to repeat words ad nauseum, and eliciting of one-to-one translations (Maracle et al, 2002). In the literature, there are no detailed descriptions of immersion activities employed to facilitate comprehension and production of Mohawk language.

The third approach found in the literature regarding adult Indigenous language learning is the individually focused approaches (McIvor, 2015), represented by the master-apprentice language learning program, the accelerated second language acquisition approach, and the 'Where are your keys?' method. The master-apprentice approach is a personalized immersion program that was first developed in California as a method for Indigenous language revitalization. It involves pairing language learners with fluent speakers and dedicating 10 to 20 hours per week over the course of two to three years to speak exclusively in the target language (Hinton, 2002). This approach has been increasingly adopted by various groups throughout the United States and Canada (McIvor, 2015).

The accelerated second language acquisition approach was developed by Dr. S. Neyooxet Graymorning, a member of the Arapaho tribe and a professor at the University of Montana. This approach aims to create an immersive learning environment that recreates the conditions under which we learn our first language. It aims to be interactive and tangible. ASLA relies on images to avoid abstract and out of context learning. These images are used to provide students with a purposeful activity or clear goal to demonstrate their understanding of the target language using only images and the target language without English as a medium (Hall, 2021). These images depict people, objects, and situations that prompt the learner to describe what they see and therefore use language in a contextual manner (McIvor, 2015; Shek, 2020). The ASLA method can be implemented with both individuals and groups. This approach has proven to effectively build proficiency in the target language (McIvor, 2015). ASLA sessions using this technique can vary from just a few minutes to an entire school day.

The master-apprentice approach and the accelerated second language acquisition approach share some commonalities. First, both emphasize the exclusive use of the Indigenous language only during learning sessions, which discourages grammatical explanation. Second, both approaches are adaptable to individually focused language learning, not just group-based immersion learning. The third point in common is that both approaches have an anti-literacy philosophy (McIvor, 2015). The focus is on staying in the language and not talking a lot *about* the language in English, a problem that comes up a lot as in the Mohawk situation (Maracle et al, 2002).

The “Where are your keys” method is a technique that facilitates language acquisition and learning by utilizing a hands-on interactive approach. Some of the strengths of the WAYK method are immersion, interactive engagement, community involvement, and teacher training

(Penman, 2017). A weakness of the method has to do with the complexity of the system, which involves learning many specific ‘techniques’ that are intended to facilitate communication and feedback between teacher and learner without lapsing into English. Some learners may find the multitude of techniques hard to keep track of and the extensive meta-language used to describe the techniques may seem overwhelming (Gardner et al, 2018). The method also heavily relies on the experience of a skilled facilitator, and although WAYK is effective for attaining conversational fluency, additional methods may be required to move language use into higher register contexts (Gardner et al, 2018).

The three approaches so far discussed for adult Indigenous language learning have their unique strengths and weaknesses. The Anishinaabe adult immersion classes prioritize creating a comfortable and low-stress environment for learners, but the program did not effectively facilitate language production. The Mohawk adult language immersion programs faced challenges in maintaining an immersion environment for adults who were uncomfortable without English translations. The individually focused approaches, such as the master-apprentice method and the accelerated second language acquisition approach, encourage immersive learning and discourage excessive use of English, focusing on building proficiency in the target language. The "Where are your keys" method is effective for conversational fluency but may be hard to implement due to the complexity of having to learn/develop the metalanguage of WAYK as well as the target language. Overall, each approach offers valuable insights into adult Indigenous language learning, but they also come with their own set of challenges that language workers should be aware of while working to develop an effective language revitalization strategy.

Chapter 3: The Praxis of Indigenous Knowledge, Linguistics, and SLA

3.1 My Indigenous Methodology and Phenomenological Approach

The academy demands that research be original and contribute to the existing body of knowledge, but it is also a great responsibility for Indigenous research to be immediately useful to the community (Cohen, 2010). This is why I have chosen to adopt an Indigenous methodology for this dissertation. Indigenous methodology is deeply rooted in community and the concept of relational knowledge (Wilson, 2001; Johnson, 2013). My Indigenous methodology is also respectful, actionable, and representative of Kickapoo ways of knowing. Indigenous peoples are typically keepers of oral tradition.

My Kickapoo people, like many Indigenous people in North America, pass along knowledge through story. Through stories about the experiences of others and people long past we can gain insight into past successes and learn from failures long past. I incorporate and center my personal narrative style which is consistent with Kickapoo tradition throughout this academic work. This academic product thus runs parallel to the work of Indigenous scholars before me such as Shawn Wilson, Jo-Ann Archibald, and Ron Ignace, whose work reflects living story and the integration of moral guidance to form the base of the research. Indigenous methodology places the researcher within the research context and emphasizes the inclusion of the researcher's personal experiences and transformation (Johnson, 2013). This is an inherently different epistemology than that is favored in Western academia, as Indigenous ways of knowing are relational, cyclical, and deeply contextual instead of linear, objective and reductionist (Archibald, 2008; Johnson, 2013). This Indigenous methodology will pair best with a phenomenological approach, which contributes to the academy while also staying as true as

possible to our original oral tradition. Indigenous methodology and phenomenology weave together in this research to create a phenomenon known as ‘research at the interface’ (Walter et al, 2019), where Indigenous knowledge and Western research methodology entwine in an equal partnership.

In philosophy, phenomenology is a way of thinking about how events, practices, and methods seem thorough experience (Giorgi, 2006). In the context of speaker creation, phenomenology is interested in how an individual experiences acquisition, learning, linguistics, second language acquisition theory, and Indigenous knowledge. This kind of thinking helps develop an understanding of the experiences that people have had when involved in successful speaker creation in Indigenous communities. I use a phenomenological approach to create a framework based on the feelings and observations of myself, having been both mentor and apprentice in the Group Mentor Apprentice method, and from the published works of others who have written about their projects and method testing to create new speakers. I do this to weave together a picture of what speaker creation in Indigenous communities looks like on-the-ground. I put the experiences of adult learners at the forefront in exploring successful new speaker creation in Indigenous communities. It is also my intention to strive for inclusivity by representing my own experiences, as I’m of the Kickapoo community and have worked with the Shawnee and Sauk communities whose revitalization efforts have not been previously shared; they have been doing the work. None of these communities’ revitalization efforts have been written about in depth nor have they written much about it themselves.

3.1.1 Adult Learners, Motivation, and Origin Stories

Indigenous adult learners who do not have their heritage language as their L1 are critical to revitalization efforts, as they can become teachers quickly if they choose (Benson, 2021).

Adult learners must overcome numerous obstacles to become new speakers. Compared to children, adult learners have a more effective cognitive ability to process complex grammar information (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; Benson, 2021). However, they require higher levels of motivation than children to sustain learning and acquisition (Benson, 2021). Adult learners are also the best informed and qualified for multiple organizational tasks, such as running language programs, teaching in schools, bringing the language to community settings, and bringing the language to their homes especially if they have children (Chew et al, 2021). Unfortunately, many adult learners engaged in language revitalization have limited access to information about what is working across communities in terms of new speaker creation (Chew et al, 2021).

For any new language workers reading this chapter, I first answer the question “What are the surface commonalities found in successful speaker creation methods?”. We know that immersion works best. Immersion is where only the Indigenous language is spoken for a sustained period (Chew et al, 2021; Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; McIvor et al, 2018; Tedick et al, 2011; Benson, 2021). We also know that successful speaker creation environments are facilitated by language workers that have linguistic training, or at least an understanding of the linguistic features of their language that enable them to introduce grammatical structures in a scaffolded way where utterances can progress from simple to more complex (Chew et al, 2021). We know that proficiency is reached through thousands of hours of exposure and sometimes less when the language exposure is highly effective structured input (Chew et al, 2021). We also know that most successful new speaker creation environments have comprehension checks or some kind of assessment that serve the dual purposes of keeping learners engaged and informing teachers and language facilitators of curriculum progression. Lastly, successful new speaker creation environments make the language enjoyable and fun. Language is more than communication, it is

identity and so attention to maximum comfort and support for learners is encouraged (Chew et al, 2021). Underlying all of these commonalities is motivation.

Motivation plays the most crucial role in the process of becoming a new speaker. Adult learners need to continually search for new inspiration to motivate themselves (Johnson, 2013). As a language worker I can attest that when I meet other language workers there's one thing above all else we want to hear from each other. We want to hear each other's 'origin story'. Usually the term 'origin story' is used for talking about superheroes, and in a lot of ways language workers view each other as superheroes. We even have villains, or rather people with difficult personality types that every community seems to have, but the main reason for wanting to hear each other's origin story is because we get inspiration and motivation from hearing what other languages workers have overcome.

Some language workers find their motivation from wanting to learn to pray in their language so that they can better participate in their ceremonies. There are other language workers that want to learn their language so that they can understand what fluent speakers are saying. Sometimes they joke that they want to make sure they're able to understand when someone is talking about them in a negative way. I've met language workers that don't want to have kids until they're absolutely sure they can provide a home filled with the language. These motivations that spur adult learners forward are intimate.

When I was an apprentice at the Sauk language program, I was motivated to help the Sauk people because I understand that the Kickapoo language and the Sauk language are related. We have similar ways that go beyond just language. We were allies in the old days and it's my belief that my Kickapoo ancestors would be proud of me lending a hand to our ally tribe. This spurred me on in my endeavor to acquire the Sauk language as quickly as possible. I gamified

my learning by trying to always be better than I was the day before. This type of intrinsic motivation fueled by personal goals helped me to put in extra effort. I had a genuine desire to learn the Sauk language.

It is important to note that simply paying tribal members to learn the language is not enough and language department heads may find difficulty inciting enough motivation through pay alone to bring about true language acquisition. This is why it is important that apprentices be vetted for some type of intrinsic motivation. Learners who are driven by an internal desire for mastery and self-fulfillment make more progress than those who are extrinsically motivated by rewards or pressures or even salary (Daskalovska, 2012; Sianipar, 2020).

3.2 Gathering Information for Successful Speaker Creation Methods

For this dissertation I did bibliographic mining of conference talks, articles, dissertations and reports done on revitalization efforts to find reports of people's experiences with successful new speaker creation methods that they observed or experienced in their Indigenous North American communities. One of the key methods being currently explored is the Paul-Creek method of second language acquisition. Michele Johnson has played a major role in bringing the Paul-Creek method to the forefront of language revitalization efforts in Canada.

Michele Johnson achieved intermediate-mid proficiency within 5 months and wrote a thorough description of the Paul-Creek Language Association Curriculum (Johnson, 2014). Michele spent 5 straight months learning Colville-Okanagan, a Salishan language. She formed a small group of adult learners that engaged in immersion from 8:00am to 7:00pm every day and scheduled different activities throughout the day. The group spent quality immersion time with an elder speaker of the language from 12:00pm to 1:30pm and from 2:00pm to 6:00pm they

focused on working through an immersion curriculum developed by the Paul-Creek Language Association (Johnson, 2013).

Thanks in part to the success Michele had with the Paul-Creek method of second language acquisition, the Paul-Creek method was also adopted by the Tlingit during a seven-month pilot project for Tlingit language revitalization that took place in 2015 (Johnson, 2016). The Tlingit pilot resulted in the creation of a handful of adults that achieved competency in the language and the continued use of the method. The successful application of the Paul-Creek method led to its adoption by the Gwich'in (Kawaja, 2023) and Randy Morin adopted the beginning part of the curriculum for the "Y" dialect of Plains Cree for his Master's project in 2018 (Morin, 2018). Morin states that he was intrigued by the claims of the Paul-Creek method's high success in bringing students to intermediate speaking level in about 1000 hours of instruction. Morin also mentioned similarities between the Greymorning method and the Paul-Creek method in using pictures to aid in language learning. Steven Greymorning's method utilizes imagery as a tool for language acquisition (Shek, 2020).

Another method that has taken the Pacific Northwest and Canada by storm is the "Where are your keys" method developed by Evan Gardner. In the 2012 article "A decade of language revitalization: Kodiak Alutiq on the brink of revolution," author April Counciller describes her experience and observations of the "Where are your keys?" (WAYK) method. She said that the techniques were not unique but the addition of the team building aspects, wellness emphasis, and collaborative spirit gave a sense of renewed inspiration and motivation that other workshops hadn't (Counciller, 2012). Although "WAYK" has been around now since 2001 (Gardner, 2018) there is still not any data on individuals achieving fluency through the WAYK method alone. I myself received training in the WAYK method in 2013 when it was taught as a class at the

American Indian Language Development Institute. The fellow language workers I took that class with ended up not being able to apply the 'gamified' system to our separate communities. In the Sauk Community and in the Kickapoo community I wasn't able to get learners to buy in to the concept of 'buckets'. Buckets are mini lessons that often are built of a question and a response. At any given WAYK event there are tables spread out in a room and at each table there is a bucket. Bucket two builds on bucket one and so on and so forth, for as many tables and buckets there are at the event. These mini lessons called 'buckets' are supposed to be bite sized enough so that eventually students that leave bucket one interact with students at bucket two, who will move on to learn from students at bucket three, etc. In the Sauk community and in the Kickapoo community my students, who consisted of families with quite a large age range, didn't like being broken up into what they felt were stratified units. It reminded me a lot of what my mom told me boarding schools were like. The non-native teachers couldn't understand why if one native student answered a question wrong, there would be no more attempts to answer that question from the rest of the native students. My mom said it was because native children used to support each other with solidarity. If one student missed the question the sentiment was 'We missed it, correct us, and move on'. Solidarity was the key factor. My students approved much more of the group staying together as one unit on bucket one, with me using comprehension checks to decide the appropriate time to move on to the next bucket. That morphed into me keeping track of my barometer student and adding in the next picture and comprehensible input plus one and keeping the group together for a scene that was near indistinguishable from any scene produced by the Paul-Creek method, the Greymorning method, or the Group Master Apprentice method that was utilized in my acquisition of the Sauk language.

3.3 Bringing the Language into New Domains

Languages are living and therefore change and grow. Much of the change a language goes through is from new generations of speakers. It's natural for language to change. A healthy intact language community often includes youth who are in touch with the ever shifting technological and cultural developments but when the youngest speakers of the language are over 50 or 60 or 70 or even in their 80s, those communities lack the linguistic vitality necessary for lexical expansion. Therefore, speaking communities with majority elderly speakers must approach lexical expansion into new domains deliberately and purposefully (Hinson, 2019). It's important that new learners know that their heritage languages can be brought to full relevance and express modern concepts in a satisfactory way that is both culturally appropriate and respectful to word formation strategies used by previous generations. Accordingly, new words can and should be incorporated into language planning and emerging education curriculum. L1 and L2 speakers can use new word creations to show that the heritage language is not static, but ever changing and adaptable to life in the modern world. This also helps speakers avoid code switching to English (Hinson, 2019). It can also help students acquire the process in which the language uses its internal morphology to create new words (Sammons, 2009).

Revitalization programs very early on, encountered lexical gaps related to modern topics such as science and technology (Sammons, 2009). It is at this crossroads that most language programs have to decide if they're going to encourage healthy bilingualism early on and allow some code switching that would mirror natural bilingual communication, or go full immersion and require learners to stay in the target language even when discussing nontraditional domains. Healthy bilingualism in a speech community is natural, but when a learner is first learning the language, it may be in their best interest to avoid code switching to enhance and edify their ability to speak the target heritage language.

Some Indigenous communities like the Alutiiq, the Hawaiians, and the Chickasaw are dedicated to the creation of new words and the avoidance of code switching in all domains. (Hinson, 2019) In contrast, the Sauk and Kickapoo communities don't mind some lexical code switching every now and then. There are some words that speakers don't even know are borrowed from other languages. I myself didn't know that the Kickapoo word for garlic, *ahoooha* is from the Spanish word 'ajo' and that my favorite Kickapoo seasoning *chipitini* is also from Spanish 'Chile tepin'. (The Spanish themselves had borrowed the word from Nahuatl 'chili' meaning 'chile' and 'tepin' meaning 'small' (Harley p.c., 2023).) It took me coming to Arizona and being inundated by Spanish signage everywhere to realize it. It is interesting how some borrowings are used without a care but when my mentor Jacob said 'sahko taim' for 'circle time' while speaking Sauk it became an utterance that sends me into fits of laughter to this day and for the rest of my life. It's truly an utterance that he will never live down, and that's possibly why most bilinguals avoid new word creations. Who really wants 'sahko taim' to be their legacy?

The Kickapoo community is extremely fortunate to still have monolingual speakers living among them today. Monolingual speakers never shy from creating new words. In contrast, us bilingual speakers, for good reason, are usually hesitant to create new words. It takes a very brave bilingual to go out on a limb and create a new word instead of just code switching to English or in some cases Spanish. So, to combat hesitation, it is important to recognize that American Indian languages, like all languages, have always evolved due to contact with other cultures. For instance, the Shawnee, Kickapoo and Sac&Fox communities have developed vocabulary for unfamiliar animals, foods, religious concepts, as well as classifications for previously unknown groups of people. For example, 'Maanitha' means 'long knife' in Kickapoo, and refers to the English and the swords that they carried. 'Meemetekosiha' or roughly 'Stick

person; person that sure does love sticks' is the Kickapoo word for the first French people they encountered. The French Jesuits would hold two sticks out in front of them in the cross shape as they first approached the Kickapoo, who observed 'these guys sure like sticks' and so the name '*meemetekosiha*' forever stuck. These additions to the language were possible because these communities had robust speech communities through which they could create and establish neologisms, who could coin new words with confidence when needed, and we can strive to get back to that in our revitalization efforts.

3.4 Garnering and Maintaining Interest in Language Work

Garnering and maintaining interest from community members in language work is of utmost importance. The decline of a language is often linked to long standing shifts away from traditional culture that are associated with the heritage language (Fishman, 2001). Cultural shift typically results in fewer people identifying with the culture and by extension the language even if this disassociation is mostly unconscious. Efforts to revitalize a heritage language may seem contrary in some respects to social mobility. This is still seen in the Kickapoo community where there are some that view revitalization of the Kickapoo language as being backward or resistant to modernization. This can discourage some people from engaging with the language.

In order to revitalize our heritage languages, our languages must retain and, in some cases, reclaim certain functions within the community. For the community, this could often involve figuring out which domains a language should be used in, and whether and how these spaces can be shared with the dominant language. This is a challenge best not left to one individual to take upon themselves but must be achieved through consensus of the community. Also, efforts to revitalize the language need to be reinforced from not just the community level but also through institutional support, for instance, garnering interest from museums that can act

as archives so they can be used as a plan B placeholder in case a revitalization effort is interrupted. Such interruption does indeed happen. The first wave of Kickapoo revitalization efforts took place in the late 1980's and then there wasn't any further forward movement until 2016. With comprehensive and responsible archiving, the next wave of revitalization workers can have a corpus to build from. I've been told by elders that there was a very comprehensive dictionary that they worked on that was given out on floppy disks. These floppy disks are now nowhere to be found and not in any of the archives. One single individual cannot decide themselves which institution should be called on to hold archival materials. Maybe a community can decide to house their materials in multiple places.

There can be opposition to revitalization from the state level or international level. English-only laws can be used to label revitalization efforts as 'disruptive' or as creating further obstacles to success, as defined by the non-Indigenous community, due largely to perceived measures of potential economic success. This kind of opposition cannot be tackled by a single individual but is best handled by a united front of community members. It is important to involve a multitude of community members in revitalization to keep the efforts from seeming overly parochial (Fishman, 2001). All of these challenges involve social, political, and cultural dimensions that require a concentrated effort by many and not just one individual. Community involvement can also defuse the obstacle of teaching and learning practices that are mismatched to language learner goals and desired outcomes of language learning.

3.4.1 Collaboration within the Community Itself

Collaboration between the internal, community, and the external, say an institution or even the Bureau of Indian Education are important, but collaboration within the community itself is also key. In the article titled, "Why is this so hard?: Ideologies of endangerment, passive

language learning approaches, and Ojibwe in the United States" (2014), authors Kendall A. King and Mary Hermes highlight the importance of ideologies of endangerment and their impact on language learning approaches. They advocate for community collaboration among each other for involvement in defining the notions of authenticity, cultural identity, and the complex dynamic between language, nationality, and geography and how these relationships are perceived, defied, or rearranged. This is key in communities like mine.

The Kickapoo people are living in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Arizona, and Mexico (Gibson, 1975). As director of the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma's language program I made it my responsibility to take in advice, comments, and hopes for the future of our language, from community members in all three bands, into account. Currently the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma is the only group of Kickapoo that has had an official language department. Hopefully there will be a time when all three bands of Kickapoo have a language department that will make sharing of ideas, materials, and methods more efficient for new speaker creation.

In addition, creating new speakers of under-resourced languages is not just about community members coming together to provide input on the teaching of the language but also about instilling a sense of pride and identity in the new speakers. This can be achieved by organizing events and festivals that celebrate language learning and acquisition (Daunhauer, 1998). The Sam Noble Museum in Norman Oklahoma hosts a Native American youth language fair every year. Young learners can come and watch as fellow youths showcase their ability which can facilitate peer to peer encouragement.

3.5 Tackling Ideological Issues

When I first became the Director of the Kickapoo language department in 2016, I was asked when the English classes would start. There were some tribal members that thought the

'Kickapoo language department' meant we had a language department that would help Kickapoo monolinguals learn English. Kickapoo monolinguals have been around for as long as anyone can remember. My grandmother, my uncles, and my dad's second wife, are all Kickapoo monolinguals. They were raised in the knowledge that it's only right to speak Kickapoo and live Kickapoo. For many of my family, not speaking English may have been a choice. For others in my family, it's not so certain. One of my great uncles spent most of his life in Oklahoma and his siblings and nieces and nephews and family all around him became bilingual and monolingual English speakers. He, however, despite his best efforts, was not able to learn English. He would try but his attempts were very broken, and his nickname became 'Me, that one', as that was his best English phrase. Unfortunately, his story was used by some in the community to advocate for not teaching Kickapoo to children, for fear that children might get stuck, like my great uncle, at 'Me, that one'.

