

Language Research and Revitalization Through a Community-University Partnership: The Mi'gmaq Research Partnership

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This paper discusses a collaboration between a university linguistics department and an Indigenous community, with the joint aim to increase the vitality of, and knowledge about, Mi'gmaq (Eastern Algonquian). It describes the history of the language in the community and how the partnership was initially formed. It discusses several joint initiatives: the development of digital language-learning resources, a class curriculum, and the hosting of an intergenerational open language workshop in the community. The authors share the models of work and lessons that have influenced them as this partnership has grown.

1. INTRODUCTION. This paper discusses a language research and preservation partnership between the Listuguj Education Directorate (LED) and the Linguistics Department at McGill University. The Listuguj First Nation is a Mi'gmaq community on the border of Quebec and New Brunswick; McGill University is a research university in Montreal, Quebec. This partnership came about when a linguistics field methods class at McGill University became connected to existing grassroots language revitalization work in the Listuguj community. In writing this paper, we hope to deliver an in-depth description of the various roles that we have found ourselves filling as a language student and community member (Wysote); as language and linguistics students (Little and McClay); and as a linguistics professor (Coon). While work of this type is inextricable from each language's context, we believe that sharing experiences, successes, and failures is beneficial to the broad scope of language documentation and revitalization. This has been done before in works such as Wilkins (1992), Yamada (2007), as well as discussion found in Dwyer (2010), and Kipp (2009), to name a few. See Crippen & Robinson (2013) for the potential difficulties of collaboration.

This paper is divided into four sections. First, we contextualize the Mi'gmaq language and language loss in Listuguj, and discuss recent grassroots community efforts that have led to increased language accessibility and use (§2). Second, we discuss the beginnings and nature of the partnership between McGill University and the Listuguj Education Directorate (§3). Third, we provide more detail about two projects this partnership has taken on, elaborating on the roles of both community and university students in these language revitalization efforts and detailing the influence of participatory action research (§4). Projects include language-learning resources, curriculum documentation and language workshops. Finally, we lay out the current direction of the project, as informed by our successes and failures (§5).

2. LISTUGUJ AND THE MI'GMAQ LANGUAGE. According to the 2011 National Household Survey Aboriginal Population Profile, Listuguj has a population of 1,850 people, 495 of whom report speaking an Aboriginal language/Mi'gmaq (Statistics Canada 2013). This number is down by 41% from the 700 Listuguj inhabitants who reported speaking an Aboriginal language in the 2006 census (Statistics Canada 2007). These numbers can be misleading due to the low response rate (at least 25% did not respond), and lack of gradation in language questions (the survey provides only binary speaker/non-speaker response options, with no option for “learning” or “non-fluent”). Census data, in conjunction with informal estimates from community members and researchers, indicate that the majority of these Mi'gmaq speakers are over the age of 60, with very few members of the younger generations using Mi'gmaq on a regular basis. Many community members recognize that immediate action is necessary to ensure that the language is passed on to younger generations.

Language attrition in the Listuguj community is rooted in a number of factors familiar to Indigenous communities across Canada: a history of colonial oppression, a lack of political and media power, and Canada's public and residential school systems. Listuguj's political and geographical context offers a further complication of linguistic interactions. Straddling the northern point of separation between Quebec and New Brunswick, the Listuguj Mi'gmaq are in close proximity to two linguistic groups: French speakers in Pointe-à-la-Croix, the adjacent town on the Quebec side of the Restigouche River; and English and French bilingual speakers across the river in Campbellton, New Brunswick.

Into the 1920s, Mi'gmaq was the primary language of communication and the first language for many growing up in Listuguj. However, residential boarding schools across Canada from the 1870s to the 1990s removed children from their homes in a nationwide program of assimilation. In addition to numerous other physical and psychological abuses that have since been documented, residential school children were forbidden from speaking their ancestral language (see e.g., Jaine 1995; Milloy 1999; Miller 1996; Knockwood 2001). If a child did speak in their native language, they would often be physically punished. This led to many residential school survivors developing psychological blocks, preventing them from speaking Mi'gmaq: “For all intents and purposes, such children became monolingual anglophones, even if little or no English had been spoken in their homes” (Sarkar & Metallic 2009:54).

