Watch and Learn:

**Assessing the Efficacy of a Narrative Ojibwe-Teaching Video
Series to Support Adult Language Learning**

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Abstract

As urbanization and globalization continue to disrupt the intergenerational transmission of Ojibwe/Anishinaabemowin and other Indigenous languages, innovative approaches to language revitalization are increasingly necessary. (Re)establishing Ojibwe as a home language is an important part of this process; however, the needs of adult learners with no access to traditional classrooms must also be met. One way is to harness the power of user-friendly digital media tools and their potential to disseminate information across vast distances using the Internet. By combining some aspects of traditional Anishinaabe pedagogy with contemporary videographic techniques, a dramatic mini-series called *Bamitaagewin* was created. The goal of *Bamitaagewin* is to entertain adult viewers while exposing them to target language chosen for its potential use at home with children.

This Master's thesis study was designed to assess the efficacy and feasibility of a narrative video-based approach to Indigenous language revitalization. Twenty participants viewed the entire series and completed a language test. Two weeks later, they returned and underwent a "cold" test to assess how much of the target language they had retained. After viewing a review episode, participants completed a third round of testing. Next, they were interviewed to discover how they felt about learning Ojibwe from a narrative video series.

Results indicate that viewing the video series fostered the retention of Ojibwe imperative verbs, even after only a single viewing. During the interviews, participants overwhelmingly reported a positive and entertaining learning experience. These results suggest that narrative language-teaching videos may fill an important but oft-neglected niche, and thereby contribute to Indigenous language revitalization.

Résumé

Puisque l'urbanisation et la globalisation continuent d'interrompre la transmission intergénérationnelle de l'ojibwe/anishinaabemowin et les autres langues autochtones, des méthodes innovatrices de la revitalisation de ces langues sont de plus en plus nécessaires. Rétablir l'ojibwe comme langue du foyer fait partie intégrante de ce processus; cependant, il faudra répondre aussi aux besoins des élèves adultes qui n'ont pas accès aux cours de langue conventionnels. Une manière d'atteindre cet objectif, est d'exploiter le pouvoir et rendre accessible les outils média-numérique et leur potentiel de diffuser l'information vers de longues distances via Internet. En combinant certains aspects de pédagogie traditionnelle Anishinaabe avec la technique vidéographique contemporaine, j'ai pu obtenir des mini-séries dramatiques *Bamitaagewin*. Le but de *Bamitaagewin* est d'amuser des adultes pendant qu'ils sont exposés au langage spécifique. Ce langage est choisi en raison de sa convenance a une utilisation domestique en présence d'enfants.

Cette étude thèse-maitrise, a été planifiée pour l'évaluation de l'efficacité et de la faisabilité d'une approche vidéographique-narrative qui mène à la revitalisation des langues autochtone. Le processus de la planification et la production des vidéos qui enseignent la langue ojibwe ont présenté des défis majeurs pour un chercheur non autochtone et dont la langue ojibwe n'est pas courante. Vingt participants ont vu les séries complètes et ont fait un examen linguistique. Deux semaines plus tard, ils sont revenus puis ont fait un examen «froid» pour évaluer le nombre d'éléments dont ils se souviennent. Après un affichage d'un épisode récapitulatif, ils ont fait une troisième session d'examens. Ensuite, ils ont fait des entrevues pour partager leurs perceptions de l'apprentissage l'ojibwe à partir de séries vidéos-narratives.

Les résultats indiquent que même si une seule diffusion des séries vidéo a encouragé la mémorisation des verbes impératifs en ojibwe. Pendant les entrevues, les participants ont reporté en grand nombre une expérience d'apprentissage positive et ludique. Ces résultats suggèrent que des vidéos narratives d'enseignement des langues peuvent répondre aux besoins d'une niche d'individus souhaitant apprendre cette langue. Cette catégorie de personnes est importante mais souvent ignorée. Ainsi cette méthode d'éducation contribue de façon effective à la revitalisation des langues autochtones.

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Chapter One – Introduction

Boozhoo

Band Daniin ndizhinikaaz. Zhaaganaashi ndaaw. Wiinibiigong ndoonjibaa, aanawi noongom Moniyaang ndayaa. Gaawiin mashi ingikenimaasii ndoodem. Ingikinoo'amaadiz anishinaabemowin.

Upon meeting an Ojibwe-speaking person for the first time, it is considered standard protocol to exchange certain biographical details so that each person may acknowledge the influences which have shaped them and the context from which he or she has emerged (Geniusz, 2009). This information can guide the trajectory of the budding relationship and determine the ways in which the parties should interact with one another; for example, they may discover that they belong to the same clan and therefore cannot marry, or that their networks of friends and family living in a particular community overlap. A short personal narrative as an introduction thus helps to place strangers within a larger context and serves as a foundation upon which an appropriate rapport can be built.