The Chickasaw language also faced similar circumstances. In some instances, Chickasaw parents chose not to teach their children the language for fear of the discrimination and hardship their children might face, and the Chickasaw also faced forcible relocations and assimilation policies like that Urban Indian Relocation act of 1956, which encouraged Native Americans to move to urban centers in order to assimilate them into mainstream American society (Morgan, 2017). So, it is important to reverse the ideology of adverse monolingualism that still plagues the subconscious of many community members.

I make it a point to celebrate monolingual Kickapoo speakers at every language class I lead and have tried to follow the Chickasaw Nation's example of supporting and revitalizing the language through initiatives that reflect reverence and appreciation of those who can speak and teach their language (Morgan, 2017). During my time as a Sauk language teacher, I facilitated

dinner celebrations of established milestones for the language learners with the intent of motivating continued learning and appreciation. A strength of the group mentor apprentice method is that each person involved has a role and responsibility that fosters connection and makes celebration of each other's achievements personal for all involved. All of this is needed to eliminate shame and stigma associated with historical and modern trauma that affect the community's attitudes towards their language.

Chapter 4: A Tried-and-True Speaker Creation Method

4.1. Group Mentor-Apprentice Method

The Group Mentor-Apprentice Method that I first participated in as an Apprentice in 2010 and then later as a Mentor-Apprentice lead was designed and created by my own mentor Jacob Manatowa-Bailey. He needed to develop a method that would meet the two linked goals of first facilitating an immersion environment that creates accelerated language fluency, and second, an immersion environment that could then be adapted to a school environment that would provide quality education. When the Group Mentor-Apprentice Method was first implemented, it was referred to as simply ‘Master-Apprentice’; later on, the name changed to ‘Modified Master-Apprentice’ after we established the team-based model. Today in my trainings and workshops I refer to it as the Group Mentor-Apprentice method as suggested by the tribes I’ve provided workshops for.

The Sauk Language Department developed a teaching team consisting of both Sauk elder speakers and apprentice speakers that would serve as instructors within a planned Kîmâchipena <‘Let’s come together’> Immersion School that was to be located in Stroud after a critical mass of teachers had emerged, through GMA, to staff the immersion school. However, The Sauk language program however did not last long enough to see the immersion school come to fruition. In preparation for the would-be immersion school, the whole Sauk language team participated in immersion school pilots to prepare ourselves and gain experience as immersion teachers to pre-k children. The Project Director Jacob and the Sauk elder speakers worked directly with apprentice speakers in Mentor-Apprentice relationships. Jacob had hoped that after the apprentices learned the Sauk language they would become Sauk language teachers. Unfortunately we never did reach the critical mass of language teachers needed to begin the talks

of building the immersion school. However, in our pilots, the Sauk elder speakers and Jacob assisted myself and the other apprentices by supervising immersion instruction and helping to create a more robust immersion environment for young learners. The specifics of how the team functioned in the immersion pilots for the pre-K school are beyond the scope of this dissertation but it's important to know the original intent that created the unique style found in the modern Group Mentor-Apprentice method was to pump out Sauk language teachers as fast as possible.

I didn't start working with the Sauk language department until the summer of 2009. Then I started as an audio and video technician, and I didn't move to the role of language apprentice until 2010. I knew that there was a Master Apprentice program going on even before I joined in 2009, but I gathered over my years there that the method wasn't fully flushed out until around the time that I became an Apprentice 2010. An assessment of the Sauk Language Department's initial Master Apprentice activities was conducted with the assistance of a non-profit organization that is dedicated to defending the rights of Indigenous people, Cultural Survival, in December 2008 (Manatowa-Bailey et al, 2012). It showed that while significant progress had been made across some skill areas like basic everyday conversation between apprentice and master speaker, and mastery over basic grammatical functions for novice high on the ACTFL scale, the initial estimate of one year to prepare teachers for effectively working with Sauk speakers in a full-time immersion environment was not realistic, in particular, because the rate of language growth for apprentice speakers was slower than expected. Using this first assessment as a baseline Jacob adjusted the developmental time frame for creating sufficient fluency from a one year to a three-year model. Another significant change to the original one-on-one Master Apprentice model was the addition of the role of Master-Apprentice *lead*. I witnessed this in 2009 when I was an Audio and Video Technician. There was a lot of English being spoken

between the apprentices and the master speakers. Also there didn't seem to be any structure to the sessions and sometimes the master speakers seemed bored and frustrated with the apprentices. However, the addition of the GMA lead role, first modeled and fulfilled by Jacob in 2010, provided the structure that accelerated language acquisition to under two years. Jacob Manatowa-Bailey demonstrated the importance of a GMA lead by taking on what is essentially an instructor role. Jacob took the burden of managing the master-apprentice sessions off of the lower-level apprentices. He instead started to run immersion set activities between himself and the apprentices that the master speakers could watch, correct, and guide as needed. Instead of the apprentices just prodding the master speakers for language or 'pulling language', Jacob and the apprentices instead modeled whole language that the master speakers could give feedback on. In effect, the role of GMA lead takes the stress off both the master speakers and the low-level apprentices. In figure 1 "A typical GMA session" you can see the lead standing. Jacob and I preferred to stand so that we could point to, move, or manipulate objects in the immersion set more effectively. Immersion set props would be located on the table. The master speakers and apprentices sit together wherever they feel most comfortable.



Figure 1. A typical GMA session

4.1.1 The Average GMA Day (Example Session & Discussion)

The average day starts at 8:00am. Every session starts with unstructured immersion.

The GMA lead initiates and facilitates small talk with the speakers and the apprentices. The GMA lead will ask how everyone slept and inquire about what people had for dinner last night. If the GMA lead can get the L1 elder speakers to engage in conversation with each other, that is always encouraged. Unstructured immersion time can be either a listening focused activity where the apprentices merely listen to the advanced level speakers talk to each other or they can be 'speaking focused' activities where the GMA lead prompts the apprentices to talk about how they're feeling, what they did the night before, and if they had any dreams.

Unstructured immersion usually goes for about 10 minutes or so and then it's time to start the first activity. For the purposes of this section of the dissertation, let's say it's a good day and everyone is high energy. The first activity would be a 'mostly doing' activity. Imagine that the content area for the session is "high frequency words to describe daily routines"¹. So, I would place realia on the table. The realia is a fake kitchen set, and I would begin to talk to the master speakers in Sauk. I would try to mostly use vocabulary the students should already know to create a "comprehensible input plus one" environment. I might say to the master speakers "Ok, I need your help cooking breakfast. I don't know how to cook so I need you to tell me what to do to make boiled eggs and bacon." The master speakers would then instruct me on how to cook my breakfast and I would use the realia to pretend to do all actions they tell me to do to make my breakfast. Then I would have an apprentice come up and this time, I would tell them what to do and they would do it. Each apprentice would get up and make fake breakfast by following either the instructions of the master speakers or myself as the GMA lead. Let's say this activity carries

¹ Content areas can be found on page 131 of appendix A "A Language Worker's Manual to the Group Mentor Apprentice Method".

on and remains fun and productive for about 20 minutes. I would then transition to the next activity.

The next activity would be a 'listening focused' activity. I found it helpful to follow action focused activities with listening focused activities as it allows the apprentices to take a small brain break and listen to the language instead of producing language again. The listening focused activity I would do would be to pick out a no-English story book. At Sauk language we bought a couple hundred children's books and then covered up the English print with marker. So, in essence, they are just picture books. Most children's books are great as the stories are often very basic and relatable. I might find a story book that shows a character getting ready for their day and going about their daily life. The master speakers then would talk about what they see in the book. They would talk about each page and what they think is going on and what might happen next. This is a great time for the apprentices to listen to the language being spoken fluently between two master speakers. Let's say this activity goes on for about 30 minutes. It is now 9:00am. I like to let everyone take a 5-minute break after every hour. They can refill their coffee or use the restroom.

The next activity will be a speaking focused activity. Before this type of session I would put together clipart pictures to elicit language to describe daily routines.



Figure 2. Getting ready for the day clipart pictures

I would start off this speaking focused activity by first narrating what the pictures represent. For Algonquin languages it is possible to talk about what is going on in each picture by simply using the 3rd person she/he/they singular verb form. So I would say in the language “He wakes up. He cooks. He brushes his teeth. He gets dressed. He works. He goes home.” Then I would ask the apprentices if any of them would like to hear me say it again. If they ask that it be said again then I would repeat the descriptions. When the apprentices are ready, I will have them say the descriptions. If they mess up, then I will let them finish and then start over again. Once they say all the descriptions perfectly then it can be the next apprentice’s turn. This adds challenge for the apprentices. Leading in this way ensures that the apprentices are always paying their utmost attention so they will not fry in the hot seat. By now it is probably about 9:55 and I announce 5-minute break till 10:00am.

At 10:00am I will lead the team through a TPRS story. TPRS stands for teaching proficiency through reading and storytelling. The story for this content area might go as follows:

TPRS STORY

“One morning Mickey Mouse woke up late. He was so upset that he overslept. He went to the bathroom to brush his teeth. He went back to his room to get dressed. He was in such a hurry. After he got dressed, he made himself some eggs for breakfast. He got into his car and drove to work. When he got to work, he realized that it was Saturday.”

I would tell the story four times and then have the master speakers repeat the story. Then I would have each apprentice repeat the story. If they mess up, I allow them to finish but then have them tell it again. They are allowed to receive help when they are retelling, but they must repeat the story back perfectly without help to get themselves out of the hot seat. Brand new apprentices are allowed to take in the whole activity as a “listening focused activity”. By now it is 10:55am so I send everyone off for their last 5-minute break of the morning.

We resume at 11:00am. The last activity I like to do is a game in the language, such as UNO, Old Maid, Sorry, Candy Land, Wahoo or even traditional games such as koothikee dice and moccasin game. If the game is new to any of the apprentices, I explain in the language what the game pieces are and how to say all of the main actions such as “skip, draw 4, pick a color, pick a card etc.”. For brand new apprentices they are allowed to pair up with a master speaker and learn how to play the game in the language through the language. We continue with games till noon. A good last session of games will elicit lots of fun phrases like “Aww dang!!, lucky!!, wow!!, etc.

In the fall of 2023, I workshopped this method with the Cahuilla in Palm Springs and they were able to bring a learner from Novice-low to Intermediate-mid in just under 6 months. They also doubled the four hours a day I recommended to 8 hours a day.

The GMA lead role is best served by the highest functioning language learner and the most skilled practitioner of Group Mentor Apprentice methods. For the Sauk language department, the consistent involvement of Jacob in group Mentor-Apprentice sessions significantly increased the pace of language acquisition for *all* apprentice speakers (Manatowa-Bailey et al, 2012). It also had a major impact on overall effectiveness by reducing the amount of English used during a given session, and the pace of learning was significantly increased by implementation of a more organized, sequenced approach to content within the group mentor apprentice sessions. GMA sessions are designed to kill dead air. Often times practitioners of the original one-on-one Master Apprentice method would find themselves sitting and staring at each other in silence or “dead air”, the master speaker waiting for a stimulus to respond to and the Apprentice not really sure what they should tackle next. With the GMA model, activities are planned out in advance. I recommend that a GMA lead prepare at least 9 activities even though a typical four-hour long GMA session may only get through three or four activities. It is best to be over-prepared for such things as when one is first starting out it can be easy to overestimate an activity that you thought might take an hour but instead the group completes the activity in 20 or 30 minutes.

These activities should be organized in a way that targets grammar structures to be focused on. They are sequenced so that the principle of comprehensible input plus one is always followed and these immersion set activities are also organized into content areas that are focused on particular semantic domains such as ‘household talk, greetings, foods and eating, seasons,

etc. (Fitzgerald et al, 2013). Alternatively, the content areas can follow a more linguistically informed sequence that take learners through a hierarchy of skills starting with phonology, progressing to morphophonology, then basic vocabulary, then increasingly complex syntax and discourse (Jenni et al, 2017; Olawsky, 2013). One must always keep in mind that the hallmark of a successful GMA session is that the room is always buzzing with language practice. With multiple learners at different levels, the high functioning language experts are kept busy, and the lower-level learners are kept engaged at their level, taking turns and having ample opportunity to practice (Jenni et al, 2017).

The team-centered strategies implemented by the Sauk language team in 2010 represent significant innovation beyond the more widely used two-person Master Apprentice model (Hinson, 2019) that places the burden of session content and effectiveness on the individual mentor and apprentice speaker. The GMA lead is a role that is filled by a more advanced apprentice speaker who takes on the responsibility of directing or leading, such that this role is referred to as the GMA “lead”. The GMA lead develops the materials, routines and activities necessary for the group to be effective. The GMA lead plans the sessions and facilitates the Immersion set activities so that the Apprentices and Mentors can focus on language transmission, leading to a more accelerated and more structured Mentor apprentice session.

Additionally, this team-based approach applied in Group Mentor Apprentice responds directly to the common two-person Master Apprentice challenge of sufficient learning time with elder speakers. As was the case for the Sauk language in the early 2010’s, the ability of elder speakers to participate in Group Mentor Apprentice sessions was impacted by health concerns, weather, and absence due to participation in traditional ceremonies or family obligations. Jacob

planned for these factors by including the following elements in the Sauk Language's Group Mentor Apprentices Program:

1. The team-based approach to Group Mentor Apprentices sessions allowed the team to utilize one Sauk elder speaker for multiple apprentice speakers.
2. A core group of committed elders allowed the Group Mentor Apprentices sessions to depend upon different Sauk elder speakers in a rotating, flexible schedule that can accommodate absence on the part of a single elder.
3. The consistent, direct participation of a more advanced apprentice speaker in the role of GMA lead is able to guide language acquisition and allows for the GMA sessions to continue in the event that no Sauk elder speakers are able to be present.
4. A flexible schedule is important so that the GMA lead and other apprentice speakers can reschedule, do home-based visits, and other innovative solutions to Group Mentor Apprentices contact time with Sauk elder speakers.

Another major challenge for many traditional two-person Master Apprentices programs is that despite sufficient time spent with elder speakers, learner language growth does not occur at an accelerated pace. This can often be traced back to ineffective methods, routines, or activities that can be difficult to self-identify within a two-person Master Apprentices relationship, especially, a two person Master Apprentices group that does not have access to outside resources. The Sauk Language Group Mentor Apprentices Program responded to this challenge by including the following in the program's approach:

1. The program allowed for multiple opportunities for monitoring language growth including quarterly evaluations, immersion school pilots, immersion field trips to the Meskwaki speech community in Tama, IA, and direct participation of the Project Director Jacob Manatowa-Bailey in the M.A sessions with other apprentice speakers.
2. The Program advocated for time and budgetary flexibility to expand the number of M.A hours beyond the baseline of 20 hours a week to account for Immersion trips to Meskwaki speaker communities in Tama, IA.

3. The Program set aside sufficient time and schedule flexibility for me, Mosiah Bluecloud, to develop additional, specific, independent language and grammar study materials to supplement Group Mentor Apprentice learning. I also used my materials to inform the sessions I lead when I moved into the role of M.A lead. The materials I developed were created with the help of Marcia Haag at the University of Oklahoma, and Algonquinists Lucy Thomason, and Amy Dahlstrom.
4. The Sauk Language program created an in-house resource base of language materials including an extensive collection of recorded Sauk that could be used to supplement Group Mentor Apprentice learning.
5. The Sauk Language program also provided extensive training and assessment opportunities by outside language experts to assist with improving and adjusting the program approach over the entire duration of the Sauk Language Master Apprentice Program. I accrued over 668 hours of professional development training during my time as a Sauk language apprentice and future Sauk language teacher.

The most important way the Sauk Language Department modified the original two person master apprentice method was by reframing the role of the apprentice to focus not only on language acquisition but also language instruction, content development, time management, decision-making, classroom management, group dynamics, activity planning, and research skills to better equip apprentices for success in the field of language revitalization (Manatowa-Bailey et al, 2014). This will be discussed in more detail in this chapter.

4.1.2 Roles and Protocol Found in the GMA Method

The major roles found in a Group Mentor-Apprentice session are the roles of fluent speaker mentors, GMA lead, and GMA apprentices. Ideally Group Mentor-Apprentice Immersion sessions should be four hours long, five times a week. The sessions should also be full immersion, zero English. The Group Mentor-Apprentice method is intended to create new speakers in under two years. There are other methods and techniques that must supplement the GMA method and those will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The GMA lead is responsible for developing and choosing the activities for MA sessions and guiding the flow of MA sessions daily. The MA lead must always be aware of the apprentice's comprehension and language production ability. The theory of "comprehensible input + 1" is the guiding principle of an excellent GMA lead's approach. The MA lead must push the apprentice to produce and comprehend speech that is just a bit above when the apprentice feels they are capable of, every day. The apprentice should feel challenged like they just did a mental workout after every GMA session. The GMA lead must also be sure not to push the apprentices so much so that the apprentice shuts down from brain exhaustion and mental fatigue. Language acquisition as an adult is like working out a muscle. The apprentices will be able to handle more and more as the months go by. If a GMA lead cannot be present, they will assign on a rotating basis another apprentice speaker to be responsible for GMA session management.

The apprentices will serve on a rotating basis as a journal keeper for the daily sessions. During the GMA session, the journal keeper makes written notes of:

1. Situations that come up which lead to a switch to English or cause other difficulties with the flow of the session. They can describe the situation in English if they are unable to write it in Sauk (or whatever the target language is).
2. Key new vocabulary that was not understood, for later review with elder speakers.
3. Key gaps in vocabulary that arise directly out of GMA sessions with a focus on functional communication. They must do their best to spell the Sauk word correctly and note the time of the utterance so that the utterance can be found on the audio recording.

It is ok if the Apprentice does not automatically know how to recognize each of these factors.

The GMA lead may need to gesture 'take note' with a hand signal until the apprentice starts to get a feel of what they need to take note of. The journal keeper should never be a brand-new

apprentice as they may not have the ability to multitask taking notes and participating in the GMA session at the same time.

Another Apprentice will serve on a rotating basis as the recorder for the daily sessions. All GMA sessions must be recorded, and each week's recordings must be made available to the apprentices so they can listen to past sessions on their drive to and from work or during their daily activities in their home. At the beginning of the session the apprentice in charge of operating the recorder will make sure the recording equipment is turned on and functioning. They must manually stop and start the recording between each immersion set or if there are any English language interruptions from outside individuals. We would often have people pop into our Immersion sessions with messages in English. The apprentice must also make sure that the recording equipment has sufficient memory for the next session and is turned off. The program director, Language information technology person, or one of the apprentices can keep track of archiving the sessions and disseminating them to the apprentices and GMA lead.

Each individual apprentice speaker is responsible for advanced review and their own independent study. It is important that they be more than adequately prepared to participate in GMA sessions. When I was an apprentice, I made it my goal to try and always be further along in my language acquisition than Jacob thought I was. I made it a game. I listened to Sauk audio after work and on the weekends to try and double my progress.

Among other things, MA apprentices should be on time. The elder speakers and MA lead's time and effort into MA sessions is invaluable and apprentices are privileged to be paid to learn their languages. They must show up on time and have as perfect an attendance as they can manage. Apprentices should also take staying in the language very seriously. Time is finite and English is a waste of time when you're paid to learn your heritage language. The Sauk language

was funded by the Administration for Native Americans to pay speakers and apprentices to do GMA sessions together. New apprentices often try to visit in English before the MA session officially starts, but they should avoid English there too. That is why MA sessions have unstructured immersion time built into the method. Unstructured immersion is where the group can visit and chat in the language before the structured activities start. In my workshops, I have the MA leads time their unstructured immersion time. When a team first starts, they may only be able to ask and answer a few utterances that may last up to a minute or two. Individual apprentices are also responsible for being prepared to contribute to the unstructured immersion at the beginning of the session. They should also demonstrate enthusiasm and engagement throughout. This way, MA leads will see the unstructured immersion time go longer and longer until they eventually have to limit unstructured immersion so that there's time for Immersion set activities that target new verb inflections or new vocabulary domains. Besides being responsible for actively contributing to MA sessions and assisting in maintaining an immersion environment each individual should prepare and practice toward contributing to a daily goodbye and small talk at the end of each session, and ensure the group is not reverting to English after the completion of the session.

Finally, Master Speakers' responsibilities are quite simple, as the GMA format was structured to make MA sessions as enjoyable as possible for Master Speakers. We made sure that had their favorite snacks and coffee waiting for them before each session and would sometimes ask them if they wanted anything further like some pre-lunch fruit, crackers, or popcorn. Their only real responsibility is to stay in the language and allow their speech to be as full and whole as possible. There were old stories of Jacob having to really wrangle the mentor speakers into staying in the language in the early years of M.A, but by the time I arrived as an apprentice in

2010 they were Sauk talking machines. Apparently sometimes Mentor Speakers would want to help apprentices understand and will break into English to help them. That's the habit that Jacob had to break.

The Group Mentor Apprentice effort is a team. It is up to everyone to stay in the language during the MA sessions and strive to be able to function outside of the MA sessions in the language as well. It is important that no one respond negatively to constructive criticism. A Group Mentor Apprentice program succeeds through constant improvement. Some of the professional development trainings I received were team building trainings. They were immensely helpful for us to learn to work together peaceably in such a demanding and often exhausting program. Language work is hard work.

4.1.3 Indigenous Immersion Basics (GMA Immersion Sets)

Immersion activities should facilitate real communication that is more beneficial to a learner than rote memorization of phrases and texts such as prayers. Immersion environments help facilitate not just the acquisition of language but also the acquisition of culture. So, for an effective Group Mentor Apprentice session 100% full immersion in the Indigenous language facilitates the opportunity for learners to develop their heritage language brain. The ability to make meaning from a limited vocabulary is a valuable skill that makes or breaks successful language acquisition. All GMA members involved are encouraged to speak in full sentences and not just one-word answers. The goal of all involved should be to make answers as long as possible and move toward initiating a fuller conversation e.g. conjuring up a better or more complete "image" of what is going on in any particular immersion activity. For example, if the GMA lead holds up a picture of a dog, a brand-new apprentice can get away with answering 'dog'. Then the MA lead will model a sentence for them to say, something like, 'I see a dog' and

then come back to them later and ask them again what they see and then the apprentice will be then expected to say, 'I see a dog'. More advanced apprentices and Mentor speakers should aim for something more elaborate, perhaps along the lines of "I see a dog. That's a cute dog. He has brown eyes and black fur. He looks like he wants to play." For GMA session, the GMA Lead creates and develops immersion set activities.