The abuses in residential schools represent a clear source of language loss, though this is only one factor contributing to language attrition. In 1970, Listuguj students began attending the local off-reserve public school in Campbellton, New Brunswick (Sarkar & Metallic 2009), when the on-reserve school burned down (Roger Metallic, p.c.). This marked an increased transition away from Mi'gmaq to English. In addition to the focus on English in the classroom, the promotion of English as the ‘language of success’ dissuaded increasing

numbers of Listuguj parents from teaching Mi'gmaq to their children at all. The result was a familiar three-generation cycle in which a generation of monolingual Mi'gmaq speakers raised a bilingual generation educated in English schools whose children speak only English (Sarkar & Metallic 2009). Marrying outside the community has also become more common. This often leads to the children of these couples speaking the majority language of French or English. This simplified history omits many individual and ongoing cases of resistance to language attrition. There were a number of Mi'gmaq speakers who continued to teach their children Mi'gmaq, in spite of external pressure to adopt English. However, the overall trend has been one of steady Anglicization.

Since the 1980's, linguistic partnerships with Listuguj community members have developed dictionaries and orthographies for Mi'gmaq such as the Micmac Lexicon (DeBlois & Metallic 1984) and *The Metallic Mi'gmaq-English Reference Dictionary* (Metallic et al. 2005). These partnerships were part of a trend in which linguists began to work with community members, producing works *with* them, rather than works *about* them (see Wilhelm 2013; Czaykowska-Higgins 2009; Rice 2009, among others).

Today, a number of Mi'gmaq speakers and educators are working hard to revitalize the Mi'gmaq language in the Listuguj community. Some of the efforts have grown out of programs at the LED, whose mission is to support Listuguj students in all levels of their studies both in and outside of the community. The LED now offers Mi'gmaq language classes for adults as well as a nursery immersion program for preschool-aged children, which began in 2011. Efforts are being made to engage young people not only in the classroom, but also through social media and online language-learning programs. Below we detail the genesis of the community-linguistics partnership and role that linguists have played in supporting the existing efforts of community members.

3. GENESIS AND NATURE OF THE PARTNERSHIP. The foundation for the involvement of linguists in the work of the LED was a small mixed undergraduate/graduate field methods course offered in the fall of 2011 at McGill University (co-taught by Professors Jessica Coon and Michael Wagner). That year, the professors contacted the McGill University First Peoples' House with the hope of finding a speaker of an Indigenous language who would be willing to take on a part-time job as a consultant for the field methods class. The call was circulated to Janine Metallic, a McGill University PhD candidate in education, who expressed interest in the position. Janine Metallic was raised as one of the youngest speakers in Listuguj; her mother, Mary Ann Metallic, teaches the adult Mi'gmaq courses at the LED.

Though J. Metallic was herself involved in her own PhD research, she reports that she saw the position as a way to raise awareness of, and contribute to, the existing language revitalization work in the Listuguj community. She expressed a condition early on of her involvement with the course: since McGill University students were benefiting from the knowledge of the Mi'gmaq language that she had gained from her family and community, the field methods course should also help create something that might be useful to speakers and learners of this language—a mutually beneficial connection between McGill University and the Listuguj community. These conditions are in fact a stated requirement of chapter 9 of the Canadian Research Tri-Council Policy Statement of Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (Secretariat of Responsible Conduct of Research 2014). This chapter:

acknowledges the unique status of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. It interprets how the value of respect for human dignity and the core principles of Respect for Persons, Concern for Welfare, and Justice apply to research

involving Aboriginal peoples. It accords respect to Aboriginal peoples' knowledge systems by ensuring that the various and distinct world views of Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples are represented in planning and decision making, from the earliest stages of conception and design of projects through to the analysis and dissemination of results. It affirms respect for community customs and codes of research practice to better ensure balance in the relationship between researchers and participants, and mutual benefit in researcher-community relations. (Secretariat of Responsible Conduct of Research 2014)

This mandate was discussed with the class early on in the course, and students later reported having felt motivated that the coursework they were doing had the potential to have an impact outside of academia.

In order to achieve the goal of reciprocity, this course departed in important ways from practices commonly seen in field methods courses. For example, in many such courses individual students are responsible for keeping their own notes on the language (e.g., in a notebook or on their own personal computer), and then writing topical papers (e.g., one on phonology, one on syntax) at the end. However, the goal in this course was to create as much accessible information about the language as possible in the limited 13-week semester. Three steps were taken in order to achieve this goal: (1) data was compiled into a shared centralized database; (2) students chose or were assigned different topics for their final write-ups, with a goal of covering a range of different themes in the language; (3) all class work was submitted in the form of contributions to a shared wiki page. While the students were required to contribute linguistically sophisticated work, they were also required to do this in a way that would be accessible to academic and non-academic audiences, with the goal of being understandable and helpful to non-linguists. During the course of the semester, the wiki page was kept password-protected in case there were errors in students' transcriptions or understanding of the material. A small group of students (including authors Little and McClay) continued work on the wiki after the course, and with J. Metallic's permission, the wiki was then made public. The present form of the wiki—to which anybody can now contribute—can be found at <http://wiki.migmaq.org>.

Though this had not been a stated goal going into the course, the end result was that students of the McGill field methods course were involved in a form of 'service learning,' which Bringle and Hatcher (1995:112), as discussed in the linguistics context by Fitzgerald (2010), define as:

A course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

As discussed in detail in Fitzgerald (2010), linguistics courses provide numerous opportunities for students to have an impact on communities outside of the classroom, and the result can be a more active learning experience for students. Even semester-long field methods classes have the potential to make contributions to language documentation and revitalization. Students are motivated when they realize they are contributing to a meaningful project with impact outside the academic classroom.

At the end of the field methods course at McGill, the class traveled eight hours from Montreal to Listuguj to meet and discuss their final class projects with language teachers

and Elders at the LED. Students presented on topics ranging from phonological stress to negation to the distinction between alienable and inalienable possession. Members of the LED liked the wiki as a language-learning resource and later approached the instructors of the course concerning an online Mi'gmaq language program. In mid-2010, the LED had received funding from Heritage Canada's Aboriginal Languages Initiative to develop an online classroom resource called "CAN-8" (Sounds Virtual Inc. 2013), and invited McGill students to become involved in lesson creation during the following summer. We return to CAN-8 below.

Authors Little and McClay were keen to join the LED for the summer. In the spring of 2012, McGill University hosted a mini-conference for the LED teachers and linguists to begin planning resource development for the summer, and then in Summer 2012, the CAN-8 collaboration began. During the summer of 2012, Little, McClay, and Conor Quinn—an expert on Eastern Algonquian languages who was invited to join the project—lived in Listuguj with a speaker of Mi'gmaq. There they worked with teachers, took Mi'gmaq language classes, and helped to create the CAN-8 materials alongside speakers of the language. Joe Wilmot, the language and culture coordinator at LED, and Quinn supervised this work. Authors Little and McClay collaborated with them in creating scripts to illustrate grammatical properties of the language and developing vocabulary lists with LED teachers.

Prior to their arrival in Listuguj, Little and McClay familiarized themselves with respectful and helpful ways of doing linguistic fieldwork, reading portions of Kovach's (2009) book on Indigenous methodologies and speaking with J. Metallic and the more experienced linguists about general practice. Overall, this project was also informed by participatory action research (PAR) (Whyte 1991; McTaggart 1991; McIntyre 2008), and held the perspective that regardless of the output, this initial collaboration could be productive as a learning process and a chance for linguists and community members to build relationships with each other. PAR as described by Benedicto et al. (2007) was especially relevant to the project. The model Benedicto et al. propose for linguistic fieldwork, and the one implemented in this project, includes training, developing useful material, and joint decision-making. These three aspects will be discussed in the sections below.

Every language revitalization partnership comes about in its own way. However, each should be led by community members, and the partnership should focus on the needs and wishes of the community. The current partnership has grown out of the collaborative work that began in 2011 and aims to bring Mi'gmaq speakers, teachers, and linguists together to develop a deeper understanding of the grammar of the language, to develop teaching materials, and to facilitate the learning, speaking, and promotion of Mi'gmaq. Over the course of the last few years, the partnership's activities and projects have expanded, and now also include linguists and students at Concordia University in Montreal. The linguists maintain a blog and the wiki, and collaborate with speakers to produce linguistic research on the Mi'gmaq language, all of which is publicly available on the blog.¹ Linguists have continued working with a software development company in Montreal, building a database application designed specifically for collaborative work so that all the linguistic data may be stored in a single, well-organized database which is free, open source, and easily sharable between academics and non-academic collaborators. This database is accessible online to all members of the team, using a login, and the information is housed in LingSync servers housed and backed up with cloud storage. In Listuguj, teachers and speakers continue to work on CAN-8, as well as laying groundwork for and piloting a Mentor-Apprentice Program

¹ Available from the centralized site <http://www.migmaq.org>.