Immersion sets are defined as either 'mostly speaking focused activities, listening focused activities, or mostly action focused activities.' These immersion set types are explained in more detail on page 123 of the GMA guide (Appendix A). The development of total fluency requires use of all three types. It is essential that each immersion session contains a mixture of all three types to help fight language immersion fatigue. It is also essential since every learner is different. Each apprentice will prefer immersion types that cater more to their learning style, so a mixture makes sure all apprentices receive time in their preferred type of immersion. The Immersion activity types are as follows:

1. Listening focused
 - a. Listening focused activities are when the elder speaker is doing most of the talking.
 - b. Listening focused activities are good for "priming" the apprentice speaker's brain to do or talk in the target language.
 - c. Listening focused activities provide an opportunity for the apprentice speaker to test his/her comprehension.
 - d. Listening focused activities are the primary method to initially hear and recognize new words, phrases, or forms.
2. Action focused
 - a. Action focused activities are when the apprentice speakers and/or elder speakers are physically engaged in learning.
 - b. Action focused activities are good for "embedding" the language in action and movement.
 - c. Action focused activities provide an opportunity to both practice culture and learn language.
 - d. Action focused activities are the primary method to link language learning to "real life" situations and activities.

3. Speaking focused
 - a. Speaking focused activities are when the apprentice speaker is intentionally, actively focused on language use.
 - b. Speaking focused activities are good for developing functional language use and communication.
 - c. Speaking focused activities provide an opportunity for the apprentice speaker to test his/her ability to actively use the language.
 - d. Speaking focused activities are the primary method to develop conversational fluency in the language.

(Manatowa-Bailey et al, 2012)

GMA leads do not necessarily have to plan in advance the length of the immersion sets that will be of the above ‘types’ of immersion. The length of the activities will vary depending on energy levels, content, effectiveness, and many other factors on any given day. Immersion activities can be recreated and facilitated by learners for community classes or in their homes, much as the WAYK method advocates. Since Group Mentor-Apprentice sessions are recorded for posterity the audio data can not only be a valuable resource for current learners to refer to, but also for future language workers to build from or study. As mentioned before, apprentices must participate in all activities and part of the GMA lead’s job is to make sure the apprentices are able to participate at their distinct individual ability in the language. Patience is key and it’s up to the GMA lead to make sure that all parties involved in the session do not resort to English to clear up confusion, but instead slow down or even ask less of the GMA apprentices, considering immersion fatigue. Immersion is hard on new learners, and it takes time for learners to become used to functioning under the pressure of an immersion environment. Sometimes a learner can start out strong at the beginning of a session but be mentally exhausted near the end of the session. A GMA lead must develop the ability to gauge when the activities should become more ‘listening focused’ activities where learners can listen and rack up exposure hours while the mentors narrate silent video or talk about what they see in no-English storybooks. These

activities will be discussed in more detail further on in this chapter. In the next section, I describe the daily structure of a GMA session.

4.1.4 Daily Structure of a GMA Session

In the beginning stages of Group Mentor-Apprentice work, a daily structure assists both the apprentices and the Mentor speakers to increase the effectiveness of GMA sessions by providing a consistent framework upon which to facilitate accelerated language acquisition. As the same types of immersion sets are practiced over and over, both apprentice speakers and mentor speakers will grow more skilled in and comfortable with the mechanics of different kinds of activities. This skill and comfort with structure will make it easier to expand and change the *content* of the GMA sessions later.

The area where the GMA sessions take place should be an environment where English is not allowed. In the GMA room at Sauk language, we had signs everywhere outside of the doors that said in English and in Sauk 'Kâta môkomânâtoweeyekani - No English'. In the beginning of a GMA program, maintaining an immersion environment through effective immersion activity sets to achieve language acquisition will take a great deal of planning. However, it will get easier as the months progress and apprentices become more familiar with the immersion environment and have an increased language ability that will allow for more fluid and flexible GMA sessions. So, the more prepared the MA lead is every day in terms of structure, content, and the specific activities, the greater the chance of accelerated acquisition for everyone involved.

At the beginning of each session there should be unstructured immersion consisting of daily greetings and small talk and at the end of the session there should be closing small talk with the mentor speaker about what they will do after the session or about when you will see them again. The MA lead should make sure people don't linger after the session and visit in English.

Within the opening and closing of a GMA session, if an activity is leading to English or creating an environment with minimal target language use, then that particular activity needs to end, and the participants should move on to the next activity. Also, if a given activity is helping create an immersion environment filled with the target language and is positively impacting specific language learning, then it can be extended, even if that means not doing another activity you had originally planned to do. It is best to plan for eight immersion set activities and then be okay with only getting through four if the apprentices are highly engaged and are performing really well.

4.1.5 Content Areas

The effectiveness of Group Mentor-Apprentice derives from its detailed structure. Jacob Manatowa-Bailey created a two-year plan to start from. Within this two-year plan there are units or themes. At the Sauk language department, we called these themes ‘content areas.’ Since working with the GMA method over the past 14 years I’ve modified the content areas and their descriptions based on workshop and presentation feedback I received from other tribal language programs that have since implemented the GMA method into their adult learning programs.

Each day we had a Master-Apprentice template that mapped our 4-hour long sessions by the hour. Session planning is described in detail on page 9 of the GMA guide appendix at the end of this dissertation. First, I’d like to list the content areas for the first two years.

Year One Content areas:

1. Core Daily Interactions
2. Family and Kinship Terms
3. Basic Commands and Requests
4. Food and Meal-Time Vocabulary
5. Describing People and Places
6. Natural World and Environment
7. Health Awareness
8. Emotional Expressions

Year Two Content Areas:

9. Life Cycles and Natural Rhythms
10. Interacting with and Describing Everyday Objects
11. Giving and Receiving Directions
12. Expressing Time and Temporal Concepts
13. Human Body and Human Conditions
14. Home Language about Children
15. Relationships and Social Circles
16. Family Dynamics and Traditions

(A Language Worker's Manual to the Group Mentor-Apprentice Method, 2024; Appendix A)

The MA lead must prepare in advance the content areas they want to use to guide their immersion sets. We used the ones listed above but other tribes may want to substitute their own content areas that better match their communities' unique situations.

The immersion sets the MA lead develops will have two parts: Content and Activities

1. Content is *what* you are going to learn; this could be a new vocabulary set, a specific communicative situation, an element of grammar, practicing a new learning method, etc. It establishes the *goal* of your learning.
2. Activities are *how* you are going to achieve your learning; these are the specific routines, games, storybooks, learning methods, etc. that will provide multiple paths for engaging in language acquisition.

(Manatowa-Bailey et al, 2014)

As stated earlier in the chapter the guiding principle behind GMA session planning is Comprehensible Input +1. Immersion sets should include a combination of new and old material. This is not limited to just vocabulary but also new verb inflections, new domains, new situations, or other learning methods such as WAYK, ASLA, or The Paul-Creek Method utilizing known vocabulary or familiar situations. The greatest skill to develop as a MA lead is the ability to place

new material in the context of known vocabulary or familiar situations without the need for translation.

In planning MA sessions, the MA lead must also rely on the principle of hearing and using a word 20 times in 20 situations for it to become a permanent part of your vocabulary. This is a concept and number I will never forget as it was mentioned often by my mentor Jacob at our group presentations to other language workers around Oklahoma. That's 400 occasions of the word! However, sticking to the content area helps reach that 400 repetitions. The structure will make sure the job gets done, even if the MA lead might forget.

An MA lead should try and keep an eye on when the apprentices are reaching plateaus in their language journey. Sometimes an immersion set within a particular content area is not helping the apprentices achieve new language learning. If the apprentices seem too comfortable and not challenged by the immersion sets then it may be time to move on to the next content area and try and create novelty and renewed challenge.

4.1.6 Types of Activities

What I learned in my time at Sauk language working under Jacob Manatowa-Bailey, was that the activities used in a GMA sessions are the building blocks that create and expand the structure that maximizes the total hours spent in a target language only environment. The structure of the GMA method must facilitate intensive language acquisition over a 1–2-year period. The sophisticated content, methods, and instructional approaches all mean nothing if they are not delivered over an extended period of time. That being said, here is a list of some of the original 'building blocks', that is, the activities we used at Sauk language GMA program.

- Story books – Story books are great for new apprentices because the mentor speakers do the bulk of the speaking, and the apprentices can listen. Storybooks with no English encourage the mentor speaker to engage in a target-language-only narrative. This is a

good activity for near the end of the immersion session when the apprentices are thoroughly mind fried. At Sauk language we took about 200 picture story books and whited out the English and then had them all scanned so we could project the no-English story books onto the projector screen so everyone could easily see. Also, that way our elder mentor speakers didn't have to squint at a page.

- Cause and Effect Cards – They can be made or bought and are used to teach apprentices how to sequence actions in the target language. They teach words like ‘first, and then, after, and finally’. It is good for beginners but also good for conversational apprentices because the MA lead can modify the difficulty. For example, the beginners can just state what is happening in the pictures using the words they know, and the more advanced apprentices can personalize the cards. They can make up a story about the cards and about the surrounding context of the sequenced activity.
- Activities that focus on a given set of vocabulary (e.g. *big and little; first, then, lastly*) – Every apprentice must learn a certain amount of vocabulary before they can produce language conversationally and The Total Physical response method is good for this objective. TPR is an immersion approach to teaching second languages that allows students to be active learners, produces quick results, and does not involve the use of textbooks or writing (Cantoni, 1999). Subject-focused activities use Total Physical Response to teach apprentices specific vocabulary that is either hardly used in common conversation or is difficult to elicit from Mentor speakers in unstructured immersion or when on immersion trips.
- Games (Uno, Old Maid, Ha Choo, Guess Who) – Games are a good break from intensive immersion activities. They usually don't involve overly challenging vocabulary and help apprentices get quick at expressing their playful emotions often mirroring what they observe from mentor speakers.
- TPRS stories – The 'Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling' technique involves making a simple story that has three parts: A beginning a middle and an end (Alley & Overfield, 2008). The TPRS method is great because it translates almost 1:1 from GMA sessions to community classes and high school instruction.
- Dolls – At Sauk language we had little wooden figurines that had our names taped on them. We also had a big carpet that was designed to look like a town. We would make up scenarios of who did what to who and when and then everyone must tell the same story of what happened from their figurine's point of view. It's great because we got to move our figurines around the carpet in real time during the story. This is one way we can bring the world to our little GMA table space. It's a lot safer than taking the last Sauk speakers out and about in a real town with real traffic.
- Conversational topics – Conversational topic exercises can be used by more advanced apprentices to practice speaking abilities. They're as simple as “Did you have any pets as a kid? What did you and your siblings do as kids? What's your favorite meal to cook?” Mentor speakers enjoy conversational topics because they can speak more naturally.

They're very useful for practicing targeted verb inflections and are a major source of further conversation. One awesome phenomenon we loved to facilitate was natural conversation between our mentor speakers. Any time they would start talking to each other we paused all activity and listened until they were done. Those were golden moments for us apprentices.

- Random story generator – This activity incorporates critical thinking. The MA lead will mix up a bunch of images and pick them out at random to create a story. The MA lead controls the verbs and objects of focus, and this is another great activity to practice verbal inflections. This is a listening focused activity. Unlike the doll activity there is nothing to manipulate and move around for context to help with comprehension.
- Fill-in-the-blank stories – This activity provides more speaker choices than TPRS stories and more room for personalization. It resembles a TPRS story but with some blanks for the apprentices and Mentors to fill in, much like the phrasal template word game, 'mad lib'. In figure 3 below, we see a fill-in-the-blank story that elicits the subjunctive mood in Sauk. The prompt translates to "BLANK tells you they're going to the store and that they will only be gone for a little while, but they end up being gone for a very long time." Here the GMA lead can place someone special to one of the master speakers. "What would you do if it was your son that left for the store and was gone too long? Would you worry? Or be irritated?"

-hkáha I
 -hkapa You
 -tha Him
 -wátha Them
 -iyékapa You to him
 -iyékáha I to him

_____ ketáchimoheki tayahikáneki wiháchi. Nomaké
 wihshenowa shén keyéhapa kéhe épayneyapipyáchi.

Kashi cháhi éshitéhékapa?

Kashi cháhi shawikapa?

ánemitéhékapa?

Ketawihiwá ketátamopineme

Eshkamini épekotéyáki

Eshkamini émyáshikeki thákich

Figure 3. Fill-in-the-blank story

These activities were chosen to develop speaking capacity in the target language through learned phrases to ask about how to say things without switching to English. They permit an

intentional practice of talking about things that may not have a specific known name in the target Indigenous language.

4.1.7 Vetting for Gifted Language Learners

One of the most difficult tasks in language revitalization is the recruitment and retention of community members for participation in language programs and becoming language instructors. The Sauk language program aimed to recruit open-minded and optimistic individuals. Jacob, while in his capacity as director, hired people that were not negative in their speech towards others. All my co-workers and myself were trained to be positively persistent. We were trained to keep a smile on our face while asking a person for the third time if they'd like to participate and facilitate safe learning environments for our students. We were also trained to try and look for potential language apprentices and future teachers in all our teaching endeavors.

When leading the community members in language activities we strove to create an inclusive atmosphere. But there were challenges: People tend to hold strong feelings regarding the language's usage and appropriateness in various situations. For example, older community members may not be willing to learn from younger individuals who were not raised as first-generation language speakers. At other times younger individuals may doubt the credibility of an instructor who may not be much older than themselves and who is also learning the Indigenous language as a second language.

It always helps to explain up front that we apprentice speakers are not L1 speakers, but we wish to put forth our best effort as a language teacher. Sometimes showing vulnerability, and awareness that we do not know everything, empowers learners to also be vulnerable in their language learning and means that they won't be afraid to try and fail and try again—in other

words, it can help lower the affective barrier. We apprentices-turned-teachers were taught to always be prepared in our activities so we could teach with full confidence that we knew what we were there to teach. We were also specific in our language instruction. For example, we were trained to not let the instruction be derailed by discussion in English about words that could lead to arguments between community members about whose family has the more correct dialect of the language. We would cut off these arguments before they began by saying “every family and every person has their own ‘fingerprint’ way of talking. It’s a natural occurrence and the language department welcomes everyone’s way of saying a word.

I was able to recruit my own apprentice from a high school class I had taught. He did very well in the immersion environment I facilitated and agreed to start coming to as many language events as he could and eventually accepted a language internship that led to employment as an apprentice. Now he teaches the language full time to other apprentices at the Sauk language department. In making the language events uniformly inclusive safe environments from the beginning, that ended up being the only type of language event my apprentice knew, and so that inclusive philosophy was then easily propagated from there.

Another benefit of recruiting from a pool of existing language students is that it is easier for them to thrive in a Group Mentor apprentice environment since they’re already accustomed to immersion environments facilitated by TPR, TPRS, and WAYK teaching methods. A Group Mentor Apprentice session is not the preferred place to break a student of the common ‘translate to English habit’. I’ve witnessed visitors to GMA sessions. They know explicitly that the space is a no-English space, but it never fails that a speaker will point to something, for example, a picture of a turtle and say ‘Mesikeeha’. Then the student will point at it, pause, and then say in English ‘turtle?’. Usually everyone at the table is bilingual English speaker but the visitor will

say turtle like the mentor speaker needs help learning English. We've developed ways to get people past this habit. We make sure incoming apprentices have the tools necessary to survive in an immersion environment.

At Sauk language we developed a survival phrases list with an audio accompaniment. We strongly advise all potential apprentices learn how to say things like "I don't understand you but keep speaking to me", "Say that slower", "What is this?", "What color is this", and of course basic numbers, colors, and animals are on the survival list.

4.2 Capacity Building at the Sauk Language Department

At the Sauk Language Department, Jacob strived to provide stability and build capacity for the Sauk language revitalization effort by providing us with professional development in the form of teacher training (Manatowa-Bailey et al, 2014). This is because an interest in becoming a teacher is one of the main criteria in apprentice recruitment for the original Sauk master apprentice program. So, we apprentices learned from language teachers of world languages, such as French and Spanish, as well as other indigenous language teachers. I learned a lot from them and was lucky to have an ongoing mentorship with a French immersion teacher the whole time I taught Sauk at Shawnee high school. Jacob was able to provide us the opportunity to receive some quality feedback and observation from Dr. Stephen Krashen and Indigenous Immersion techniques from Hualapai educator and linguist Lucille Watahomigie, Chickasaw Language director Josh Hinson, and linguist and founder of the Wôpanâak language reclamation project, Jessie Little Doe Baird. Jacob made sure our teacher training had plenty of classroom management strategies and guided practice in curriculum development.

The structure of the group mentor apprentice method thoroughly prepared us for facilitating and maintaining immersion environments so that we could apply effective immersion

in our community classes and high school classes. Jacob also advocated for me in completing my bachelors in Linguistics at the University of Oklahoma. I used the guidance of Dr. Haag, a linguistics professor at the University of Oklahoma, who often worked with native tribes in Oklahoma, to complete my bachelors. Dr. Haag helped guide my linguistic analysis of Sauk to better inform my MA lead duties. Being able to understand language through the lens of Linguistics helped me have a more robust mental model of the language. Mental models will be discussed more in the next section.

To better solidify the effectiveness of the Sauk language department we hosted Jonathan ‘Joc’ Clark, who specializes in creating collaborative working environments for organizational development. Joc ran exercises that helped develop our skill sets in leadership and team building within the department. We received training in conflict resolution, teambuilding, group facilitation, participatory strategic planning, coaching, dialogue, strengths-based leadership, and appreciative inquiry. This was very helpful training as language work often comes with its own challenges from within and without. With Joc’s training we were able to streamline conversations around work-related challenges and better navigate each other’s personalities, strengths and weaknesses regarding our individual definitions of language work is.

The Sauk language program created a high school course with the intention of recruiting young SLA learners to participate in the Mentor Apprentice program. However, after many years of trying that effort was abandoned. I was only able to get one language apprentice recruited from the high school course in Shawnee, and the other teacher at Stroud High school did not recruit more than a couple new apprentices from all their efforts. The Sauk Language Department assessment was that the potential number of college-ready graduating students is too small, and that public education is not preparing most Indigenous youth for success after high

school. Furthermore, there are no existing institutional structures to help students develop interest in language revitalization work as a viable and valued career path. We found that most recent graduates did not have the interest to engage in intensive language learning and leadership training (Mantowa-Bailey et al, 2014).

4.3 Replicating Group Master-Apprentice (GMA) Success for Other Indigenous Communities

At the core of the success found by implementing group mentor apprentice at the Sauk language department was the concept of deliberate practice. Deliberate practice is an approach that can be applied to any critical task with the goal of getting much better at that task. As GMA leads and apprentices are in the middle of performing a task, such as moving a toy car around on a carpet with a play city printed on it, they can receive immediate feedback in the form of taking directions from a speaker on where the car needs to go on the play mat carpet. This immersion set revolves around a specific skill of following directions. The phrases heard might be “turn left, turn right, go straight.’ There should be a goal destination in the ‘following directions’ immersion set used in this activity. Deliberate practice is characterized by goal-directed activities that are intentional. After the immersion session, the GMA lead switches to English and gives feedback to open dialogue on the performance of the apprentices. This way, the apprentices can make changes to how their language acquisition is happening or can be improved in the GMA sessions. For example, if there were too many new vocab phrases for an apprentice the GMA lead helps them create a self-study plan to catch up. They can do flash card exercises to catch up to everyone else’s ability.

The GMA lead and the apprentices should continually build ‘mental models’ of the Group Mentor Apprentice situation. A mental model of a language lesson represents an internal framework that is best informed by the field of linguistics, to provide clear structure to immersion

activities. I've found that the more linguistics a learner has the better they're able to establish their own mental model of the structure of their language. Tribal members that are trained in linguistics are able to demystify accelerated language acquisition curriculum through their understanding of their language's key grammatical features. For example, Sauk, Shawnee and Kickapoo learners agree that the first most useful things to learn are the endings for animate and inanimate objects. After animacy endings are acquired then the next natural suffixes to acquire are the plural suffixes. After one learns animacy and plurals then it is time to learn verbs in their independent form and then conjunct form. This mental model updating goes on and on until learners start trying to figure out discourse markers or syntactic constructions used to best express frustration, joy, humor etc. Linguistics helps language workers identify what they do not know so they can then set a course to learn what they know they don't know.

A mental model helps one understand the immersion set objectives and goals, the delivery of new input, the structure of the guided practice that facilitates repetition of vocab or grammatical structure and the comprehension check phase where the GMA lead decides how fast the team can continue to progress. At Sauk language we would have frequent GMA planning meetings where we would discuss our mental models of GMA sessions. In these meetings we could voice our concerns, expressing whether we felt like we could move on or needed more time or, for example, that we felt that working on forming prohibitives should be the next focus in teaching how the irrealis is used. Also, anytime we would add a new apprentice we would discuss ways to accommodate and shift our learning behaviors to accommodate the novice.

From the onset of the GMA program, in the first content area "Core daily interactions" it is important that the apprentices know how to talk not only 'within' the immersion sets to extend the kinds of conversation taking place, but also 'around' the immersion set activities to be able to

stay in the language. If they feel the need to ask to stay with the immersion set longer or make a request to cut the immersion set short, they need to be able to express themselves as such.

Phrases such as “I like this, again please.” Or “this one is too much” should be translated into the language and be included in the “survival phrases needed for incoming apprentices” study guide.