(based on the model described in Hinton et al. 2002), and holding daily Mi'gmaq language classes for most of the year. This partnership has received funding for the period from 2012 to 2015 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and has hosted a workshop on the Mi'gmaq language (expanded upon in §4), bringing together many diverse, sometimes passionate, sometimes hesitant, voices within the community to speak about issues surrounding the use and presence of Mi'gmaq in daily life.

4. BUILDING LANGUAGE RESOURCES, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS. Educators in Listuguj have taken a multi-pronged approach to tackling the revitalization of Mi'gmaq. In this section, we discuss three sub-projects the partnership has collaborated on. First, we describe the documentation of Mary Ann Metallic and Janice Vicaire's adult Mi'gmaq language classes, and the role played by student-linguists in the classroom. Second, we address the creation of CAN-8 online language lessons, using it as a concrete example of what kinds of expertise linguists and community members each brought to the partnership. Third, we discuss the importance of engaging community members in the conversation of language revitalization; the last section focuses on a community language workshop that took place in the second year of our partnership.

4.1 THE CLASSROOM. The LED is home to an innovative, intuitive teaching method developed by Mary Ann Metallic, who received the Linguistic Society of America's first *Excellence in Community Linguistics Award* in 2014. While this paper will not delve deeply into the mechanics of this method, which has been described elsewhere (see Sarkar & Metallic 2009), it is necessary to give an introduction to what the classroom experience is like in order to discuss the role that these classes play in resource-building.

This most striking thing about the classroom in the LED is that the walls are covered in pictures. These pictures (of people, of clothing, of food, of places, etc.) are organized in four rows according to grammatical categories present in the Mi'gmaq language: number (singular or plural) and grammatical animacy (animate and inanimate). The pictures and their arrangement serve as a mnemonic, encouraging students to leave English outside the classroom and thereby diminish English's status as the default language of communication. If a student forgets a word, they have the option of indicating its associated picture rather than switching to English. The set-up is similar to the techniques of the language revival activist Stephen Greymorning's Accelerated Second Language Acquisition (Greymorning 1997). This method also reflects Caplin's (2006) study on learning strategies of Mi'gmaq students. Both the visuals around the classroom (pictures) and the emphasis on verbal communication reflect her findings: "Students actually preferred a multi-modal approach to learning consisting of both visual and verbal methods of instruction" (Caplin 2006:69).

In the classroom, Mi'gmaq is spoken and heard more than it is written and read. In the early days of the beginner classes, the teachers focus on building up students' vocabulary within context. Rather than memorizing lists of words, students develop their vocabulary by saying simple descriptive sentences about pictures on the walls, or having short conversations with the teachers and each other. The emphasis is on speaking so the students can use the language immediately. Writing is not introduced until later and students are discouraged from using paper and pencils. This highlights a key part of teaching Indigenous languages—the importance "that Native children learn to use their tribal language instead of just understanding it" (Cantoni 1999:56). Furthermore this emphasis on speaking caters to

the desire of parents of children learning Native languages for their children to use it and not just learn words in isolation (Paupanekis & Westfall 2001:96).

As the students learn more, both at home and with their teachers, lessons become more flexible, guided by student questions and interests. A typical later class might start with a student asking, “I know how to say ‘I see a person’ and ‘You see a person,’ but how do you say something like ‘A person sees a moose’?” Often, these questions will not have simple answers, and lead to new areas for learning and discussion that neither the teachers nor the students could have predicted. Students are also encouraged to answer each other’s questions, an empowering practice that gives students greater confidence in their own knowledge.