Furthermore, being able to talk about how an immersion set is going should also entail being able to understand feedback about how the immersion set is going from the mentor speakers. For example, one mentor speaker at Sauk language department didn’t mind talking about made up stories and make-believe things; another elder mentor speaker could only handle so much make-believe about things that never happened. For example, when the Sauk language team wanted to work practice immersion sets that elicit “what if” statements, we had to be very careful not to trigger the speakers with questions like “If your dog brought home a snake from outside, who would you call to come help you?” The speakers would immediately freak out and declare “That’s why the dog isn’t let outside!!” instead of playing along with the fake scenario with something like “If my dog brought a snake in from outside, I would call ___”.

In conclusion, the Sauk language department’s success with the GMA effort was because of the institutional support of the Sac&Fox nation and the Administration for Native Americans through which the language department director at the time, Jacob Manatowa-Bailey was able to procure and direct the resources necessary to develop a small group mentor apprentice program: A structured GMA program that facilitated 100% no English during sessions and a commitment from the apprentices to not just be language learners but as professionals within the field of language revitalization with an emphasis on becoming language teachers.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Summary

The first chapter was an in-depth look at the nature of the problem. It emphasized the significance of new speaker creation research, the importance of new speaker creation in the field of language revitalization. It also motivated an answer to the question “why a focus on adult learners?” and the need for a meta-analysis and synthesis of existing literature based on my lived experience in the process of new speaker creation. Chapter Two was a literature review that summarized the published work on successful speaker creation methods used in Indigenous communities and the immersion pedagogy that has been applied and used in the past by Indigenous people working in revitalization. The literature review also gave primacy to my lived experiences of creating speakers in the under-resourced, highly endangered Indigenous language, Sauk, and provided a framework for contextualizing adult immersion language learning of Indigenous languages. Chapter Three described my chosen Indigenous methodology and phenomenological approach used to create a framework based on my observations and lived experiences in new speaker creation of having been both mentor and apprentice within the Group Mentor Apprentice method at the Sauk language department, and from the published works of others who have written about their projects and method testing to create new speakers. Chapter Four laid out the theory and practice of the Group Mentor Apprentice method used for successful new speaker creation at the Sauk language department. Chapter Four complements the proposed curriculum (given below in Appendix A) that future language workers can use to inform their own group mentor apprentice efforts. This dissertation in conjunction with the proposed sample curriculum aims to shed light on one process of creating new speakers in indigenous communities.

5.2 Potential Impact of Applied Immersion Methods

The value and contribution of this dissertation towards new speaker creation in Indigenous North American communities is based in definition of key terms, language worker roles, effective collaboration, and successful new speaker creation methods in a revitalization context. (Recall that ‘reclamation’ is the acquisition of language from documentation, while ‘revitalization’ is the acquisition of language from L1 speakers.) This dissertation has detailed the importance of a sustainable model of new speaker creation that depends on long-term capacity building, training, community-based research, and collaborations across various sectors, including tribal, academic, and regional partners.

Structured full immersion can be hard to enact long term without training and/or research. Structured full immersion involves creating an environment where the Indigenous language is used exclusively for at least 20 hours a week. Only by establishing an exclusive language environment can Indigenous communities begin to facilitate new speaker creation. This approach recognizes that language revitalization cannot be achieved by any one person or organization alone. The Sauk Language wouldn’t have been able to find success if not for the Administration for Native Americans, This speaks to the conclusion that, today, Indigenous language revitalization requires funding. Besides the financial resources, successful speaker creation requires a collective effort and a network of information sharing among Indigenous communities and institutions. This dissertation is possible through the support available at the University of Arizona, suggesting that academia also has a role to play in Indigenous language revitalization.

There is more than one way to do immersion, and it is my hope that this dissertation will help language workers know more about what they didn’t know before in regard to immersion and adult learning. Diligent and deliberate practice is key in becoming an effective MA lead and

apprentice. Planning for immersion is intense in the beginning stages. My mentor Jacob recommended 5-10 hours of allotted planning time [for how many contact hours in class? Is that for all 20 hours spent in the immersion setting?] when I first started learning to fill the role of MA lead. After about a month or so I only needed about an hour and in about 3 months I only needed about 15 to 30 minutes of planning time.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

My hope is that the next wave of scholarship in this area is able to implement this method and then study its results, getting interviews from the MA lead, language mentors, and language apprentices. By interviewing the MA lead, language mentors, and language apprentices, future scholars can gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of this method and further contribute to the understanding and implementation of structured full immersion approaches found in the group mentor apprentice method in language revitalization efforts.

This dissertation focused on using the group mentor apprentice method in a revitalization context, with language communities that still have L1 speakers. Another good area to look at would be applying the group mentor apprentice method to language communities in a reclamation context, i.e. that are working from documentation. There are activities in the sample curriculum that demonstrate ways of facilitating immersion even when not being fluent. The flexibility of the method allows for GMA sessions to continue if mentor speakers are temporarily unavailable for regularly scheduled GMA sessions.

Although beyond the scope of this dissertation, technology as an adjunct to the GMA method would be another great area to explore. An apprentice's self-study outside of the GMA sessions is a big part of successful speaker creation and applications such as *7000 Languages* and *Rosetta Stone* could potentially be used by apprentices to get more language input while outside

of GMA sessions. *7000 Languages* also has the capability of allowing apprentices to create lessons. Apprentices could potentially create lessons that replicate GMA sessions for their students or for their own practice and preparation for GMA sessions.

Appendix A: A Language Worker's Manual to the Group Mentor Apprentice Method

A Language Worker's Manual to the Group Mentor Apprentice Method

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Introduction and GMA Review

Origins of the Group Mentor Apprenticeship Program

The Group Mentor Apprenticeship Program that the author uses at the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma language program and has trained and workshopped with other tribal language programs originated from the Sauk language program's 'Modified master-apprentice program'. The author, Mosiah Bluecloud, was an apprentice in the Sauk Language program and was trained by his Mentor Jacob Manatowa-Bailey in the inner workings of what is now called the Group Mentor-Apprenticeship method. Mosiah received extensive professional development to not only become a more effective language teacher and linguist but to also keep adding to the efficacy of the GMA method.

This manual is a supplement to Mosiah Bluecloud's dissertation and was used as source material in the Group Mentor Apprenticeship training for a core group of apprentices who were working towards fluency in the Kickapoo language in the summer of 2024. These individuals dedicated their careers to successfully developing and teaching in the community-wide Kickapoo Immersion School. The development of this manual and the Kickapoo Group Mentor Apprenticeship Program was funded through a Bureau of Indian Affairs Living Languages Grant A24AP00049 and the Bilinski Dissertation Fellowship from the University of Arizona.

Objectives of the Team-Based Group Mentor Apprenticeship Model

In order to meet the two goals of providing an immersion environment that creates fluency and a school environment that provides quality education, the Kickapoo Language Department is utilizing a teaching team consisting of both existing Kickapoo mentor speakers and apprentices to instruct within the Immersion School. Under the guidance of the language program coordinator, Kickapoo mentor speakers will work directly with apprentices in a mentor-apprenticeship relationship. The mentor speakers will assist teachers in the classrooms with children. The mentor speakers will work closely with apprentice teachers in directed learning specific to fulfilling their roles in the immersion environment and participate in immersion school pilots.

Objectives of the Immersion-Centered Language Program

The primary goal of this Immersion-centered language program is to develop the next generation of fluent speakers by:

- Utilizing the Group Mentor-apprenticeship method to accelerate second language acquisition and fluency rate of adult learners
- Facilitating a team environment with the L1 speakers or proficient L2's
- Using this Group Mentor apprenticeship sample curriculum to document the development and expansion of this accelerated, more structured team-based Mentor-Apprenticeship model and add to the budding field of Group Mentor Apprenticeship training, where the Mentor-Apprenticeship lead takes a primary role in directing Group Mentor Apprenticeship sessions and developing the materials, routines, and activities for effective GMA sessions.

Applicability of the GMA Method to other Indigenous Communities:

This Group Mentor apprentice model has the potential to create new speakers within other Indigenous people that face similar situations in terms of:

- A small speaking population
- Very limited internal resources for creating new teachers from the new speakers
- A need for new speakers that can effectively teach within the tribal community and staff a potential immersion school

Strategies for a Team-Based Group Mentor Apprentice Session and Roles and Responsibilities

A successful Group Mentor apprentice program facilitates accelerated language acquisition for apprentices through a structured team-based model that provides more effective language input than could be achieved in the classic individual one-on-one mentor-apprentice pair model.

Key strategies:

1. The team-based approach to Group mentor apprentice sessions allows the whole team to maintain functionality with either one mentor speaker for multiple apprentices, or two or three mentor speakers for one or multiple apprentices.
2. A core group of committed mentor speakers allows the team to depend upon different mentor speakers in a rotating, flexible schedule that can comfortably accommodate the absence of a single mentor speaker.
3. The consistent, direct participation of the GMA lead as a more advanced apprentice learner allows for Group Mentor Apprentice sessions to continue if no mentor speakers are able to be present.
4. The flexible schedules of the GMA lead and other apprentices allows for rescheduling, home-based visits, and other innovative solutions to ensuring apprentice contact time with Mentor speakers.

Principal Roles and Responsibilities of the GMA Lead:

1. The GMA lead is responsible for developing and choosing the activities for GMA sessions and making sure each apprentice is receiving comprehensible input and passing comprehension checks at their individual level before moving on to the next activity.
2. The GMA lead is responsible for training the highest speaking level apprentice to be a GMA lead.

3. If the GMA lead cannot be present, they will assign the highest-level apprentice to be responsible for management of the GMA session.

GMA Session Guidelines, Including Roles for Apprentices

1. The objective of every session is to speak the target heritage language for as long as possible. However, In the beginning stages of GMA, GMA planning can be done in English. The teams can discuss plans and instructions for the immersion set in English, and then afterward the immersion set the team can discuss problems and solutions to doing the immersion sets better. These planning and reviewing periods in English can help apprentices manage their stress levels during immersion. The ultimate goal is to move even the planning and review periods into English.
2. One apprentice will serve on a rotating basis as a journal keeper for the daily sessions. The Journal keeper will be signaled by the MA lead on what to take note of. The journal keeper will:
 - Make written note of situations that come up which led to a switch to English or cause other difficulties with the flow of the session.
 - Make written note of key new vocabulary that was not understood for later review with mentor speakers.
 - Make written note of key gaps in vocabulary that arises directly out of GMA sessions with a focus on functional communication.
3. One apprentice will serve on a rotating basis as the recorder for the daily sessions. To the extent possible without it interfering with their participation in the session the recorder will:
 - At the beginning of the GMA session make sure that the recording equipment is functioning and turned on.
 - Manually stop and start recording between each immersion set.
 - At the end of each session make sure recording equipment has sufficient memory for the next session and is turned off.
4. Each individual apprentice is responsible for being on time for GMA sessions
5. Each individual apprentice is responsible for demonstrating enthusiasm and engagement throughout the GMA session.
6. Each individual apprentice is responsible for review of previous session recordings for more language input, and independent study so that they can be adequately prepared to provide quality contribution to GMA sessions.
7. Each individual apprentice is responsible for being prepared to contribute to the unstructured immersion that consists of daily greetings and small talk at the beginning of each session.
8. Each individual apprentice is responsible for using only the target heritage language during immersions sets.

9. The only goal of the apprentice is to help the mentor speaker continue to speak the target heritage language. Everything else (comprehension, production, feeling comfortable, etc.) is secondary to this goal.
10. Always remind Mentor speakers of the target heritage language at the beginning of each session to speak only the target heritage language.
11. The GMA lead, not the mentor speaker, is responsible for structuring and leading the session so that immersion is achieved.
12. The more engaged the apprentice is with specific activities or routines the greater the chance that total immersion will be achieved.
13. To stay engaged, the apprentice should use phrases and questions to elicit the target heritage language from the mentor speaker. The apprentice needs to show readiness in using new vocabulary or new grammar structures that are being targeted in a particular immersion set. This is to help the mentor speaker feel comfortable enough to keep using the target heritage language with everyone and not feel like new apprentices need to be babied or helped along with translations or circumlocution.
14. The apprentice does not need to be able to understand or respond directly to everything the Mentor speaker says.
15. The apprentice needs to be able to continually elicit the target heritage language from the mentor speaker. The apprentice should continually apply as much as they can of the vocabulary that they have learned in previous contexts to the new immersion set activity.
16. The apprentice should repeat as much as possible the target heritage language spoken to them by the mentor speaker, even if they have no idea what they're saying. The worst thing they can do is use English to clarify understanding and break the no English rule.
17. The apprentice should intentionally limit inserting topics or vocabulary that will lead to English. If the mentor speaker does use English, gently remind the Mentor speaker, using the heritage language to stay in the language. *"Oh? And what's that called in the language?", "How would that be in the language?"*
18. If a conversation is leading to a lot of silence, then switch topics or activities.

GMA Session Guidelines for Mentor Speakers

1. The objective of each session is to speak the target heritage language for as long as possible.
2. It is important to gently correct apprentices by modeling whole language rather than using criticism.

3. Use gestures and be willing to repeat what you say frequently. It is normal for apprentices to have to hear a word used many times in many contexts before the word will be used by them fluently.
4. Patience is needed with new apprentices because they will not understand everything that is said in the language. Whole language input in immersion will get them there.
5. An apprentice's understanding will not substantially increase unless you continue to speak to them in the language.
6. Always remember to never switch to English, even if you can't think of how to respond or don't remember how you should say a specific word or if you don't understand the apprentice.

Instead, **in the target heritage language**, say any of the following:

I don't know. I forgot what it's called.
Let's talk about another one. I don't understand you.

(or any other response that allows you to stay in the target heritage language and not switch to English.)

7. Try to make your make your answers as long as possible. It is good for the apprentices to hear complex and paragraph long answers about all the items within the immersion set activities.

For example, if the apprentice holds up a picture of a puppy and asks you "What do you see?" DON'T JUST SAY "puppy". Instead, say something more extensive.

For example:

"I see a puppy. That's a cute puppy. He has brown eyes. He has black fur. He looks like he will be a big dog one day." and whatever else you can think of in the target language to describe the picture.

For another example, if the apprentice holds up a picture of an eagle and asks you "What do you see?" DON'T JUST SAY "eagle". Say something more like:

"That is a eagle. He is brown and white. Eagles eat fish. My mother was Eagle Clan." or:
"That's an eagle. Did you know eagles are sacred to us? Its good luck to see an eagle. You may see one if you walk around in the woods.

Daily Group Mentor Apprentice Session Structure

The effectiveness of Group Mentor apprentice sessions is facilitated by a daily structure that assists both apprentices and mentor speakers by providing a consistent framework upon which to accelerate language acquisition. As you maintain consistency in staying in the language during

immersion sets, both apprentices and mentor speakers will grow more skilled in and comfortable with the mechanics of different kinds of activities. The skill and comfort with the GMA structure will make it easier to expand and change the content of GMA sessions later on. As the framework becomes familiar to all parties, the framework itself will act as the comprehensible input and add context for the new target language vocabulary.

At the Beginning of Each Session:

- Set aside time at the beginning of each session for unstructured immersion. Unstructured immersion consists of daily greetings and small talk in the target heritage language. Take note of how the apprentices slowly start to be able to participate more and more in the unstructured immersion. This can be a good opportunity for assessment for the growth of the apprentice's speaking ability.
- Do not forget to start every GMA session with the mantra of "No English now, we'll speak only the language".

During the Session:

There are three basic categories of immersion sets to use within a session:

1. Listening focused.
 - a. Listening focused activities are when the mentor speaker is doing most of the talking.
 - b. Listening focused activities are good for getting the apprentice's brain used to the sounds in the target language.
 - c. Listening focused activities are for testing the apprentice's comprehension.
 - d. Listening focused activities are for helping apprentices become familiar with target heritage language words, phrases, and grammar structures.
2. Action focused.
 - a. Action focused activities are when the apprentices and mentor speakers are engaged in building, making, or moving around for language acquisition.
 - b. Action focused activities tie the language to physical action and movement.
 - c. Action focused activities facilitate practice of culture and language acquisition.
 - d. Action focused activities can be used to bring the language to new domains and make the language feel more relevant to apprentice's lives outside of GMA.
3. Speaking focused.
 - a. Speaking focused activities are for getting the apprentice's mouth and brain working together to produce the language.
 - b. Speaking focused activities facilitate practical language use for communication.
 - c. Speaking focused activities challenge the apprentice to start to develop their distinct way of expressing themselves in the language.

- d. Speaking focused activities are the best way for apprentices to gain conversational ability in the language.

It is impossible to gain fluency in the target heritage language without actively using the language daily. All three immersion activity types lead to total fluency and can save people from being passively fluent in the target language. So, it is essential that each immersion session contains activities from each immersion activity type.

Also remember, that if a given activity is leading to English or creating an environment with minimal target heritage language use, then end that activity and move on to the next activity. However, if a given activity is helping to create an immersion environment filled with the target heritage language and positively impacting specific language learning then it should be extended, even if that means not being able to do all the planned activities for the session.

At the End of Each Session:

Daily goodbye and small talk.

1. To the extent your ability allows have some closing small talk with the mentor speaker; ask what they are doing after the session, discuss when you will see them again, etc.
2. End each session by saying goodbyes in the target heritage language; the last words you say when you and the mentor speaker are parting should be in the target heritage language.
3. Don't linger after a session and visit in English. If you are not prepared to visit in the target heritage language, then say your goodbyes and end your interaction with the mentor speaker.

Group Mentor Apprentice Session Planning

At the start of the GMA journey, overcoming the challenges of cultivating an effortless immersion environment, engaging in effective learning, and achieving growth in language acquisition require rigorous structure and planning. However, when the team has increased language ability that allows for more fluid and flexible GMA sessions, session planning needs less preparation time for the GMA lead. Initially, the more prepared the GMA lead is in terms of the structure, content, and specific activities for an GMA session, the more accelerated language acquisition will be for all.

In planning your GMA session take into consideration the following:

1. Mix and alternate between each type of immersion activity (Listening focused, Speaking focused, Action focused) during each of your sessions.
2. Prepare at least 8 activities before each GMA session. The number of activities you complete in a four-hour period will vary depending on energy levels, content, effectiveness, and many other factors in any given session.

3. The GMA lead should prepare in advance according to the content area. The immersion sets and the specific activities should all be ready to go well before the session.
4. The order of the immersion sets used within the Daily Group Mentor Apprentice structure should be guided by the team's abilities. If the team is just beginning it may be easier to start with a listening focused immersion set activity.
5. Be flexible and prepared to move on to the next activity if the one being used is not effective and is filled with too much 'dead air'.
6. Remember that immersion sets have two parts: content and activities.
 - a. Content is *what* the apprentices are going to acquire; this could be new vocabulary, phrases for specific communicative situations, grammar functions, practicing a new teaching method such as TPR, WAYK, etc. Content is the *objective* of what the apprentices are acquiring.
 - b. Activities are *how* language acquisition will be facilitated; activities are the beginning and closing routines, games, storybooks, learning methods, etc. that provide a variety of paths for facilitating whole language immersion.
7. The concept of comprehensible input +1 must be at the base of all GMA planning. Language acquisition is comprehensible input with new vocabulary or grammatical structure being added in bit by bit. This technique is referred to as Comprehensible input + 1. This can be achieved by:
 - a. Immersion sets containing a lot of old material that will feel like much appreciated review and a little bit of new material to keep up engagement.
 - b. The new material can be new nouns, but it could also be new verb forms, new domains, or new teaching methods that utilize known vocabulary or familiar situations.
 - c. The GMA lead should try to create a balance between the challenge of new learning and the benefit of comprehension/familiarity in cultivating and reinforcing an effortless immersion environment.
 - d. The GMA lead should try to learn by placing new material in the context of known vocabulary or familiar situations without the necessity of translation.
8. Remember in your GMA planning that language acquisition requires **20 x 20**. You need to hear and use a word approximately 20 times in 20 situations for it to become a permanent part of your vocabulary. That's 400 occasions to use the word.
9. Remember in your planning that apprentices will experience "plateaus" in their language acquisition. A "plateau" is when an immersion set is not helping an apprentice to achieve

further language acquisition. If an apprentice is entirely comfortable and not challenged by the immersion sets then as the GMA lead you have to take some time to find the new limits of your apprentice's abilities. This is where the skills of a linguist come in handy, as the new challenge may lay in helping the apprentice find new ways to express themselves with thru more complicated verb forms or in a deeper understanding of the languages semantic or pragmatic domains.

Some other considerations:

1. Just because an activity fails the first time doesn't mean you should never circle back to it. It might work at a later date when apprentices are further along in speaking ability or it may just need revision and/or further practice to be effective.
2. The most important indicator of effectiveness is that everyone is able to stay in the language during the activity.
3. The second most important indicator of effectiveness is that functional communication between apprentices and mentor speakers is achieved.
4. The third most important indicator of effectiveness is that language ability is going beyond previous levels.

Daily GMA Session Planning Template Sample

Main content goal: be able to talk with mentor speakers about familial relations.

Individual content goals:

1. Learn basic terms for different relatives.
2. Learn basic questions to ask about relatives.
3. Learn some basic responses to the topic of relatives.

Phrases/questions/topics for daily greeting and small talk *in the target heritage language* (Kickapoo)

1. *Taani eesipemaatethichi Kekwitha? Ketaanetha?* – How's your son? Daughter?
2. *Kasi ishithoa Kekwitha? Ketaanetha?* -What's your son's name? daughter?
3. *Taani iseimikaki Maachi saanwiiki?* – How was maachi's weekend?

Learned phrases for daily reminder *in the target heritage language* to reinforce No English:

Kiimetotheenenihaatoweepena seeski – Lets just talk Kickapoo only

Listening focused activities for this session:

1. Have mentor speaker select one of the conversation cards and tell a story about that person. Example card: *What is your child's favorite food?*
2. Have mentor speaker describe flashcards of famous families. Example cards: **A picture of the Simpsons family, the Jetsons family, the Adams family etc.**
3. Family routine focused on relatives. Example: Have mentor speaker fill out a family tree on a dry erase board, or big post-it paper
4. Have mentor speaker tell one or more of the *Little Critter* storybooks by author Mercer Mayer or any storybook that has a family in it. Many Little Critter storybooks have Little Critter's family action focused activities such as going to the beach or going fishing together. The *Alexander* books by Judith Viorist are also very suitable.