The challenge lies in replicating this pedagogical process in language-learning materials. As lessons are variable and heavily influenced by student input, they are difficult to circulate among people who are unable to attend them in person. Rather than disrupting this natural and effective method of teaching, classes can be described after-the-fact, as samples and examples of possible classes rather than as scripts for other teachers to follow. This was the idea that Gail Metallic, the Director of the LED, suggested in the summer of 2012. Since the student linguists were already taking Mi’gmaq classes, it was a logical next step to have them take notes during each class and write them up as lesson reports. Little took on this responsibility, taking two Mi’gmaq classes four days per week, one with other post-secondary students, the other with recent high school graduates. After each lesson, she would describe the major themes, note the materials and sample situations used, and conclude the lesson plan with a description of the linguistic concepts and practical skills learned. By the end of the summer, she had recorded 24 lesson plans, which are now available as a resource for other Mi’gmaq teachers (for instance, at the English high school in neighboring Campbellton). These recorded lessons acted as a road map. . Many times, M. Metallic would build from a student’s question during class. The next class would then build from the previous class. This flexibility of curriculum allowed for each class to be catered to the needs of the students. The students were always learning material relevant to them. This is especially important in a language-learning setting as the students can thus use what they have learned immediately.

Crucially, Little participated in these classes as a student, not as a teacher’s aide. The teaching method is uniquely student-focused, and positioning oneself as a neutral outsider, neither teacher nor student, would make it hard to experience the lessons as they are fully intended. During classes, Little and McClay had the goal of learning the language, similar to their classmates. They built up relationships with other students as well as with the teachers. Additionally, since both had studied linguistic aspects of Mi’gmaq during their undergraduate degrees, they both had some knowledge about certain areas of the language. However, the sort of knowledge they had gained was not geared towards communication, but instead prioritized the examination of abstract linguistic qualities. For instance, both linguists knew that Mi’gmaq is a polysynthetic language; as such they expected to learn words composed of many morphemes. However, they both lacked basic vocabulary and did not know how to build these words. Being in a classroom setting allowed the linguists to learn practical language skills by talking about themselves and asking questions about other people. During their field methods class, they had never practiced speaking Mi’gmaq, and they came into the class with fresh perspectives, very aware of the limitations of their knowledge.

As discussed in §2, recognizing the power imbalance inherent in a community-academic partnership was essential. Little and McClay came into the class with degrees in linguistics from a prestigious Canadian university, and it was important to negotiate the relationship of the supposed expertise that comes with a university degree and the practical inexperience

as newcomers to the community. There were moments, particularly early in the summer, where it was important not to “allow [linguists’] supposed expertise to trump [community members’] experience” (Speas 2009:35). The student linguists had to be content not to know the answer to most questions they were asked, and learned not to scramble to come up with a response as they would have done in university classes. Ultimately, it was a matter of being responsible participant-observers by showing respect for the teachers and their knowledge (see, e.g., Jorgensen 1989). This highlights the premise that linguists must be willing to learn from the community members that they work with rather than assume the role of an expert as per discussion in Gerds (2010), Czaykowska-Higgins (2009), and Rice (2009).

4.2 CAN-8. The CAN-8 program is a digital language-learning resource: teachers and administrators enter information in the form of audio recordings, text, or images to a centralized database, and students can access these materials by logging in to the CAN-8 system on their own computers (Sounds Virtual Inc. 2013). Lessons can take multiple forms to highlight speaking/listening skills, reading/writing skills, or simply drilling comprehension. The program allows students to learn and practice the language without requiring an in-person speech partner or teacher.²

Creating the CAN-8 materials had been the purview of the language and culture coordinator at LED, Joe Wilmot. Wilmot had experience teaching the language to high school students, but had not spearheaded the development of an entire curriculum before. The other two contributors, one a Listuguj community Elder and the other a literacy teacher, became involved through Wilmot. Neither had any formal instruction in language curriculum development. These employees began recording and uploading CAN-8 materials over the course of 2010-2011, but found that it was progressing slowly. There were few employees of the LED who had the teaching experience required to assist them, and those who had that experience were busy teaching their own classes. The Listuguj community Elder continues to work with the linguists recording content, but the literacy teacher did not remain on.

By the end of the first summer, the project had created over 100 lessons for CAN-8. Each generally consisted of dialogues scripted by Quinn and Wilmot. These scripts were written and recorded by Wilmot and other speakers he recruited for the task, and then loaded into CAN-8 by Little and McClay. Much of the material came from Mary Ann Metallic’s classes as documented by Little. Inputting involved uploading the text, audio, and an accompanying image file to CAN-8, and synchronizing the text and audio so that written portions would light up when the corresponding parts of the recording are played. This synchronization process allows users to focus on and replay a challenging or relevant part of a sound file.

It must be emphasized that the linguists did not come in as experts on education or curriculum development. Rather, many of the lesson plans came from the documented curricula as transcribed by Little. These transcribed lesson plans later fed into the online language-learning resource. Linguists also used their training in recognizing linguistic patterns to inform grammar development.

Now, Mi’gmaq teachers at the local high school use CAN-8 during Mi’gmaq class. The LED is responsible for recruiting and maintaining users. It is advertised through teachers in the language classroom as well as pamphlets in the LED building. The LED recognizes that CAN-8 lessons are only one component of a holistic approach to language revitalization,

²We strongly advise that any readers wanting to recreate this method use non-proprietary options. Some resources we recommend include the Template for Multi-Layered Language Learning Resources (Ko et al. 2015) and First Voices (First Voices 2013). For a cheap, simple flashcard learning tool we recommend Quizlet (see <https://quizlet.com/learnmigmaq> for Mi’gmaq flashcards developed by the Mi’gmaq Revitalization Project).

which must include work in integrating the language in community spaces both in and outside the classroom, working together with families, and connecting young people with Elders. Nevertheless, the CAN-8 lessons are a valuable resource for language-learners.

Though the summer was productive, the group also faced some important challenges with CAN-8. First, our working process involved multiple speakers of the language, but only a couple learners—the linguists. Seeking more input from community members learning the language would have provided valuable insight on what materials to create and which formats would have been the most useful, and is a primary goal going forward. For example, taking surveys of community members about material they would like to see included could guide further development. Community members have mentioned to the authors that they would like to see more commands in CAN-8 directed to young children, for instance, in dialogues between a parent and their child. See Rosborough (2012:162) for more discussion on lack of child-directed speech for second language learners. These kinds of dialogues were not initially included in CAN-8, but after discussion, a unit on speech to children has been added.

Second, CAN-8 itself is restrictive and under copyright. The nature of the user interface for both administrators and users can make uploading and accessing the materials time-consuming. Files for lessons have been backed up and stored externally, to facilitate the possibility of future transfer to a different lesson platform, since they are difficult if not impossible to recover from the program itself.

Thirdly, negative reviews from users of CAN-8 describe its interface as unappealing. Furthermore, learners with Apple computers cannot download CAN-8, as it is only available on PCs. This cuts off many potential users in the community.

Though the CAN-8 project faces challenges, the successes outweigh the shortcomings. Building this resource gave the partnership a tangible area in which to work, while contributing towards the larger goal of language revitalization. CAN-8 served as an initial focus point from which the partnership learned what each individual had to offer and which areas needed work; in this way, it was invaluable. Thus, tangible resource-creation projects like these are central to collaboration.

4.3 SUMMER WORKSHOP. In the summer of 2013, the LED-University partnership organized the first-ever Mi'gmaq Language Summer Workshop, with the collaboration of linguists at Concordia University. The goal of the workshop was to inform community members about language-learning resources, to foster motivation to learn the language, and to provide a space for all members of the community, speakers or not, to share their experiences with and impressions of the language. Similar workshops have been organized for other linguistics-community partnerships, such as the Cayuga project (Cayuga Language, n.d.) and the Coast Salish Community-University Research Alliance (CURA 2012.). The Mi'gmaq Language Summer Workshops are unique, however, as community high school students and post-secondary students were key organizers.

The workshop was planned and organized by Listuguj high school graduates and post-secondary students enrolled in summer Mi'gmaq classes (including author Wysote), Mi'gmaq language teachers, and two visiting linguists living in Listuguj (author Little and McGill MA student, Yuliya Manyakina). Many of the ideas for the implementation of the workshop came from the high school graduates and post-secondary students. This event was open to all community members.