Speaking focused activities for this session:

1. Introduce yourself and talk about your family.
2. Randomly select a relative card and take turns telling brief stories about that person.
3. Take turns using play figures to tell a story about a family.
4. Take turns using ten words to build a story. The GMA lead must prepare ten words ahead of time for this activity.
5. Take turns using ten pictures to tell a story. The GMA lead must prepare ten words ahead of time for this activity.
6. Take turns connecting two related pictures. For example: A happy face and a beach. People are often happy when they go to the beach because it is sunny and fun there.

Action focused activities for this session:

1. Label dolls and place them in front, beside and behind each other to represent a family tree.
2. Place realia food next to each doll and talk about each family member's favorite food
3. Draw each family tree based on each individual's description of their family for a comprehension check. Each apprentice will narrate the family trees they recorded—either their own or someone else's tree—with as much as they can say about each family member. "The mentor's sister loves to eat grapes as a snack." etc.

Phrases/questions/topics for daily goodbye and small talk *in the target language*: These are example phrases of what could be target inflections or target vocab. A complete list should be added to by the journal keeper in the GMA journal. The GMA lead picks these phrases for the apprentices to be exposed to.

Kiineewaa Kwekwechithaata aakwimehe? – Will you see James later?

Kiiaanemekai kothe – Tell your father I said hello

Aapake kiineone - See you tomorrow

Proposed Order of Activities for Immersion Sets

1. Introduce yourself, talk about your family. The apprentices should prepare for this activity beforehand during their self-study.
2. Have mentor speaker describe flashcards of families.
3. Act out family scenarios—no talking. Example: Cooking dinner, playing cards, etc. without talking, which is a learning tool to move away from using English to express an action.
4. Take turns connecting two pictures. For example, a picture of a Movie theater and a picture of money. I would say in the language “I’m frugal with my money except when I go to the movies. When I go to the movies, I buy everything. Popcorn, drink, candy etc. The apprentices can listen to the GMA lead and Mentor speakers do this activity. They are welcome to try it if they feel comfortable. Otherwise, this would be classified as a ‘listening focused activity’.
5. Have mentor speaker describe all that they see in one of the *Alexander* storybooks. An example book to use would be *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, or any other children’s book by author Judith Viorst.
6. Draw a family based on speaker description.
7. Take turns using play figures to tell a story about a family.
8. Family tree with dolls activity (Activity 1 under *Action focused* activities above).
9. Take turns using ten words to build a story. The GMA lead must prepare ten words ahead of time for this activity. These words must be high frequency words that will facilitate conversation.
10. Have mentor speaker select one of the conversation cards and tell a story that comes to mind from the prompt in the conversation card.
11. Randomly select a relative card and take turns telling brief stories about that person.

Here is a blank version of the daily GMA apprentice session planning template and a “proposed order of activities for immersion sets” that a GMA lead can use to plan their own session. These documents can help a GMA lead stay on track during the immersion set. They can fill out brief descriptions or just the title, whatever helps them remember what they’re going to lead everyone in.

Daily Group Mentor Apprentice Session Planning Template

Main content goal:

Individual content goals:

Phrases/questions/topics for daily greeting and small talk *in the target heritage language*:

Learned phrases for daily reminder *in the target heritage language* to reinforce No English:

Listening focused activities for this session:

Speaking focused activities for this session:

Action focused activities for this session:

Phrases/questions/topics for daily goodbye and small talk *in the target heritage language*:

Proposed Order of Activities for Immersion Sets

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

Content Areas for Group Mentor Apprentice Learning: Year One

Content areas will be used to measure and evaluate language growth. Content areas are not intended to define total learning within the Group Mentor Apprentice sessions but to provide both mentor speakers and apprentices with a baseline for learning in each year of the project. The eight content areas for Year One are as follows:

1. Core Daily Interactions: This content area focuses on basic conversational phrases for greetings, introducing oneself, and common exchanges that might happen in daily interactions. The content area covers basic language necessary to explain and direct Group Mentor apprentice session activities without switching to English or using written English cue cards to frame activities. Most times, Group Mentor Apprentice activities require explanation before Mentor speakers and apprentices can become fully engaged in the activities. Sample phrases include: *I am going to talk first. Then you will talk next. We are going to work together. They are going to work together.* Immersion sets in this content area may look like using kitchen set realia to cook a toy steak. The GMA lead will keep the steps of cooking a steak very simple. Example dialogue would be “I will go first. Then the Mentor speakers will go next. Then you. First, I take out the pan. Then I turn the oven on. Then I cook the steak. Then I eat the steak.” Each member of the team will take turns cooking the steak and narrating what they’re doing. Notice how the dialogue is very simple, so the apprentices can get used to how activities work in a GMA session.
2. Family and Kinship Terms: The goal of this content area is teaching words and phrases related to family relationships, which are often central in Indigenous cultures and provide familiar anchors for new vocabulary. This content area should also focus on the necessary language to reinforce immersion or redirect language acquisition back into the heritage language. This is a key skill set for apprentices who must be primarily responsible for assisting Mentor speakers to speak only the heritage language within a Group Mentor apprentice session. Sample phrases include things like *I don’t understand you but keep talking in the language, Don’t use English, Let’s keep going, Don’t worry about how you say that word, etc.* Example immersion set: Apprentices will ask the mentor speakers about a picture provided by the GMA lead. “Who is this? What is he doing? Are these two siblings?”

Are these two father and son? If the mentor speaker says something the apprentice does not understand the apprentice can say “I don’t understand you but keep talking in the language”. The apprentices can do play with a doll in the doll house. They can make the doll look out the window or stand by the kitchen sink of the dollhouse and ask, “what is she doing?” If the Mentor speaker accidentally slips into English, the apprentice will say “Let’s stay in the language OR they can start trying to repeat back the last thing the mentor speaker said.

3. Basic Commands and Requests: This content area introduces simple, high-frequency commands (e.g., "sit," "stand," "listen") and requests (e.g., "please give," "help me") to build fundamental communication skills. The goal of this content area should also focus on the necessary language to draw out and extend the amount of heritage language used by mentor speaker speakers. This is from initial assessments done by Cultural Survival at Sauk Language that showed that mentor speakers would often run out of things to say without the assistance of apprentices in directing the flow of conversation (Manatowa-Bailey et al, 2012). Sample phrases include: *Describe this for me. What do you remember about him? Tell me more about what you did. What is this called? Etc.*
4. Food and Meal-Time Vocabulary: This content area covers common words and expressions around food, eating, and meal preparation, as these contexts are central to both culture and daily life. The goal of this content area should also focus on the necessary language to involve the mentor speakers and other apprentices in the development of theory about one’s intention, motivation, actions, or feelings of either members of the Group Mentor Apprentice team or third parties. GMA leads and apprentices aim to get the mentor speakers to describe things “within” the activities for the GMA sessions and also they should aim for the ability to talk “around” the activities. The team should aim to be able to elicit and receive real time feedback on the activity and also have the ability to segue to the next activity all without needing to revert to English. Sample phrases could include: *Why do you not like to cook for large groups? Why is it hard to cook for strangers? Was this activity fun? Do you have any food allergies?*
5. Describing People and Places: This content area introduces words and simple phrases for physical descriptions and place-based references (e.g., "big," "small," "near," "far"), which

can be expanded over time for more detail. This content area should also cover the language necessary to engage in a core set of learning activities at the early childhood education immersion level. Apprentices will need more than just noun-focused vocabulary (colors, numbers, animals, shapes, etc.) and basic questions words (what is this?, who is that?, where is the ___?, etc.). They also need key verbs to engage in many activities. Sample verbs include *match, cut, draw, write, bring, touch, kick, etc.*

6. Natural World and Environment: This content area introduces high-frequency terms related to nature, animals, weather, and landscape, allowing learners to connect with familiar aspects of their environment. This content area should also include the necessary language to address basic life activities that can be the subject of everyday conversations within Group Mentor Apprentice sessions. Sample topics include: *sleeping, eating, traveling, working, cooking, etc.* While daily language pervades all Group Mentor Apprentice learning, this content area allows for a more structured focus on specific topics. In Year One the focus on high frequency words to describe daily routines as a content area could be on *work conversation* with an emphasis on the office setting of the Language Department. It is important that the workplace become a place where only the language is spoken even if just by GMA team members at first.
7. Health Awareness: This content area contains basic routines and sequences that mirror daily life activities, like "do you need a jacket?" or "do you get hot easily?," emphasizing naturalistic use of verbs and verb structures. This content area also has the potential to enhance apprentices' knowledge of the language necessary for apprentices and mentor speakers to successfully communicate with each other about how an outdoor environment or indoor environment will affect classroom management. Sample phrases include: *Can you help him? He needs his jacket. She needs to go to the bathroom. You work with those three, etc.*
8. Emotional Expressions: This content area is about basic words and phrases that help learners express emotions and states of being (e.g., "happy," "sad," "tired," "hungry"), which are foundational to personal communication. This content area also enables apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make basic responses in regard to the health of the L1 speakers.

Sample phrases include: *Are you happy today? Did you take your medicine? Is your back still hurting? Tell me about your health. Let me give you a ride to the doctor, etc.*

Content Area #1: Core Daily Interactions

Primary Goal: This content area covers basic language necessary to explain and direct Group Mentor apprentice session activities without switching to English or using written English cue cards to frame activities. Sample phrases include: *I am going to talk first. Then you will talk next. We are going to work together. They are going to work together.*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year One, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate-mid level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language for a minimum of four hours in an immersion GMA session.

Key Strategies:

- At the beginning of each session and between each immersion set explain to mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* activities that you will be doing for the GMA session. This way they can help explain or at the least be very patient while the apprentices find their footing.
- Daily reminder *in the target heritage language* at beginning of each session that English will not be used.
- Using specific phrases, apprentices take primary responsibility for explaining and directing the *purpose* and the *method* for chosen activities.
- Include routines specifically designed to challenge apprentices and mentor speakers not to use English in order to clarify the purpose and/or method for chosen activities. These are 'mostly speaking focused activities' where the apprentice can use their survival phrases to pull language from the mentor speakers.
- Transition to new activity if current activity is not producing functional communication, frustrating mentor speakers, or leading to English within the GMA session. Do not switch to English to clarify confusion.
- End each session by switching to English and talking again about the *purpose* and *method* for chosen activities.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?

- What would a list of survival phrases look like to help incoming apprentices?
- What phrases help decrease the amount of English within a GMA session the most?
- Is functional communication in relation to the content area increasing for apprentices?

Activities and Methods for Core Daily Interactions

Core Purpose: As an apprentice you are trying to establish with mentor speakers that the target heritage language is the only language you want to use to communicate with them. In the long term you are trying to eliminate English from every single interaction you have with Mentor speakers whether that is an GMA session, a phone call, a birthday party, running into them at the store, etc. In regard to Group Mentor Apprentice sessions, you are trying to reach a place where you can do all the planning, explanation, and direction of increasingly more sophisticated activities without the use of English.

For daily life:

- Train your brain to use the target heritage language by attempting every interaction you have using the language, even with nonspeakers.
- Specifically in regard to developing your ability to conduct Group Mentor apprentice session management focus on giving direction and explanation to your friends and relatives in the target heritage language first even if ultimately you have to switch to English for them to understand.
- Your daily life provides many opportunities to use the same language set that you need for Group Mentor Apprentice session management. Think about the number of times in a given day that you tell your children, relatives, or students to sit in a particular place, wait in order to speak, explain why they should or should not do something, ask them if they understand, etc.
- In your daily interactions with other apprentices at the language department attempt to say everything in the target heritage language even if ultimately you have to switch to English.
- In your non-GMA session interactions with mentor speakers, always begin your interaction in the target heritage language and to the extent possible given your ability level continue to speak only the target heritage language.

For GMA sessions:

From the moment a mentor speaker walks in the door until the moment they leave, as an apprentice, you should be trying to talk only the target heritage language. Don't visit with them in English before, after, or during an GMA session; doing so gives the impression that the target

heritage language is for GMA sessions and English is for real life interaction. You are trying to establish that the target heritage language is the language of daily communication and that you never want to talk with them in English.

- Immediately establish the target heritage language as language of communication.
- Begin each session by greeting mentor speakers in the target heritage language; the first words you say when you first see a mentor speaker should always be in the target heritage language.
- Be prepared in advance with the basic phrases you need to explain and direct a particular activity. The GMA lead should check with speakers the phrases they prepare or elicit these phrases from mentor speakers during preparation for the session if they don't already know the phrases they will need to run the session.
- The more repetition you use in explaining and directing during Group Mentor Apprentice sessions the more comfortable you will become with doing so and the amount of advance preparation you need to manage sessions will decrease.
- Before you begin an immersion set give the Mentor speakers a reminder not to use English during the session.
- Avoid or move past the moments of confusion.
- Both apprentices and mentor speakers tend to switch to English when faced with something they don't know, can't understand, or are having difficulty communicating about. Gently remind the participants to stay in the language during GMA sessions.
- Initially as an apprentice try to avoid creating or getting stuck on a moment of confusion. It is better to move on without resolving it than switch to English.
- Later after both apprentices and mentor speakers have broken the habit of switching to English the moment of confusion will not require as much active management.
- Always close your session with the target heritage language as the language of communication.
- To the extent your ability allows have some closing small talk with the mentor speaker about what you did that day; review the *purpose* and *method* for chosen activities.
- To the extent your ability allows consider and try to visit with the mentor speaker about the following with the intent of evaluating the *effectiveness* of the session:
 - Was a given activity useful in learning new vocabulary/grammar or in reinforcing existing vocabulary/grammar?

- Was the activity enjoyable?
 - Did the activity work the way you thought it would, or did it turn out differently?
 - How could the activity have been better or more effective?
 - Did the activity lead to English and if so, why?
-
- When the session ends that does not mean it is time to speak English. If you are not prepared to visit in the target heritage language after the session, then say your goodbyes and end your interaction with the mentor speaker.

Specific content to reinforce core daily interactions:

- Content involving location (sitting in a particular place, moving to a particular place, etc.)
- Content involving order (who will go first, who will talk first, etc.)
- Content involving purpose (why we are doing it; what we hope to learn, etc.)
- Content involving comprehension (do you understand why we are doing it; do you understand how we are going to do it, etc.)
- Content involving method (this is how we are going to do it)
- Content involving challenge (that didn't work; that confused me, etc.)
- Content involving adjustment (we should try it like this, let's do it again, etc.)

Content Area #2: Family and Kinship Terms

Primary Goal: To talk about familial relations using immersion sets that facilitate the development of basic language skills that maintain or redirect Group Mentor apprentice learning back into the target heritage language and limit amount of English used in GMA sessions. *This is my mom. This is my dad's brother. This is my mother's brother.*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year One, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate-mid level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language for a minimum of four-hours in an immersion GMA session.

Key Strategies:

- Begin each session by greeting speakers in the target heritage language; the first words you say when you first see a mentor speaker should always be in the target heritage language.
- Daily reminder *in the target heritage language* at beginning of each session that English will not be used.
- Include activities specifically designed to challenge apprentices and the mentor speakers not to use English. For example, games like Uno or Sorry can include simple penalties for speaking English during game play (H. Harley, personal communication, October 7th, 2024).
- Transition to new activity if current activity is not producing functional communication, frustrating apprentices, or leading to English within the GMA session. Do not switch to English to clarify confusion.
- End each session by saying goodbyes in the target heritage language; the last words you say when you and a mentor speaker are parting should be in the target heritage language.

Assessment Questions for the GMA lead to ask themselves:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?
- Is the current list of survival phrases adequate to help the apprentices in this content area?
- What phrases help decrease the amount of English within a GMA session the most?

- Is functional communication in relation to the content area increasing for apprentices?

Core Activities and Methods for Family and Kinship Terms

During the activities remember that everyone's objective is to establish with the mentor speakers that the target heritage language is the only language the team wants to use to communicate with. In the long term you are trying to eliminate English from every single interaction you have with the mentor speakers whether that is an GMA session, a phone call, a birthday party, running into them at the store, etc.

Activities to build fluency one domain at a time:

- Train your brain to use the target heritage language by attempting every interaction you have using the language.
- Talk to yourself in the target heritage language as you drive, describe what you see around you in the target heritage language while you're waiting for a doctor's appointment, talk to your children in the target heritage language even if they don't understand you, etc.
- Even if you are talking to someone in English think about how you would say it in the target heritage language.
- In your daily interactions with other apprentices in your language program, attempt to say everything in the target heritage language even if ultimately you have to switch to English.
- In your non-GMA session interactions with mentor speakers always begin your interaction in the target heritage language and to the extent possible given your ability level continue to speak only the target heritage language.

For every single GMA session:

From the moment a mentor speaker walks in the door until the moment they leave you as a apprentice should be trying to talk only the target heritage language. Don't visit with them in English before, after, or during an GMA session; doing so gives the impression that the target heritage language is for GMA sessions and English is for real life interaction. You are trying to establish that the target heritage language is the language of daily communication and that you never want to talk with them in English.

- Daily greeting and small talk.
 - Begin each session by greeting mentor speakers in the target heritage language; the first words you say when you first see a mentor speaker you should always be in the target heritage language.

- Prepare in advance one or more small conversational topics; a brief story to tell, a specific question to ask, or any other exchange that takes place entirely in the target heritage language.
- This should be “real life” communication; something that happened, health, weather, how somebody is doing, etc.
- After small talk but before you begin an immersion set give the mentor speaker a reminder not to use English during the session.
- Don’t forget to avoid or move past the moment of confusion.
 - Both apprentices and the mentor speakers tend to switch the English when faced with something they don’t know, can’t understand, or are having difficulty communicating about.
 - Initially as an apprentice try to avoid creating or getting stuck on a moment of confusion. It is better to move on without resolving it than switch to English.
 - Later after both apprentices and the mentor speakers have broken the habit of switching to English the moment of confusion will not require as much active management.
- Daily goodbye and small talk.
 - To the extent your ability allows have some closing small talk with the mentor speaker; ask what they are doing after the session, discuss when you will see them again, etc.
 - End each session by saying goodbyes in the target heritage language; the last words you say when you and a mentor speaker are parting should be in the target heritage language.
 - Don’t linger after a session and visit in English. If you are not prepared to visit in the target heritage language, then say your goodbyes and end your interaction with the mentor speaker.

Specific activities to reinforce ‘No English’ in the family and kinship terms content area:

- Activities involving non-verbal communication:
 - Total Physical Response Routines: Show me in Plains Indian Sign Language ‘mother’, ‘father’, ‘sister’ etc.
 - Premade action cards for spoken/gestured commands. Printed out from the internet. I like to type clipart after any search item in the images tab on google.
 - Premade Picture cards for spoken/gestured commands. Printed out from the internet.

- Play-acting.
 - Who is that? Are they related?
 - Everyday activities that involve action.
 - Mime and guess.
 - Guess who I'm drawing.
-
- Develop capacity in the target heritage language through learned phrases to ask about how to say things without switching to English.
 - Intentional practice of talking about things that don't have a specific, known name in the target heritage language.
 - Storybooks with No English that encourage mentor speaker to engage in the target heritage language only narrative.
 - Conversation or storytelling topics that encourage mentor speakers to engage in the target heritage language only narrative.

Content Area #3: Basic Commands and Requests

Primary Goal: Development of basic language skills by apprentices necessary to draw out and extend the amount of the target heritage language used by the mentor speakers and limit amount of English used in MA sessions. “*Do you like this one? What do you think of this? What do I do first? What do I do next?*”

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices’ success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year One, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate-mid level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language for a minimum of four hours in an immersion GMA session.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- Regularly remind the apprentices to practice speaking or listening to heritage language audios outside of GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.
- Try to ask questions that create an opportunity for more than one-word responses. Questions that ask ‘why’ or ‘how’ something is the way it is elicits more from the master speaker than ‘who’ or ‘what’ questions.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?
- What would a list of survival phrases look like to help incoming apprentices?

- What phrases help decrease the amount of English within a GMA session the most?
- Is functional communication relative to the content area increasing for apprentices?

Core Activities and Methods for Basic Elicitation, Basic Commands, and Requests

Core Purpose: As an apprentice, you aim to encourage the mentor speakers to provide instruction using complete sentences and assist you in acquiring the full language. Over time, you need the mentor speakers to offer longer, more detailed responses, descriptions, and explanations that expand your learning beyond its current level. Elicitation techniques allow you to draw out and increase the amount of the target heritage language used by the mentor speakers, moving past single words or short phrases.

For daily life:

- During your daily conversations, practice asking questions using a variety of tenses and grammatical structures in the target heritage language.
- While conversing in English, consider how you would phrase your statements and question in the target heritage language. This will improve performance during GMA sessions.
- During your daily interactions with other apprentices at your language department, strive to ask all questions in the target heritage language, even if you ultimately need to switch to English to complete the exchange.
- In your non-GMA session interactions with the mentor speakers try to get to know them using the heritage language.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For every single GMA session:

- Daily conversation.
 - Set aside a portion of each GMA session to unstructured immersion, where you engage the mentor speakers in open-ended conversations about their daily lives and you can share your own life experiences as well.
 - Before your sessions with the mentor speakers, prepare one or more questions to ask them about real-life topics, such as recent events, their health, or how someone they know is doing. This will help improve performance during GMA sessions.

- Draw on your experience with the mentor speakers to ask questions that will elicit full-sentence responses. For example, if a mentor speaker enjoys discussing tribal politics, inquire about their views. Accordingly, if they like talking about their children, ask questions related to them.
- Always attempt to expand your learning to unfamiliar domains and topics beyond your current level of proficiency.
- During immersion sessions, continually seek out new questions to ask that challenge your current ability, explore related topics, and aim to elicit greater detail from the mentor speaker. This will encourage them to provide longer, more comprehensive responses.
- It is often easier to extend immersion sets rather than start a new one.
- If apprentices and the mentor speakers switch to English when faced with a challenge move on to the next segment in the activity or start a new activity.
- A new apprentice may try to avoid getting stuck in a moment of confusion. Impress upon them that it is better to move on without resolving it than switch to English.
- Eventually both apprentices and the mentor speakers will have broken the habit of wanting to switch to English when a moment of confusion arises.
- Try to facilitate a personal connection between mentor speakers and apprentices through levity, allow space for the occasional funny joke or observation. This will help language acquisition in the long term.

Specific activities to practice basic commands and requests:

- Conversational topic routines:
 - Requesting the mentor speakers to talk about what they ate for breakfast.
 - Asking the mentor speakers about what commands a good dog should know.
 - Asking the mentor speakers about what parents say to their kids at bedtime.
 - Asking the mentor speakers about what teachers usually say to kids at school.
- Use storybooks with No English that provide opportunities to talk about what is happening with the story and speculate about motivation, reason, intention, behind characters in the story asking or commanding of other characters in the story.
- People picture card routines:
 - Asking about what people do.
 - Asking about what they use.
 - Asking about what they look like.
 - Asking about how what emotions the people in the picture may be feeling.

- Object routines with pictures:
 - Asking how things are used.
 - Asking who uses them.
 - Asking about how they are made.
 - Asking about what they look like.

Content Area #4: Food and Meal-Time Vocabulary

Primary Goal: This content area covers common words and expressions around food, eating, and meal preparation, as these contexts are central to both culture and daily life. The goal of this content area should also focus on the necessary language to involve the mentor speakers and other apprentices in the development of theory about one's intention, motivation, actions, or feelings of either members of the Group Mentor apprentice team or third parties. GMA leads and apprentices aim to get the mentor speakers to describe things "within" the activities for the GMA sessions and also they should aim for the ability to talk "around" the activities. The team should aim to be able to elicit and receive real time feedback on the activity and also have the ability to segue to the next activity all without needing to revert to English. Sample phrases could include: *Why do you not like to cook for large groups? Why is it hard to cook for strangers? Was this activity fun? Do you have any food allergies?*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year One, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate-mid level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language for a minimum of four-hours in an immersion GMA session.

Key Strategies:

- Involve the Mentor speakers and other apprentices in speculating about the intention, motivation, actions, feelings, etc. involving food activities.
- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Ask questions that require mentor speakers and/or other apprentices to think about potential reasons or possible answers that are not obvious or clear within a given situation.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- Regularly remind apprentices to study outside of GMA sessions. The more they study outside of sessions the more they will be able to contribute, and the easier GMA sessions will become.

- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.

Assessment Questions:

- How well are the key strategies being used by the whole team within GMA session at this point?
- Does the use of speculation about favorite foods to eat or cook help extend the kinds of conversation taking place with GMA sessions beyond the descriptive?

Core Activities and Methods for Food and Mealtime

Core Purpose: As an apprentice you are trying to encourage the mentor speakers to teach in full sentences and assist you in whole language acquisition. Over the long term you are trying to learn how to engage in “real life” conversation not just describe things or understand descriptions given by others. The use of speculation is a way for you to draw out and extend conversation with mentor speakers that includes intention, motivation, emotions, and other areas that require active thinking about the potential and the possible, not just the known.

For daily life:

- In your daily conversations practice asking questions that don't have a definitive answer. For example, instead of just asking “Is he hungry?” you can ask “Why do you think he's hungry?”
- Even if you are asking someone a question in English think about how you would ask it in the target heritage language.
- In your daily interactions with other apprentices at your language department ask questions that involve speculation. For example, “What do you think about this food?” or “Why do you like to eat it?”
- In your non-GMA session interactions with the mentor speakers try to ask them several questions that involve speculation. For example, “What do you think you are going to cook later?” or “What do you think about fast food versus home cooked meals?”
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For GMA sessions:

- Unstructured immersion sets (as discussed in 4.1.1).

- In your unstructured immersion sets think of conversational topics that require speculation. For example, “Why do you think Natives really like to make to-go plates?” or “What other restaurants should the casino add in the future?”
- Prepare in advance one or more questions to ask the mentor speakers that require speculation; focus on “real life” communication to which apprentices or the mentor speakers have a personal connection. For example, “How do you think your sister is feeling about her son not wanting to learn to cook?”
- Try to ask questions that experience with mentor speakers tells you will produce full sentence responses. If a mentor speaker likes soup; ask about soup. If they like to talk about breakfast, ask about breakfast.
- In the immersion sets try to identify new questions to ask, new aspects of a topic to talk about, greater detail to elicit, or other ways to encourage the mentor speaker to produce longer, fuller responses to speculate on. For example, follow up “How do you think he’s feeling after eating all that chili?” with “Why do you think he feels that way?”
- Remember, it is more effective to extend learning by adding to an immersion set than it is to start an entirely new one. Remember the technique, COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT + 1. For example, if you have been speculating about someone’s favorite food, you might extend the conversation by asking who is their favorite cook in their family.

Specific activities to practice talking about cuisine:

- Conversational topic routines.
 - Asking about motivation. For example, “Why did he cook that?”
 - Asking about intention. For example, “What was he trying to make?”
 - Asking about reason. For example, “Why do Kickapoos love Chinese food so much?”
 - Asking about condition. For example, “How does he feel about losing his lunch?”
- Use sequenced visuals to speculate about what is going to happen next, who is going to do it, why they are going to do it, etc.
- Use storybooks with no English that provide opportunities to question the mentor speakers about what is happening within the story and speculate about motivation, reason, and intention behind someone trying to eat or trying to cook or trying to eat.
- Use visuals with no obvious connection to speculate about the connection between two pictures. For example, “What is he going to do with that blender?” or “What do think he has in that grocery bag?”
- Use visuals of emotions to speculate about intention, motivation, reason, and condition. For example, “Why do you think he’s crying?” or “Who do you think made him mad?”

- Create immersion sets that require apprentices and mentor speakers to express an opinion. For example, use a series of visuals of famous chefs to speculate about who is the best chef and why.
- Create immersion scenarios with cause and effect for which there is no “right” answer and speculate about the answer. For example, “A man goes into the kitchen; why did he go in there?”

Content Area #5: Describing People and Places

Primary Goal: The primary goal of this content area is to equip the apprentices with foundational language tools to describe people and their surroundings in order to interact with their environment and engage meaningfully in immersion set activities going forward. By introducing key descriptive vocabulary, basic question words, and practical verbs, learners can go beyond simply naming objects. They gain the ability to participate actively in immersive settings, where they can follow instructions, engage in interactive tasks, and describe basic attributes of people, places, and objects. Apprentices can also achieve a basic knowledge of the vocabulary necessary to teach at an entry level within an early childhood education immersion environment. Example phrases: *This is big, this is small, can you find the blue pen? Look closely. What do you see in this room?*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year One, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate-mid level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language for a minimum of four-hours in an immersion GMA session.

Key Strategies:

- Actively practice immersion sets as early childhood education activities with mentor speakers and other apprentices. With language, teaching is the best way to learn.
- For many indigenous languages its best to first focus on learning the verbs in immersion activities. Apprentices can always point to or show objects and nouns that need to elicit or use a survival phrase such as “what is this?”.
- Connect all learning to physical and visual demonstration of the activities; you should always be showing and doing as well as speaking.
- Rely on key learned phrases to maintain immersion while practicing activities that have difficult vocabulary. For example, if you don't know the verb for “spin” then use “Let's all do like this.” to indicate the action and/or elicit the vocabulary you need.
- The more studying the apprentice does outside of GMA the more advanced they will be with specific routines or activities they do with Mentor speakers and the faster the pace of their language acquisition will be relative to the GMA content areas.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?
- Are the apprentices getting better at eliciting language from the speakers especially when there is ‘dead air’?
- Does the practice of teaching as learning extend the overall functional communication of apprentices with mentor speakers within GMA sessions?

Core Activities and Methods for Describing People and Places

Core Purpose: As an apprentice who will eventually be teaching full time either in an early childhood education immersion environment or teaching adult learners through immersion this content area provides a basic introduction to the vocabulary necessary to describe people and places. This includes both noun-focused vocabulary (*colors, numbers, animals, shapes, etc.*), basic question words (*what is this?, who is that?, where is the ____?, etc.*), and the key verbs (*match, cut, draw, write, bring, touch, point to, etc.*).

For daily life:

- In your daily life practice using the vocabulary, playing games with relatives.
- To the extent possible apprentices should run immersion sets with their families.
- In your daily interactions with other apprentices at your language department use the vocabulary you have acquired in this content area across multiple contexts.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For GMA sessions:

- ***Unstructured immersion sets:***
 - In your unstructured immersion sets think of conversational topics with mentor speakers that allow you elicit vocabulary for describing people and places. For example, “how tall is your grandson?” or “What do you remember about your first school building when you went to first grade?”
 - If you have acquired sufficient vocabulary to not switch to English, try doing your lesson planning with mentor speakers in the target heritage language.
- ***Structured immersion sets:***
 - Use visuals of school scenes or activities to become familiar with the kinds of vocabulary that comes up when you want to describe how people or places look.

- Use puzzles, sorting and matching games, sequencing games, coloring, tracing, cut and paste, and other common early childhood education activities to acquire the ability to describe people and places.
- Have mentor speakers help you to learn how to tell story and sight word books to elicit description words.
- Have mentor speakers help you create songs because songs are excellent mnemonic devices.
- Learn by teaching- practice descriptive vocabulary by role-playing children and teachers in an immersion school.
- Design GMA routines focused on learning descriptive vocabulary for specific themes that are common in the early childhood education classroom (what do different animals look like, family descriptions, what does nature look like during each season, etc.)
- After apprentices have familiarized themselves with basic descriptive vocabulary apprentices can create lesson plans for a day or even a week of early childhood education instruction and practice the actual instruction with the mentor speakers and their family and friends.

For potential immersion pilots:

1. Immersion pilots can be a means to evaluate the overall progress of language ability for apprentices. Immersion pilots can be used to identify areas that apprentices need to concentrate on within Group Mentor Apprentice sessions.
2. In creating and maintaining a strong immersion environment remember to focus on classroom management first and let the target heritage language emerge from your classroom management. Phrases used: *Everybody clap once if you can hear me; clap twice if you can hear me.*
3. Because children don't understand everything that you are saying to them in the target heritage language you have to communicate with them physically and visually as well as verbally.
4. Don't worry about not speaking the language perfectly during an immersion pilot. As long as the team is doing good classroom management and demonstrating as well as speaking, the children will understand what is going on.
5. When a child understands what you want them to do and/or not do, it doesn't matter if you mispronounced a word, forgot how to say something or messed up a grammar point.

6. Talk around children as well as to them. The more input a child's brain receives, the better.
7. Everyone in the team should lean into their strengths in the language. Children do not have a long attention span so have plenty of classroom management phrases burned into your memory before the first day of the pilot.

Content Area #6: Natural World and Environment

Primary Goal: The primary goal of this content area is to create a structured foundation for using the language in everyday, practical contexts that are both familiar and relevant to the natural world and outdoor education. By focusing on high-frequency terms related to nature, daily activities that often happen outdoors, and professions that are often in the outdoors, this content area aims to embed language in everyday contexts for talking about nature and the great outdoors. This content area is also good for helping apprentices to achieve a basic knowledge of the vocabulary necessary to engage in outdoor education at an entry level within an early childhood education immersion environment.

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year One, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate-mid level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language for a minimum of four-hours in an immersion GMA session.

Key Strategies:

- Actively practice classroom management for outdoor education with mentor speakers and other apprentices; don't just talk about classroom management. You need to actually *do* classroom management within your Group Mentor Apprentice sessions. Have the speakers pretend to be students or even bring some children in for a small pilot.
- Focus on learning the verbs for outdoor education; you can always point to or show objects and nouns that you haven't mastered.
- Connect all classroom management for outdoor education to physical and visual demonstration of what you want children/learners to do; you should always be showing and doing as well as speaking. Example: *be careful, walk slowly, don't touch that*
- Use key learned phrases to maintain immersion while practicing classroom management routines that have difficult vocabulary. For example, if you don't know the verb for "spin" then use "Let's all do like this." to indicate the action and/or elicit the vocabulary you need.
- The more prepared the GMA lead is, the faster the pace of language acquisition will increase. Regularly remind apprentices to practice practice and study study outside of GMA.

Assessment Questions:

- How are the key strategies being used by apprentices within GMA session at this point in the program?
- How does the addition of classroom management for outdoor education vocab and phrases extend the overall functional communication of apprentices with mentor speakers within GMA sessions and outside of GMA sessions?

Core Activities and Methods for Interacting with the Natural World and Environment

Core Purpose: For apprentices who could possibly be called upon to teach full time in an early childhood education immersion environment this content area provides a basic introduction to supplement vocabulary used for describing the natural world and environment. In terms of vocabulary this content area focuses primarily on the actions (*sit on the grass, stand on the dirt, turn around at the tree, follow the leader, listen to the birds, look at the water, etc.*) and commands (*Stop! Good! Come here! Pay Attention!, etc.*) necessary to maintain order during an outdoor nature lesson.

For daily life:

- In your daily life practice using commands, transition activities, and other attention getters with your own children or relatives.
- To the extent possible, practice the vocabulary for describing nature and the environment in your other settings. Total Physical Response routines are a good way to practice basic actions and commands for the outdoors at family reunions or family get togethers.
- In your daily interactions with other apprentices in the language program, use the vocabulary you have acquired in this content area in as many contexts as you can find.
- Keep a notebook journal with you to write down vocabulary that comes up which you don't know how to say or talk about in the target heritage language. Focus on acquiring the language needed to properly express yourself in the language.

For GMA sessions:

- ***Unstructured Immersion Sets:***
 - In your unstructured immersion sets think of conversational topics with the target heritage language speakers that allow you to use the vocabulary for talking about nature. For example, "What do you remember about your first camping trip?" or "What's the scariest animal you have ever seen out in nature?"
 - If you have acquired sufficient vocabulary to not switch to English, take an immersion trip and go visit another language immersion program or even an English language Early childhood education program and talk in the target

heritage language with speakers about what the teachers are doing in their immersion sessions.

- ***Structured Immersion Sets:***
 - Use visuals to become proficient at describing nature and the great outdoors.
 - Role play teacher and students out in nature or using dolls and a jungle set up.
 - Use visuals/storyboard sequences to practice vocabulary that you would use in different outdoor scenarios such as hunting, fishing, or camping. For example, talk with the mentor speakers about a storyboard of a child who can't sit still long enough to fish.
 - Utilize photos and/or video of previous immersion pilots to discuss with other apprentices and mentor speakers what worked and didn't work in regard to classroom management during previous pilots.
 - After you have familiarized yourself with basic nature vocabulary create a daily or even a weekly schedule for early childhood education instruction and practice the actual instruction with the mentor speakers.

A note for potential immersion pilots:

Immersion pilots offer a valuable opportunity to assess the language development of apprentices, both overall and within the context of an Early Childhood Education classroom. The primary goal of these immersion pilots is to identify areas for improvement for GMA sessions. Effective classroom management is crucial to the success of Early Childhood Education immersion settings. Apprentices should prioritize classroom management first, allowing the heritage language to naturally emerge from this environment. Since children may not fully comprehend the apprentice's verbal communication in the heritage language, they can effectively supplement understanding by using physical and visual cues. It is imperative to use the target heritage language as much as possible during an immersion pilot; the aim is to immerse children in the language, even if they do not fully grasp all that is said. Apprentices should speak both directly to the children and around them, using familiar vocabulary, without undue concern for exactness or precision.

Content Area #7: Health Awareness

Primary Goal: This content area will help apprentices develop the ability to ask about, understand, and respond to topics about the health and wellness of the elderly mentor speakers. Sample phrases could include: *Did you take all your vitamins today? Do your hands hurt today? Are you feeling well today? Do you have any doctor appointments today?, etc.*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year One, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate-mid level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language for a minimum of four-hours in an immersion GMA session.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared the GMA lead is, the faster the pace of language acquisition will increase. Regularly remind apprentices to practice practice and study study outside of GMA.
- Always seek to foster longer conversations and engaged dialogue; don't be afraid to rely on your personal familiarity with the mentor speaker, their tribal connections, and their health situation, to guide discussions beyond just learning particular phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- How are the key strategies being used by apprentices within GMA session at this point in the program?
- How does the addition of health and wellness conversational vocab and phrases extend the overall functional communication of apprentices with mentor speakers within GMA sessions and outside of GMA sessions?

Core Activities and Methods for the Health Awareness Content Area

Core Purpose: As an apprentice to elderly speakers, one spends extensive time working alongside mentor speakers who either personally experience health challenges or have relatives dealing with such issues. It is crucial to be able to communicate with them about this significant ongoing concern in their lives. Regarding vocabulary, this content area primarily concentrates on the actions, states of being, and questions essential for health and wellness conversations with mentor speakers.

For daily life:

- In your everyday activities, engage in practicing the vocabulary related to health awareness discussions with your own children and/or family members. Speak to them it may be hard at first but after a while it will be expected.
- Even in your interactions with other apprentices outside of GMA sessions, use the vocabulary you have acquired in this content with them. Ask other apprentices about the health of famous people or their own health. You can tell them about yours health.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For GMA sessions:

- ***Unstructured immersion sets:***
 - Think of conversational topics with mentor speakers that allow you to use the vocabulary for the health awareness conversation content area. For example, “what are your favorite home remedies for a cold?” or “did you pick up any new hobbies during the pandemic?”
 - Prepare in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers; focus on “real life” communication; for example, if you know that a mentor speaker has allergies that act up in the spring, ask about that, or if you know that one of their relatives will be getting surgery soon, ask how they are preparing.
- ***Structured immersion sets:***
 - Use visuals of different health conditions, topics, or scenarios to elicit language that comes up in health-related conversations.
 - Use dolls and the carpet with a town design on it to work routines focused on learning vocabulary for specific health situations that are common in the lives of mentor speakers (going to the hospital to visit a relative, going to the pharmacy to pick up medicine, not being able to see to drive long distances anymore, etc.)

- Object routines – health, medicine, vitamins.
 - Talk about different vitamins.
 - Talk about what ailments can be solved by which vitamins.
 - Talk about herbs and what they can do for the body.
 - Talk about what different vitamins, herbs and medications look like.
- Use storybooks without English text that provide opportunities to question mentor speakers about the story's narrative related to health and try to facilitate health-related discourse between the mentor speakers.
- Use visuals and/or real-life situations to speculate about reason, intention, motivation, etc. For example, “Why do you think he’s sleeping all day?” or “Where should he go if Indian Health services is closed?”
- People picture card routines-health and medicine (x-ray tech, lab tech, front desk, etc.)
 - Talk about what each position does in a hospital.
 - Talk about what machines or tools they use.
 - Talk about what clothes they need to wear.
- Celebrity expirations/medical conditions Picture Card Routines
 - Who is this?
 - How did they pass away?
 - What does the news say they had?
- Healthy food/unhealthy food picture card routines.
 - Why is it healthy?
 - Why is it unhealthy?
 - What happens if you eat too much salad/pizza?
- Outdoor conditions that can affect health.
 - smoke
 - flood
 - drought
- Conversational topic routines.
 - Talk to mentor speakers about the health conditions and habits of their relatives.
 - Talk to mentor speakers about the health benefits of movement.
 - Discuss family photo albums and health conditions of family and friends.
 - Asking mentor speakers about their current exercise routines.
 - Talk about traditional medicine and what they remember from their old folks’ teachings.

Content Area #8: Emotional Expressions

Primary Goal: The main goal of this content area is to equip learners with foundational language for expressing and understanding emotions, physical states, and health-related needs, fostering personal and empathetic communication. By focusing on vocabulary and phrases that allow apprentices to express their own feelings and inquire about the well-being of others, this content area aims to promote emotional and relational language that supports health and wellness conversations. This content area will enhance meaningful interaction with master speakers and also a good added benefit is that this content area can help create a safe space for honest communication. Sample content phrases would include: *What do you like to do when life gets hard? How do you/did you used to comfort your kids when they were upset? How can you tell when someone is happy? etc.*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year One, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate-mid level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language for a minimum of four-hours in an immersion GMA session.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- Always seek to foster longer conversations and engaged dialogue; don't be afraid to rely on your personal familiarity with the mentor speaker, their tribal connections, and their health situation, to guide discussions beyond just learning particular phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the apprentices masters of the key strategies at this point?
- What does the list of survival phrases look like for an incoming apprentice at this point in the program?
- Is functional communication relative to the content area increasing for apprentices?

Activities and Methods for Emotional Expressions

Core Purpose: As an apprentice who spends a great deal of time working within a language department it is important to be able to communicate about how one feels in order to stay on top of stress management. Burnout can destroy a lot of hard work. It can make common tasks and situations we encounter on a daily basis within an office setting difficult. In terms of vocabulary this content area focuses primarily on the verbs for emotional states (overwhelmed, energetic, happy, excited, tired, etc. It is also helpful to talk about work related vocab as well such as (send, make, meet, call, told, etc.), and states of being (sick, coming late, feeling bad, feeling better, etc.), and questions (When are we meeting? You doing well today? Are you bored? Did you send it? Did you look at it?, etc.) necessary to discuss work related issues with mentor speakers and each other.

For daily life:

- In your daily life practice using the vocabulary for work conversation with your own children and/or relatives. It may be weird at first for everyone but soon after enough times it will be expected, and they will gain comprehension.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. You can inquire to apprentices about what they are working on and how they feel about it. You can tell them what you are doing. Don't forget to use the language to make arrangements for meetings.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For GMA sessions:

- ***Unstructured immersion sets:***
 - In your unstructured immersion sets think of conversational topics with the target heritage language speakers that allow you to use the vocabulary for the work conversation content area. For example, "What is the best job you've ever worked?" or "What do you like about working in language revitalization?"
 - Prepare some questions in advance to ask the mentor speakers, focusing on "real-life" communication. If you know a mentor speaker's relative is looking for a job, ask about that. If you know they used to work at a hospital, inquire about their work there and how it made them feel.
- ***Structured immersion sets:***
 - For your structured immersion sets use visuals of different common everyday work tasks, outdoor occupations, indoor occupations and work scenarios to become familiar with the kinds of vocabulary that comes up in work related conversation.