The workshop lasted five hours, and fell on the same week as the community Wellness Fair and the annual Pow Wow. This allowed the organizers to advertise the workshop during

both these events to attract participants. Around 70 Listuguj community members and visiting Mi'gmaq learners and speakers from neighboring Mi'gmaq communities attended the first workshop. It began with breakfast and a general welcome by the organizers and the Listuguj chief, Dean Vicaire. An ensemble composed of a community drums group and young Mi'gmaq language immersion students sung traditional songs. Following the introductions, two guest speakers came to the podium. The first was Bernard Jerome, the former chief of the neighboring Mi'gmaq community of Gesgapegiag and a fluent Mi'gmaq speaker who spoke both in Mi'gmaq and English about the importance of keeping the language. The second speaker was Jaime Battiste, who is a young Mi'gmaq lawyer from Eskasoni, a Mi'gmaq community in Nova Scotia. He spoke about his experiences as young speaker of Mi'gmaq in a place where he has few peers who speak the language.

The workshop participants, who were all speakers or learners of Mi'gmaq, browsed themed booths set up around the venue. Each booth had a topic connected to Mi'gmaq language or culture, ranging from the medicinal properties of plants to Mi'gmaq language resources in Listuguj. Mi'gmaq immersion preschool teachers Janice Vicaire and Theresa Mitchell reconstructed their classroom to replicate the learning environment of the Listuguj Mi'gmaq immersion nursery. Their booth was designed to encourage awareness of the preschool immersion program. Listuguj parents and children were able to see a replica of the classroom and able to ask the teachers about the immersion program. There were also two booths designed by linguists: one detailing the benefits of multilingualism, the second showcasing successful cases of language revitalization worldwide.

After lunch and the booth walk-around, the students of the Mi'gmaq summer language classes led hour-long discussion groups with all workshop attendees. The student-organizers had prepared a list of questions during the planning of the workshop that served as topics for each discussion group. These groups opened an intergenerational dialogue between speakers and learners. At the end of the workshop, the students then shared their groups' responses, often giving concrete points for the direction language revitalization efforts should take, but also couching these ideas and hopes in the lived experiences of the participants.

The discussion groups were generally agreed to be the most influential part of the workshop. The student organizers of the workshop led the discussion groups. The groups provided the opportunity for different generations to honestly share their thoughts on the language, free of judgment. Some younger workshop participants told their Elders that they felt as though the Elders might resent them for not having learned the language; parallel to this, some Elders felt that the Youth may resent them for not having taught them the language. Such conversations had never happened in an open community forum prior to the workshop, and they were essential in allowing community members, young and old, to explicitly and productively connect with each other. This realization alone has helped all generations better understand the obstacles for language learning in the case of the younger generations and language teaching in the case of the older generations. Author Wysote wrote about these discussion groups on the blog at www.miqmaq.org:

While learning the language in the most practical sense is vitally important, learning to forgive each other inter-generationally is a form of healing that I suspect will facilitate language learning and retention. All I can say is that this language workshop was a step in the right direction and it is critical as Mi'gmaq that we organize and participate in more of them. (Wysote 2013)

The partnership held subsequent workshops in the summers of 2014 and 2015, and plans on continuing this workshop annually, so as to foster more support for learners and speakers and to provide a platform for more dialogues of this kind.

5. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

Many of the lessons the partners have taken from this project have been about what each of us can offer a revitalization effort. For community members, the answers are clear: speakers, teachers, and learners each contribute their own knowledge and expertise in the language, language-learning, and revitalization. Speakers, especially teachers, have important experience in passing the language to others and familiarity with strategies and tools for new speakers of any language. Learners themselves have knowledge in this area as well, in addition to their own unique experiences that have allowed them to build skills in other areas, be they technological, social, academic, trade-related, or otherwise. Each revitalization effort is going to look different from every other one: each is shaped by the individual participants.

The linguists helped in both linguistic and non-linguistic ways. As described in Speas (2009), it isn't purely linguistic expertise that makes linguists potentially valuable to language revitalization programs. She points out that linguists have experience navigating bureaucracies and funding agencies, and that they hold a certain amount of privilege just from being able to say 'affiliated with X University.' Conventional linguistic knowledge has also been useful to our revitalization partnership. Having some knowledge of second language acquisition research and knowing specifics of Mi'gmaq syntax and phonology (particularly the areas in which it differs from English, the first language of nearly every student at the LED) has given the collaborators insight into potentially useful topics for language-learning resources to cover. Additionally, the linguists who traveled to Listuguj to help with CAN-8 all had a great deal of experience in being language-learners, so they could productively draw on that background, either with specific regard to using CAN-8, or just in terms of general attitudes that can help and hinder language-learners.