- Create GMA routines that focus on building fluency through learning vocabulary for specific work situations common to the lives of mentor speakers, whether in the present (getting to and from work, calling in sick, when and where we are meeting, etc.) or the past (what they used to do for work when they were younger, and where and what their friends and family did for work, etc.).
- Object routines – favorite hobbies and least favorite chores.
 - Talk about favorite hobbies.
 - What tools are used in the favorite hobby?
 - Talk about least favorite chores.
 - Are there any tools or machines used to do those chores?
- Use storybooks with No English that provide opportunities to question mentor speakers about what is happening with the story in regard to work and listen to narrative related to work.
- Use visuals or real-life situations to speculate about reason, intention, motivation, etc. For example, “Do you think the chairman likes his job?” or “Why do people at the bank seem so happy?”
- People picture card routines-occupations (focus first on office and school settings)
 - Talk about what people do at various professions.
 - Talk about what jobs the mentor speakers might love or hate.
 - Talk about why customer services jobs might be hard emotionally.
- Celebrity Picture Card Routines
 - Talk about famous Native American Leaders.
 - What tribe were/are they?
 - What are they known for doing?
- Fun job/boring job picture card routines.
 - Which apprentices think they could sell cars?
 - Has anyone every been waitstaff before?
 - Has anyone ever worked more than one job and how did they like it?
- Doll routines about conditions that affect work.
 - What happens when food is left out and goes spoiled story
 - Make up a doll routine about the water going out in the dollhouse
 - Make story about the power going out in the dollhouse
 - Make a story about noisy neighbors next to the dollhouse
 - Make a story about it being too cold or hot in the dollhouse
- Conversational topic routines.
 - Talk about a time they saw someone happy about a new job.
 - Talk about a time you asked for a raise.

- Talking about a time you didn't work for a long period of time.
- Open discussion about how everyone feels about working in language revitalization.
- If you won a billion dollars, would you still work to keep yourself busy?

Content Areas for Group Mentor Apprentice Learning: Year Two

Content areas will be used as a means to measure and evaluate language growth. Content areas are not intended to define total learning within the Group Mentor Apprentice sessions but to provide both mentor speakers and apprentices with a baseline for learning in each year of the project. The eight content areas for Year Two are a continuation of Year One, and are as follows:

9. Life Cycles and Natural Rhythms: This content area focuses on building on daily interactions and natural world vocabulary, this area could introduce language for life processes (birth, growth, death, seasons, etc.), encouraging learners to observe and describe change over time in nature and humans. This content area will also enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses regarding biological processes of the human experience that shape one's capacity to interact with one's environment. Sample phrases would include: *When was he born? He's young. When did he die? How many kids did they have?*

10. Interacting with and Describing Everyday Objects: This content area will expand on the content area 'describing people and places.' This content area will introduce more complex vocabulary and structure for discussing and categorizing household items, tools, and community objects. It will also enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses in regard to common object states (open, closed, hot, cold, heavy, light, etc.) and object use (clean, put in, move, carry, set up, break, fix, etc.).

11. Giving and Receiving Directions: This content area will go deeper into spatial awareness, apprentices can practice direction and location phrases for both close and far distances, enabling them to guide others or describe places meaningfully and enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses in regard to common actions associated with location, movement, and placement (go, come, leave, put, move, drive, pass, etc.), basic directions (north, south, east, west, up, down, etc.), and basic locations (under, in, on top, behind, between, etc.).

12. Expressing Time and Temporal Concepts: This content area will cover practical temporal concepts (like "now," "soon," "later," days of the week, and expand upon the seasons) and basic expressions for future, past, and habitual actions, helping learners discuss time in practical terms. This content area will enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses in regard to seasons (spring, summer, fall, winter), modern concepts of time (clock time, calendar time, etc.), and basic questions related to time (when? how long? how old? etc.).

13. Human Body and Human Conditions: This content area includes body parts and basic health expressions, as well as verbs for self-care and health routines. This content area will enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses in regard to parts of the body, illness, and bodily processes. Sample phrases would include: *My head is hurting. Do you have any aspirin? I haven't had a bowel movement in two days. Does she have cancer?*

14. Home Language about Children: This content area introduces everyday phrases for guiding, comforting, and instructing children, building more complex structures around caregiving and

familial interaction. This content area will enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses in regard to those daily tasks that are associated with the rearing of children (*How do I change a diaper? What do I do if my child has a fever? When can I start grounding my child from TV?*)

15. Relationships and Social Circles: This content area will enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses regarding the limitations, dynamics and thoughts inherent to all human beings as they relate to others. This content area could introduce vocabulary for friendships, extended family, and social roles in the community, adding depth to relational language. Sample phrases would include: *Are you dating her? How do you get along with his mother? Would you mind loaning me your red dress? I'm getting a tattoo just like yours.*

16. Family Dynamics and Traditions: This content area will enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses to the complicated issues of family relations, how friendship develops in a person's life, and the difference between the two. This content area introduces language for discussing family gatherings, traditions, and roles within family life, supporting learners in articulating cultural and familial connections. Sample phrases include: *Is that your mother's sister? My father is old. Would you like me to take your sister to the store? Who is your family? What clan are you?*)

Content Area #9: Life Cycles and Natural Rhythms

Primary Goal: The primary goal of this content area is to provide learners with language to discuss fundamental aspects of life processes. Part of the aim of this content area is to support culturally grounded communication that enables conversations about family and community while facilitating respectful communication on sensitive topics all while deepening the apprentice understanding of the language.

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year Two, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate high or advanced-low level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language and be able to effortlessly lead GMA sessions.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared an apprentice is by self-studying outside of GMA, the faster they will acquire the language in GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.
- Always seek to foster longer conversations and engaged dialogue; don't be afraid to rely on your personal familiarity with the mentor speaker, their tribal connections, and their health situation, to guide discussions beyond just learning particular phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?

- Are the apprentices getting better at eliciting language from the speakers especially when there is ‘dead air’?
- Is functional communication relative to the life processes content area increasing for apprentices?

Core Activities and Methods for Life Processes

Core Purpose: Apprentices who spend a great deal of time within a tribal community will need to be able to communicate about the major events in life that occur. They must know how to understand discourse about these events in their own lives and the lives of relatives. The vocabulary in this content area (born, grow up, pass away, etc.), states of being (healthy, happy, good life, pregnancy, etc.), and questions (When were they born? How did they pass away? How can we pull ourselves out of a sadness? etc.) these are necessary terms to talk about life processes within the speaking group.

For daily life:

- Never shy away from using the language at home with relatives outside of GMA sessions. It may be weird at first for everyone but soon after enough times it will be expected, and they will gain comprehension.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. You can ask other apprentices about what their relatives do and do not do when they are pregnant. What they like to do when they are sick to heal faster. Then you can tell them the same things about yourself.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For GMA sessions:

- ***Unstructured immersion sets:***
 - For unstructured immersion sets prepare conversational topics with the Mentor speakers and the apprentices that allow everyone to use the vocabulary for the Life processes content area. For example: “What season were you born?” or “What do you remember the first wedding you ever attended?”
 - Also create in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers that focus on “real life” communication. If you know that someone’s relative is about to give birth ask about that or if you know that someone’s relative is about to be getting married ask about that to create conversation.

- **Structured immersion sets:**
 - Find clipart pictures of different life stages, physical states, or situations that deal with youth, middle age, golden years, and the final stages of life, to become familiar with the kinds of vocabulary needed to talk about these things in the language.
 - Create GMA routines that focus on acquiring vocabulary for specific situations common in the lives of Mentor speakers and apprentices. The subject matter can be either in the present or in the past. This could include what they remember about a family member's funeral, why someone in the past died, or when their children were born.
 - Using storybooks with No English text can will provide opportunities to question Mentor speakers about what is happening with the story in regard to common life processes. Apprentices can listen to narrative related to these life processes.
 - Utilize pictures or refer to real-life situations to speculate about why something happened the way it did or why something is the way it is now. For example, "Why do you think that young person acts so old?" or "Why is he getting married again?"
 - Use photos of family to:
 - Talk about how people acted in their younger years.
 - Discuss what they themselves were like growing up.
 - Describe how they lived.
 - Discuss how/why people moved away and still haven't moved back.
 - Celebrity Picture Card Routines
 - Discuss what they did/do to get famous.
 - Talk about where they grew up or who they married.
 - Speculate about why or how they passed away.
 - Sequencing Routines
 - Make photos that show kids making a snow man. Imagine a step-by-step picture guide on how to make a snowman.
 - Put together clipart photos showing how kids are at a park compared to how parent and elderly are at parks.
 - Find pictures of yourself and talk about how you were at each age in the photos.
 - Outdoor conditions that affect life.
 - Discuss where you got married or where you would like to get married.
 - Discuss what it would be like to move away to the desert.
 - Imagine and talk about what it would be like to move the tribe to the Amazon.

- Talk about what it would be like to move the tribe to big city in Japan.
- Conversational topic routines.
 - Discuss the differences in owning a cat vs owning a dog.
 - Discuss life goals to be accomplished to have already been accomplished.
 - Talk about what makes life easy or difficult.
 - Talk about what happens in the tribe after someone passes away.
 - Discuss views on the afterlife.

Content Area #10: Interacting with and Describing Everyday Objects

Primary Goal: Interacting with and describing everyday objects is the focus of this content area. This content area will get apprentices proficient at asking about, understanding, and responding to questions about common object states (old, new, open, closed, heavy, light, etc.) and object uses (wipe, take out, put away, clean, heat up, cool off, break, etc.). This content area will also expand on basic descriptions by introducing more complex vocabulary and structure for discussing and categorizing household items, tools, and community objects.

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the material in the content area from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year Two, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate high or advanced-low level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language and be able to effortlessly lead GMA sessions.

Core Activities: See *Activities and Methods for Describing and Interacting with Objects*.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared an apprentice is by self-studying outside of GMA, the faster they will acquire the language in GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.
- Actively try to create opportunities for longer conversations and dialogue; utilize your personal knowledge of the mentor speaker, their friends and family, and their various life situations to extend conversation beyond learning specific phrases.

Core Activities and Methods for Describing and Interacting with Objects

Core Purpose: Inanimate objects play a central role in our daily lives. We are continually engaged in describing and using these objects. In terms of vocabulary, this content area primarily focuses on the actions we perform with or to objects, their states of being, and the questions necessary to discuss describing and interacting with objects alongside mentor speakers and one another.

For daily life:

- In your daily life practice using the vocabulary for describing and interacting with objects with your own children and/or relatives. Even if you ultimately have to switch to English to explain begin your interaction in the heritage language.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. You can ask other apprentices to describe the texture of their favorite fruit, ask how they like to prepare it, and what their least favorite fruit is and why, etc.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For MA sessions:

- *Unstructured immersion sets:*
 - Create immersion sets that contain conversational topics that allow you to use the vocabulary from the content area. Since unstructured immersion is always the first part of a GMA session this works as a priming for the apprentices to get a feel for what new vocab the session has in store. Sample phrases include “Do you prefer hot or cold drinks in the summer?” or “are towels rough or soft?”
 - Also create in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers that focus on “real life” communication. If you know that a mentor speaker’s heater is not running well, ask about that or brainstorm in the language ways to get it fixed.
- *Structured immersion sets:*
 - Use clipart pictures from google image search to show different object states.
 - Create GMA routines focused on acquiring vocabulary for describing and interacting with object states that our common in the lives of the team.
 - Object routines - common tools, machines, and objects found in the home.
 - Talk about how cleaning materials are used and what they are like.
 - Talk about how cooking utensils are used and what they are like.
 - Talk about modern toys and toys from the past and what they are like.
 - Talk about items used to take care of the lawn and what they are like.

- Object routines - common tools, machines, and objects in an office setting.
 - Talk about how office tools are used.
 - Talk about who uses them.
 - Talk about common items used when fishing and what they are like.
 - Asking about common items used when hunting and what they are like.
- Use storybooks with No English that provide opportunities to question mentor speakers about what is happening with the story in elicit descriptions about how things look and feel.
- TPR routines to practice object placement and use.
 - Use clipart or real-life situations to talk about how foods feel.
 - Elicit descriptive words from traditional names which are often descriptive.
 - Discuss common object states of objects found in outdoor work environments.
 - Describe types of fabric and clothing.
 - Talk about traditional foot ware and elicit descriptive words to describe the way they feel vs how running shoes feel.
 - Talk about different types of animals and speculate on what they must feel like.
 - Discuss plants and elicit descriptive words for identification.
 - Talk about the texture of good and bad fry bread.
 - Elicit descriptions about smell by talking about favorite smells.
 - Elicit descriptions about sound by talking about animal sounds.
 - Elicit descriptions about sound by talking about music.
- Outdoor conditions and the effect on object states.
 - What are objects you use in the cold? (Gloves, snow shovel, scarf, etc.)
 - What are objects you use in the heat?
 - Talk about objects you use in the rain.
 - Talk about objects you use in the dark to make light.
- Conversational topic routines.
 - Discuss objects that make home life easier.
 - Discuss objects that make being a construction worker possible.
 - Talk about objects used by professional cleaners.
 - Discuss favorite objects used for cooking.
 - Discuss favorite objects used in gardening.
 - Discuss objects used in ceremonies.
 - Discuss objects used in washing clothes.
 - Discuss objects used in playing sports.

Content Area #11: Giving and Receiving Directions

Primary Goal: The content area of giving and receiving directions will enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses in regard to common actions associated with location, placement, and travel (go, come, leave, put, move, drive, pass, etc.), basic directions (north, south, east, west, up, down, etc.), and basic locations (under, in, on top, behind, between, etc.). This content area provides the opportunity to go deeper into spatial awareness. Learners can practice direction and location phrases for both close and far distances, enabling them to guide others or describe places meaningfully. Example phrases: *Go left at the stoplight, turn right at the stop sign etc.*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding giving and receiving directions from Mentor speakers and each other in immersion.
- By end of Year two, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate high or advanced-low level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language and be able to effortlessly lead GMA sessions.

Key Strategies:

- If mentor speakers start to draw blanks on what to say, use learned phrases to draw out more detailed description or explanation.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared an apprentice is by self-studying outside of GMA, the faster they will acquire the language in GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.
- Actively try to create opportunities for longer conversations and dialogue; utilize your personal knowledge of the mentor speaker, their friends and family, and their various life situations to extend conversation beyond learning specific phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?
- Are the apprentices getting better at eliciting language from the speakers especially when there is ‘dead air’?
- Is functional communication relative to the content area increasing for apprentices?

Core Activities and Methods for Direction & Location

Core Purpose: As adult learner apprentices, they spend much of their lives in motion, traversing from one place to another, while also actively moving, locating, and arranging objects in the world around us. In terms of vocabulary, this content area primarily focuses on the actions, descriptors, and questions necessary for discussing direction and location with Mentor speakers and one another.

For daily life:

- In your daily life practice using the vocabulary for Direction & Location with your own children and/or relatives. Even if you ultimately have to switch to English to explain begin your interaction in the heritage language.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. You can ask other apprentices how to get to their favorite restaurant. You can ask them where they like to put their keys when they get home, or how they are getting to their next vacation destination, etc.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For MA sessions:

- ***Unstructured immersion sets:***
 - In your unstructured immersion sets think of conversational topics with The heritage language mentor speakers that allow you to use the vocabulary for the Direction & location content area. For example, “did you have any friends that you used to visit when you were a child?” or “tell me where you used to put your clean clothes and your dirty clothes when you were a child.”
 - Also create in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers that focus on “real life” communication. If you know that a Mentor speaker is going to a ceremony this weekend, ask about that. Ask apprentices if they are going to watch any movies soon.

- **Structured immersion sets:**
 - Use clipart pictures from google image search to show different locations, movements, and places to become familiar with the kinds of vocabulary that comes up in conversation.
 - Create GMA routines focused on learning vocabulary for Direction & Location situations that are common in the lives of Mentor speakers either in the present (for example where are do the like to go eat dinner) or the past (where did they have Christmas celebrations at last year).
 - Object routines – where items are located.
 - Talking about where things are located in each room in a dollhouse.
 - Talking about where each object probably would come from.
 - Talking about where buildings are located on a map.
 - Talking about where dolls are standing in relation to a map on the table.
 - Use storybooks that does not have any English to talk about what is happening within the story in regard to direction & location and listen to L1 narrative as it informs one’s understanding of how direction and location is talked about in the heritage language.
 - TPR routines to practice the following:
 - GMA lead tells apprentice how to place a ball in on around or near a cup
 - GMA places a doll on the table map and has the apprentice describe where the doll is located in relation to the surroundings.
 - Apprentice is blindfolded and must listen to verbal instruction in the heritage language to get from one side of the room to the other.
 - GMA lead will have apprentice move a car around on the table map by verbal directions.
 - GMA lead will have apprentices point to the direction the GMA lead says
 - Use clipart pictures from google image search or pictures from real-life situations to elicit language. For example, show a picture of a man walking into a restaurant and ask “Why do you think he’s going to the restaurant?” or “Where do you think he came from?” or “does he look like he’s going to work or going to eat?”
 - Games with maps (like Risk or Candyland)
 - Where is he going?
 - How many more spaces until you win?
 - Where are you trying to go next?
 - Follow the route.
 - People picture card routines
 - Talking about how people are getting around.

- Talking about where people are located in relation to other things.
- Talking about where people have placed objects.

- National geographic/Traveler Picture Card Routines
 - Where did they go?
 - How did they get there?
 - What were they looking for?
 - Where did they come from?

- Famous places picture card routines.
 - Would you like to go there?
 - Would you dislike going there?
 - Have you already been there?

- Geography
 - Show and talk about places that are cold.
 - Show and talk about places that are hot.
 - Show and talk about places that are dry.
 - Show and talk about places that are wet.
 - Show and talk about every biome possible.

- Conversational topic routines.
 - Discuss common places tribal members all go.
 - Discuss road trips.
 - Discuss what roads one should take to get to the city the fastest.
 - Talk about how to get to other related tribal people's homeland.
 - Talk about getting to the best places for camping.
 - Talk about getting to Mexico.

Content Area #12: Expressing Time and Temporal Concepts

Primary Goal: This content area will enable apprentices to ask about, understand, and respond to basic concepts of time, seasons, modern time concepts, and fundamental time-related questions.

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding time and temporal concepts from Mentor speakers and each other within immersion and outside of immersion.
- By end of Year Two, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate high or advanced-low level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language and be able to effortlessly lead GMA sessions.

Core Activities: See *Activities and Methods for Talking about 'When'*.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared an apprentice is by self-studying outside of GMA, the faster they will acquire the language in GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.
- Actively try to create opportunities for longer conversations and dialogue; utilize your personal knowledge of the Mentor speaker, their friends and family, and their various life situations to extend conversation beyond learning specific phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?
- Are the apprentices getting better at eliciting language from the speakers especially when there is ‘dead air’?
- Is functional communication increasing after working immersion sets centered around Direction & Location increasing for apprentices?

Core Activities and Methods for Talking about ‘When’

Core Purpose: Apprentices will need to be able to make references to time. In terms of vocabulary this content area focuses primarily on basic concepts of time and seasons. Also it is important to address modern concepts of time that include clock time and calendar time. Example phrases used: *when? how long? how old?, etc.*

For daily life:

- In your daily life practice using the vocabulary for talking about when an event occurred or will occur with your own children and/or relatives. Even if you ultimately have to switch to English to explain begin your interaction in the heritage language.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. You can ask your fellow apprentices about when they are going on their next big trip; you can ask what they did the day before, or when they usually eat dinner, etc.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For MA sessions:

- ***Unstructured immersion sets:***
 - Utilize conversational topics with the heritage language mentor speakers that elicit the vocabulary for time expressions. For example, “What did you do during the winter when you were a child?” or “Did you hear lots of winter stories growing up when there was snow out?”
 - Also create in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers that focus on “real life” communication. If you know that a mentor speaker went to hang out at the swap meet over the weekend, ask about when they got there, how long they were there, when they left, etc.

- **Structured immersion sets:**
 - Utilize clipart from google image search to show different times and seasons to become familiar with the kinds of vocabulary that comes up in conversation.
 - Create GMA routines focused on learning vocabulary for time and season related situations that are common in the lives of Mentor speakers either in the present (for example when they go do laundry) or the past (for example trips to the farmers market).
 - Use no English story books that make it easy to elicit opportunities to ask mentor speakers about what is happening with the story regarding the time or season in which the events in the story occur and listen to narrative related to talking about 'when'.
 - Question and response routines to practice the following:
 - Actions in the future (What am I going to do tomorrow?)
 - Actions in the past (What did I do yesterday?)
 - Actions in the present (What am I doing now?)
 - Create an image board from clipart to elicit language to talk about time and season related situations. For example, "When do you think the bear will be back from his cave sleep?" or "What do you think he's going to when the snow melts?"
 - Use sequencing routines to practice talking about before, during, and after
 - Future (before he goes to work, he's going to get coffee)
 - Past Action (before he went to work, he split all his coffee)
 - Present Action (he's sad that he won't have any coffee before he goes to work)
 - Time (How long are you going to be on vacation? When will you be back?)
 - Use clipart to practice talking about when something occurs.
 - Early morning
 - Late morning
 - noon
 - afternoon
 - sunrise
 - sunset
 - springtime
 - summer
 - fall
 - wintertime

- Use a calendar to talk about the months of the year.
 - Talk about things that people do in each month
 - Talk about what the weather is like.
 - Talk about what most people like or don't like about that month.

- Use board maker to create a routine about animals.
 - Discuss what animals do during the winter.
 - Talk about what animals are nocturnal

- Use plains sign or ASL to practice:
 - A long time
 - A short time
 - today
 - tomorrow
 - yesterday

- Geography
 - Talk about things that people do in spring in Oklahoma.
 - Talk about things that people do in summer in Arizona.
 - Discuss things that people do in autumn in New York.
 - Discuss things that people do in winter in Canada.

- Conversational topic routines.
 - Do you prefer to go to the doctor in the morning or afternoon?
 - Were you a morning person when you were little?
 - What did you want to be when you grew up?
 - Do you have any relatives that fought overseas?
 - What is your favorite part of the day?
 - Do you remember when you lost your first tooth?
 - If you won the lottery how long would you be rich?

Content Area #13: Human Body and Human Conditions

Primary Goal: This content will enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses in regard to describing the way people look with an emphasis on describing the body, things we or others do with our bodies, and things that we do or that happen to our bodies. Example phrases: *This is my arm/leg/head, can you show me your hand?, which man in the picture looks dizzy? Where does it hurt? Etc.*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding the human body and common human conditions from Mentor speakers and each other within immersion.
- By end of Year Two, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate high or advanced-low level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language and be able to effortlessly lead GMA sessions.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared an apprentice is by self-studying outside of GMA, the faster they will acquire the language in GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.
- Always seek to foster longer conversations and engaged dialogue; don't be afraid to rely on your personal familiarity with the mentor speaker, their tribal connections, and their health situation, to guide discussions beyond just learning particular phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?
- Are the apprentices getting better at eliciting language from the speakers especially when there is ‘dead air’?
- Are apprentices gaining more speaking ability after doing immersion sets related to this content area?

Core Activities and Methods for Human Body and Human Conditions

Core Purpose: Our bodies play a vital role in our everyday lives. We are consistently engaged in describing, utilizing, and conversing about our bodies. In terms of vocabulary, this content area primarily focuses on the appearance of the body, the actions we perform with or upon our bodies, and the states of being for our bodies.

For daily life:

- Never shy away from using the language at home with relatives outside of GMA sessions. It may be weird at first for everyone but soon after enough times it will be expected, and they will gain comprehension.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. Talk to them about a time you hurt yourself on accident, or talk about how you are feeling that day.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For MA sessions:

- *Unstructured immersion sets:*
 - At the beginning of the GMA session, start conversation with the heritage language mentor speakers that allow you to use the vocabulary to talk about the human body. For example, “do you have any really tall people in your family?” or “how many legs to spiders have?”
 - Also create in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers that focus on “real life” communication. If you know that a Mentor speaker doesn’t like spiders as if its cause spiders have too many legs.

- *Structured immersion sets:*
 - Utilize clipart from google image search to show a variety of people, animals, or actions to become familiar with the kinds of vocabulary that comes up in conversations about the body and what the body is capable of.
 - Create GMA routines focused on learning vocabulary for situations that involve discussion about the human body to elicit vocab that is common in the lives of Mentor speakers.
 - Create picture card routines - appearance
 - skinny
 - fat
 - little
 - healthy
 - sick
 - long hair
 - short hair
 - elicit color
 - shape
 - any other conditions
 - Use no English story books that make it easy to elicit opportunities to ask mentor speakers about what is happening with the story in an attempt to elicit language that can be used to describe the body and appearance.
 - TPR actions that involve the use of the body.
 - sit
 - run
 - bump
 - hit
 - walk
 - crawl
 - shake
 - laying
 - rolling
 - lay on stomach
 - lay on back
 - lay on side
 - Utilize clipart to elicit language for talking about the anatomy of the human body. For example, “does a dog have four legs or two arms and two legs?” or “How many legs or arms does an octopus have?”
 - Games for guessing
 - Who/which one are you?

- Guess who
- What does the bank robber look like?

- Celebrity Guessing Game

- Outdoor conditions and their effects on the human body.
 - What do people do when it's hot.
 - What do people do when it's cold.
 - What do people do when it's wet.
 - What do people do when it's dry.
 - What do people do when it's windy.

- Conversational topic routines.
 - Discuss about how bodies have changed over the decades.
 - Discuss how Natives take care of their bodies past and present.
 - Discuss current physical conditions.
 - Discuss what we could do as teenagers that is hard now.
 - Discuss habits that are unhealthy and healthy.

Content Area #14: Home Language about Children

Primary Goal: this content area will enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses for common actions and situations that happen in a home setting with children involved. Sample content phrases would include: *Did you do your chores? Can someone change the baby? Who is ready for bed? Go get your teeth brushed.*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding language used in the home with children from Mentor speakers and each other within immersion sets.
- By end of Year Two, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate high or advanced-low level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language and be able to effortlessly lead GMA sessions.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared an apprentice is by self-studying outside of GMA, the faster they will acquire the language in GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.
- Always seek to foster longer conversations and engaged dialogue; don't be afraid to rely on your personal familiarity with the mentor speaker, their tribal connections, and their health situation, to guide discussions beyond just learning particular phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?
- Are the apprentices getting better at eliciting language from the speakers especially when there is ‘dead air’?
- Are apprentices gaining more speaking ability after doing immersion sets related to this content area?

Core Activities and Methods for Home Language About Children

Core Purpose: Apprentices spend considerable time with their families and children, it is of high importance that they can communicate about the common tasks and situations they encounter in their daily home lives especially when children are involved. In terms of vocabulary, this content area primarily focuses on the actions, states of being, and questions necessary to discuss home-related issues with mentor speakers and extend our language learning into their own homes.

For daily life:

- Never shy away from using the language at home with relatives outside of GMA sessions. It may be weird at first for everyone but soon after enough times it will be expected, and they will gain comprehension.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. If they have children ask other apprentices about how their children are doing in school.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For MA sessions:

- ***Unstructured immersion sets:***
 - In your unstructured immersion sets think of conversational topics with the heritage language mentor speakers that allow you to use the vocabulary for the home conversation content area. For example, “What does your grandson like to eat?” or “Is your daughter still living with you?”
 - Also create in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers that focus on “real life” communication. if you know that a Mentor speaker babysat a grandchild, ask what they did; or if you know that they have a son who is having a hard time, ask about him.

- **Structured immersion sets:**
 - Utilize clipart from google image search to show common childcare activities, times, or family scenarios to gain the speaking ability to express oneself using the high frequency vocabulary that comes up in the home environment.
 - Create GMA routines focused on learning vocabulary for situations that involve discussion about the childcare in the home to elicit vocab that is necessary for child rearing.
 - Clipart card routines
 - Waking children up in the morning
 - Getting everyone ready to leave the house in the morning
 - Asking if kids are ready for school
 - Checking in with kids about their school experience
 - Feeding times
 - Playing as learning
 - Getting chores done
 - Getting ready for bed
 - Setting rules for good behavior
 - Find storybooks with No English, or mark out the English if you have to, that provide opportunities to ask speakers about what is happening with the story with the hope of eliciting language for a home setting.
 - Utilize board maker and clipart images about why things are the way they are in a home with children. For example: “Why are some children scared to sleep alone?” or “Why are some children never hungry at mealtime?”
 - TPR to elicit and practice home immersion
 - Wake up
 - Dance and sing
 - Clean up
 - Eat your food
 - Play with your toys
 - Play pretend
 - Use a baby doll to practice all the common actions, temporary states of being, and common questions associated with taking care of a young children.
 - Verb routines: take turns inflecting verbs commonly found in child rearing conversations. “*Feed, burp, put them to sleep, take care of, pick up after, take to, hold hand, sing to, buy for, play with, bathe, etc.*”
 - Utilize object Routines with objects associated with children in the home
 - rattle

- iPad
- diapers
- bottle
- baby swing
- jumper
- crib
- baby powder

- Small World Toys Routines
 - recreate an entire home setting in miniature to better elicit language.
 - More information is found at www.smallworldtoys.com

- Conversational topic routines.
 - Talk with apprentices about their experience with children.
 - Ask mentor speakers about their children.
 - Discuss with mentor speakers their thoughts on iPads and YouTube.
 - Show and talk about family photo albums.
 - Talk about famous children shows from everyone's childhood.
 - Discuss how parenting styles have changed over the years.
 - Discuss current expectations of children now vs in the past.

Content Area #15: Relationships and Social Circles

Primary Goal: This content area will help apprentices develop their ability to ask about, understand, and create responses regarding common emotional states, social situations, and patterns of communication within the target language's cultural interactions. Sample content phrases could include: *does Mickey love Minnie?*, *how does Brutus treat Popeye?*, *How does Wylie Coyote feel about Roadrunner?*, *how important is good communication in a marriage?*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language regarding human relationships from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year Two, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate high or advanced-low level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language and be able to effortlessly lead GMA sessions.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared an apprentice is by self-studying outside of GMA, the faster they will acquire the language in GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.
- Always seek to foster longer conversations and engaged dialogue; don't be afraid to rely on your personal familiarity with the mentor speaker, their tribal connections, and their health situation, to guide discussions beyond just learning particular phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?

- Are the apprentices steadily growing in their ability to elicit language from the mentor speakers?
- Are apprentices gaining more speaking ability after doing immersion sets related to this content area?

Core Activities and Methods for Relationships and Social Circles

Core Purpose: An apprentice should work on their ability to effectively communicate about common emotional states, interpersonal situations, and relational dynamics encountered in social interactions. This content area primarily focuses on vocabulary pertaining to individuals' conditions, the ways they treat one another, their perceptions and feelings about each other, and their modes of communication. The vocabulary in this content area focuses primarily on states of being (happy, mean, stingy, sick, strong, hardworking, etc.), the ways people treat each other (respectful, empathetic, gracious, kind, understanding, supportive, etc.), what people think/feel about each other (anger, love, curiosity, sympathy, sadness, missing them, etc.), and how people communicate (quickly, carefully, attentive, argumentative, direct, etc.)

For daily life:

- Never shy away from using the language at home with relatives outside of GMA sessions. It may be weird at first for everyone but soon after enough times it will be expected, and they will gain comprehension.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. Ask about their perspectives on their friends, request descriptions of the character of their heroes, or ask about what they say when they want to get to know someone.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For MA sessions:

- *Unstructured immersion sets.*
 - In your unstructured immersion sets think of conversational topics with the heritage language mentor speakers that allow you to use the vocabulary for the human relationships content area. For example, “How did your mother talk to you when you were a child?” or “Who is the most generous person you know?”
 - Also create in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers that focus on “real life” communication. If you know that a Mentor speaker had an argument with his/her sister, ask about that; or if you know that they have a grandson who they are proud of, ask about him.

- ***Structured immersion sets.***
 - Utilize clipart from google image search to show various actions and situations to become familiar with the kinds of vocabulary needed to talk about human relationships.
 - Create GMA routines that focus on learning vocabulary for specific situations that are common in the lives of the apprentices and the mentor speakers.
 - Clipart picture card routines that show:
 - Various emotions
 - How people treat each other in times of distress
 - How people think about each other in times of celebration.
 - How people feel about each other when in quarantine.
 - Ways people communicate when they want something.
 - Find storybooks with No English, or mark out the English if you have to, that provide opportunities to ask speakers about what is happening with the story with the hope of eliciting language for a talking about relationships.
 - Utilize board maker and clipart images about why things are the way they are in happy or difficult relationships. For example, “Why do some people make friends easily?” or “It’s good to try and visit one’s parents more than at least a couple times a year right?”
 - Verb focused immersion set routines: Every apprentice should inflect the following verbs.
 - Speak highly of, hug, gossip, visit, understand, misunderstand, argue with, tease, mock, etc.
 - Treat well, treat poorly, attend to, cook for, buy for, invite, etc.
 - Small World Toys Routines
 - Small World Toys allows the team to create an entire setting to model a human interaction in miniature.
 - Buy a set up for your language program at www.smallworldtoys.com
 - Physical Role Play Routines-different kinds of human interactions.
 - Two people who are laughing together about something.
 - A grandmother encouraging her grandchild.
 - An uncle teasing his nephew.
 - Two young ladies making dinner plans.
 - Someone who is proud of another person.

- Someone who is bragging about what their friend did.
- Conversational topic routines.
 - Discuss what it means to be a good person.
 - Retell a story about when a stranger treated you good.
 - Retell a story about when someone treated you badly.
 - Discuss family photo albums and the circumstances for any gatherings.
 - Discuss feelings, thoughts, and ideas about how siblings should treat each other.
 - Discuss changes between how native people treat each other now vs in the past.
 - Discuss surprise parties
 - Discuss family get togethers

Content Area #16: Family Dynamics and Traditions

Primary Goal: This content area will introduce language for discussing family gatherings, traditions, and roles within family life, supporting learners in articulating cultural and familial connections and enable apprentices to ask about, comprehend, and make responses in regard to common dynamics, situations, and actions between the apprentice and one or more of their friends and relatives. As an apprentice who spends a great deal of time talking about other human beings, it is important to be able to communicate about the interactions that we have with our friends and relatives. In terms of vocabulary it focuses on the things we do with/for our friends and relatives (help, give, visit, see, please, think about), the possessive forms of terminology describing them (my father, your father, my mother's brother, my niece, our friend, etc.), and the grammar conjugation associated with actions that involve multiple people (transitive animate, conjunctive, and prohibitive). Example phrases: *Can you tell me about your family? How many siblings do you have? When does your family get together? What does your family like to do when they get together? Etc.*

Baseline for Learning:

- Apprentices' success is defined by their basic comprehension of the material and their ability to elicit language and/or carry on conversation regarding family dynamics and traditions from Mentor speakers and each other.
- By end of Year two, apprentices will have the ability to fully engage at the Intermediate high or advanced-low level on the ACTFL scale in the target heritage language and be able to effortlessly lead GMA sessions.

Key Strategies:

- If the mentor speakers start drawing blanks on what to say next, use learned phrases to elicit a more detailed description or explanation of what is being focused on.
- Regularly encourage the mentor speakers *in the target heritage language* to give highly detailed responses or go on tangents related to the given subject.
- It is normal for the apprentice to not understand or be able to respond directly to everything the mentor speaker says. If elicitation is leading to increases in the amount of uninterrupted target heritage language, then progress is progress.
- The more prepared an apprentice is by self-studying outside of GMA, the faster they will acquire the language in GMA sessions.
- Never try and force an immersion set to work and create whole language and facilitate conversation. If there is too much dead air or the apprentices are struggling too much it is ok to move on to the next activity. That is why one must always over prepare.

- Always seek to foster longer conversations and engaged dialogue; don't be afraid to rely on your personal familiarity with the mentor speaker, their tribal connections, and their health situation, to guide discussions beyond just learning particular phrases.

Assessment Questions:

- Are the key strategies being successfully applied within the GMA sessions?
- Are the apprentices steadily growing in their ability to elicit language from the mentor speakers?
- Are apprentices gaining more speaking ability after doing immersion sets related to this content area?

For daily life:

- Never shy away from using the language at home with relatives outside of GMA sessions. It may be weird at first for everyone but soon after enough times it will be expected, and they will gain comprehension.
- Remember to use new vocabulary acquired in GMA sessions in daily interactions with fellow apprentices. Ask other apprentices about whom they visited with over the weekend, the health status of one of their relatives, or ask about an interaction with a friend that you know they had.
- Carry a notebook with you to write down questions that arise and you don't know how to ask in the target heritage language.

For MA sessions:

- ***Unstructured immersion sets:***
 - In your unstructured immersion sets think of conversational topics with the heritage language Mentor speakers that allow you to use the vocabulary for the family matters content area. For example, "Did you see your sibling this weekend?" or "How is your kid doing in school?"
 - Also create in advance one or more questions to ask mentor speakers that focus on "real life" communication. If you know that a member of the GMA team has had a recent reason to celebrate, then ask about that. I.e. a graduation, or a birthday etc.
- ***Structured immersion sets.***
 - Utilize clipart from google image search to show different common actions, times, or scenarios to become familiar with the kinds of vocabulary that come up in conversations about friends and relatives.

- Create GMA routines that are based around vocabulary for social gathering that are common in the lives of GMA team members.
- Create clipart picture card routines for:
 - Relatives and close friends vocabulary.
 - Verbs associated with supporting a friend or relative.
 - Verbs associated with visiting people or meeting up.
 - Verbs associated with staying with a friend or relative for a short time.
- Find storybooks with No English, or mark out the English if you have to, that provide opportunities to ask speakers about what is happening with the story regarding the family interactions.
- Utilize board maker and clipart images about why things are the way they are. For example, “Who took care of him when he was out of work?” or “Why is he mad at his cousin?”
- Try to elicit verbs in the transitive Animate, Conjunctive, and Prohibitive using the following verbs: stay with, love, tease, visit, miss, pity, pick up, loan, give, help, scold, see, take to, go with, embarrass, disagree, encourage, worry about, make mad, etc.
- Small World Toys Routines
 - Small World Toys allow you to create an entire setting to model a human interaction in miniature.
 - Buy a set up for your language program at www.smallworldtoys.com
- Telling narrative with storytelling routines
 - Performing narrative about the families one comes from.
 - The most recent time I ate a new food as an adult
 - Choose a card with a prompt on it and tell about your experience with what is written on the card.
 - No English storybook where everyone expresses the opinion of a family member in the story told in the first person.
- Role Play Routines - different kinds of interactions with relatives and friends.
 - A best friend asking to borrow money.
 - A grandmother encouraging her grandchild.
 - Siblings teasing each other.
 - A child visiting their elderly great grandparent
 - A father encouraging his son to finish his chores.
- Conversational
 - The team asks each other about their favorite relatives.
 - The team asks each other about a relative they didn't like as a child.

- The team asks each other about the health of their relatives.
- The team asks each other about if they want their kids to go to college.

Summary

The GMA structured input model based on content areas facilitates a large base vocabulary for apprentice speakers. This then opens the door for language acquisition based on form rather than content area. It is possible to implement language acquisition based on form as opposed to topic at an earlier stage in a GMA program but that is up to the discretion of each individual language program. This is merely a guide to GMA, and it is my hope that others will continue to make adjustments and changes as I have over the years until a perfect system is achieved.

Now, to review some basic information about the team-based GMA program model:

The overall goal of team-based GMA is to develop conversational adult learners that can become teachers and bring the language to new generations of potential speakers.

1. The aim of Team-Based GMA is to bring apprentices to a level of language proficiency sufficient enough to bring other apprentices to a conversational level even without the help of L1 mentor speakers. We're not aiming for comprehensive L1 level language mastery. It's good if it happens, but no pressure.
2. This doesn't mean Master L1 speakers are not the heart of GMA, because they are truly the heart of GMA.
3. Successful conversational fluency attainment requires between 15-20 hours of weekly consistent focused immersive learning, this is so much more than just being 'talked at'.
4. Successful GMA is built upon the concept of implicit language learning. (See dissertation)
5. Language acquisition is accelerated when through targeted, practical, varied, and contextualized conversations that produce high levels of repetition.

Additional Resources

Study Tips for GMA

1. **Listening over speaking.** Just as babies learn language by hearing it before they can speak, you must first listen to and comprehend your heritage language before you can speak it fluently. Focus on listening to the way words are pronounced to improve your fluency.
2. **Speaking over reading.** Once again like babies, first you must hear and speak the language before you can learn to read it. Written text simply reminds you of the pronunciation of words you already know. Therefore, prioritize speaking the language over worrying about reading your heritage language on paper.

3. **Consistence is key.** Consistently using the words you learn outside of class will help you remember them better. Incorporate them into your daily life as you would English words.
4. **tomato; tomahto.** Different speakers may pronounce words with slight variations. Similarly, like when a child first learns a language, the key is to communicate effectively, rather than insisting on exact pronunciation.
5. **Practice every day.** For most people, second language learning is a gradual process that requires extensive practice. Repeatedly hearing and speaking words and phrases is essential for them to become ingrained in your mind. Listening to audio resources and conversing with family or friends are excellent ways to enhance GMA session instruction and improve fluency.
6. **Speak with courage.** Speaking up without fear of mistakes is important for progress in language acquisition. Even if you say something imperfect, trying is better than remaining silent.

Resource Suppliers used by the Sauk language department and Kickapoo Language department in the application of Group Mentor-Apprentice

Quill.com-general office supplies, storage, furniture, some language resources

Shop4tech.com-electronics, CD/DVD supplies, audio/visual equipment

PCMallgov.com-electronics, audio/visual equipment, computer accessories/supplies

Ili.com- technology support, language resources

Orientaltrading.com-cheap giveaways, party supplies, cheap promotional items

www.bhphotovideo.com -camera equipment, scanners, printers, audio/visual equipment

www.musiciansfriend.com - audio equipment **Amazon.com** –books, films, small recording equipment

USAO Bookstore

1727 W. Alabama St. Chickasha, OK 73018

Beginning Kiowa curriculum

www.cdw.com

Printer ink and cartridges

The Apple Tree

7204 E. 41st Street

Tulsa, OK 74145

918-622-8733

Educational resources and materials

Martel Electronics Sales Inc.

56554 E. LaPalma Ave.

Yorba Linda, CA 92887 Electronic equipment and supplies

Orionmarket.com

877-755-5300

New and refurbished laptops

Bayscan Technologies

12782 Prospect Ave., 1st Floor

Strongsville, OH 44149

877-229-7226

Small World Toys

5711 Buckingham Parkway Culver City, CA 90230
Educational classroom toys

Sky Oaks Production Inc.

PO Box 1102
Los Gatos, CA 95031
408-395-7600
Educational resources

Bargains Lane

85 N. Garfield Road
Spring Valley, NY 10977 845-354-3100
Misc. equipment and resources

Zoommania

1420 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
877-950-5550
Cameras and recording equipment

Super Warehouse

6779 Mesa Ridge Road Ste. 200 San Diego CA 92121
800-814-5410
Electronic equipment

Different Roads to Learning

37 East 18th Street 10th Floor
New York, NY 10003
800-853-1057
Educational resources

Buffalo Nickel Press

PO Box 1317
Pawhuska, OK 74056
918-287-3899
order@buffalonickepress.com
www.buffalopress.com

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