Apart from learning what each of us can contribute to language revitalization, this collaboration has also taught the partners about other core necessities. First, frequent and open communication is a must, particularly when collaborating at a distance. The lack of incidental run-ins and casual updates about projects that one gets when one works in the same building as other collaborators makes it essential to schedule frequent calls, in-person visits, and send email updates often. Second, when constant communication is impossible, clear documentation becomes all the more important. The lesson plans are one example of this; another is the CAN-8 handbook, a guide discussing how to structure lessons and add material to the CAN-8 program that was written following the work on CAN-8 in the first summer. Though limited, documentation can substitute for reminders and clarifications that are easy to do in-person but difficult at a distance. It can also be easily shared between different projects working on similar tasks, so that a network of revitalizers can benefit from each other's experiences. Third, it is essential for linguists to enroll in the language classes they want to help teachers with, learning alongside students. This provides much-needed perspective, allows linguists to get to know the students and their learning needs, and allows the students to learn more about the linguists. The students themselves should have considerable input in the process of building language learning resources for their own use.

Finally, one recurring theme in this collaboration has been that it is crucial to be willing to step outside one's own areas of expertise and help with things one might not be an expert in, or as directly invested in. For instance, the academic research the linguists often do is not

directly related to class and teaching work, but it contributes to a more complete knowledge of the language itself, and can sometimes raise interesting puzzles for teachers and speakers. The teachers see the value in this and field questions from the linguists—one project, an experiment to learn more about Mi'gmaq intonation and word order, is currently being worked on by a team of one linguist and two teachers (Hamilton et al. 2014). Conversely, the linguists had no or little previous experience developing curricula, but Little (who drew up the documentation of the language class) made it a priority to learn best practices in the field, working hard to learn the principles and theories that would best help her communicate the content of the classes. The resources she helped create are currently being used in a neighboring high school. The flexibility to learn specialized skills needed for different tasks has been a key quality in the success of this multifaceted partnership.

As for where to go from here, after the mixed reviews of CAN-8 and the success of the workshop in the summer, there are some clear indications for future development of this language revitalization partnership. The first is to prioritize and facilitate in-person language learning where possible. In the summer of 2012, a member of the Listuguj community now working for the LED, Victoria Metallic, organized a pilot run of the Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP) (see Hinton et al. 2002). MAP connects learners with fluent speakers of the target language in an immersion environment where participants do everyday activities in the target language. Having a community member drive this program was crucial to the success of it. A linguist would not have been able to connect and interface with community members as well as V. Metallic did. This reflects Gerdt's (2010) comments on the critical role of community members in language revitalization and the limits of linguists in working on community-based revitalization projects.

In conjunction with this working to build a MAP, the partnership hopes to develop a resource that takes advantage of new technologies—a mobile application for learners to work with speakers in creating audio and visual flashcards that mimic the work that Metallic and Vicaire do in their classroom (Quizlet 2015). The goals for this application are also to make up for some of the difficulties found in using CAN-8. Initial results of these efforts can be found linked from the centralized project website: <http://www.migmaq.org>.

In this paper, we hope to provide one case study of a community-linguistics partnership with the hope of contributing to a larger conversation about the role of linguists in language revitalization, as well as the role of community members in linguistic research. As detailed above, we have learned that it is important for academics to understand the broader socio-political and historical context of the language and to recognize the inherent power imbalance in partnerships between academic and community organizations. Due to these imbalances, language-revitalization efforts are most successful when driven internally by community members. Thus, partnerships should focus on the needs and wishes of the community. Even semester-long field methods classes have the potential to make contributions to language documentation and revitalization; students are motivated when they realize they are contributing to a meaningful project with impacts outside the academic classroom. Creating resources for language-learning is a difficult but rewarding process and it is best to consult with learners and teachers throughout. Furthermore, in the context of language attrition, conversations about language are often difficult. To this end, it is crucial to provide a space in which these conversations are facilitated and encouraged, and in which learners, teachers, Elders, and parents can share their experiences and stories. Though community-linguistics partnership may not be the solution for every community, the successes of this partnership demonstrate that it can be a beneficial option.

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