It is not only an observation of protocol that prompts me to begin this work with a self-introduction in Ojibwe – a language that is indigenous to my birthplace and yet remained unknown to me until young adulthood. It is also intended to be a declaration that despite the demographic, social, political, historical, and economic factors that have contributed to the endangerment of the Ojibwe language, it is still possible for motivated learners to learn it independently and use it appropriately. My own introduction contains some basic biographical details that describe the context from which I emerged as a participant in the Ojibwe language revitalization movement, though an English translation only awkwardly conveys the more subtle nuances that reveal my attitudes towards the language and culture, and my rather marginal positioning as a non-Anishinaabe (or a non-Ojibwe person) within the Ojibwe-speaking world. Deconstructing my introduction discourse will thus serve to acknowledge the

influences that have guided me towards investigating the best practices of a narrative video-based approach to language learning.

Niin

> *I am called Band Daniin (Brent Delaine). I am English. I'm from Winnipeg, but now I live in Montreal. I still don't know who my totem is. I teach myself Ojibwe.*

I have come to appreciate that the name by which one introduces oneself in another language is loaded with implications. This awareness first developed during my high-school study of Japanese, where I learned to transform my given name into a syllabic *katakana* form. My *sensei* [teacher] explained that monolingual Japanese speakers might struggle to pronounce non-Japanese names, since the language does not have consonant clusters like /br/. Accordingly, introductions might become awkward and the power structure lopsided: by coincidence, it is much easier for an English speaker to pronounce Japanese names than it is for Japanese speakers to pronounce English ones. Patricia Ningewance, who I consider my *gikinoo'amaagekwe* [teacher] as the author of several Ojibwe-teaching resources that I have used extensively, claims that "today, most Anishinaabeg pronounce English proper names as they are" (2004, p. 4). However, realizing that even a simple introduction is laden with sociolinguistic weight has informed my perceptions of name-changing and language-identity, and consequently I choose to introduce myself in Ojibwe as "Band Daniin". I choose to use my "Ojibwe" name – which is not a ceremonial spirit-name that I have been granted, but simply a substitution of English phonemes with their Ojibwe equivalents – out of consideration for monolingual Ojibwe speakers, should any still exist, and to critique the assumption that English phonemic proficiency should necessarily accompany or precede that of Indigenous-language phonemic proficiency.

In both Japanese and Ojibwe, my choice to use a "transliterated" version of my English name instead of choosing a traditional target-language one highlights my out-group status, as a *gaijin* [foreigner] in Japanese, and a *Zhaaganaashi*

[English-person] in Ojibwe. In Ojibwe, being "English", refers less to my ethnic heritage (I am actually of *Ome'igwesii*[1] and *Wemitigoozhi*[2] descent), and more to the simple fact that I am not Anishinaabe. The necessity of making such a distinction between in- and out-group members may seem antiquated or even racist to some Western sensibilities, but it is entirely relevant considering the historical and political wrongs committed upon indigenous people around the world by colonizers, who often learned and used indigenous languages to infiltrate and destabilize those civilizations as a means of assimilating them to colonizer ways of life (Debenport, 2010). As I learned during my Japanese studies, this bait-and-switch tactic has been employed in Japan to accelerate the destruction of indigenous languages and cultures, like that of the Ainu, just as it has been employed on Turtle Island (North America) to force the assimilation of Inuit, Metis, and First Nations such as the Ojibwe (I will return to this topic in more depth in Chapter Three). Despite my out-group status, I hope to help reverse the trend of decline that has befallen Indigenous languages in Canada, and in doing so, perhaps help to restore some trust amongst Anishinaabe and Zhaaganaashi people. In pursuit of this lofty goal, I implicate myself in the Ojibwe clan system by claiming that I "do not yet know who my totem is", rather than dismissing the concept entirely, as sometimes occurs with non-Anishinaabeg learners. A totem is an animal that represents the group of people related through patrilineal descent within which one is forbidden to marry and which designates the role that each member of that clan would have been historically expected to play in an Ojibwe community (such as teaching, guardianship, governance, etc.) (Ningewance, 2004). Many Ojibwe people are proud of their clans as a symbol if their Ojibwe identity, and Ningewance claims that "Everyone belongs to a clan, whether you know it or not" (2004, p.47). Although it may be impossible for me to ever positively identify my totem, I choose to acknowledge some belonging within the Ojibwe clan system, however marginal, out of respect for the

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[1] 'Ukrainian'
[2] 'French'

institutions that have shaped the language and culture that I am attempting to discover.

Like identifying one's totem, mentioning one's birthplace is standard in an Ojibwe introduction-discourse. However, it is especially vital in understanding how I came to know and support the indigenous language revitalization movement. Winnipeg, known by several Ojibwe names and located in what is now Manitoba, has been a nexus of Indigenous trade and activity for "at least thirty centuries" (Friesen, 1996, p.3). Since the arrival of Europeans, the Metis and First Nations of the region have played a major role in Canadian history – most notably by orchestrating the Red River Rebellion and preventing the ratification of the 1987 Meech Lake Accord (King, 2012). Census data further reveals that Winnipeg can boast the highest urban population of Aboriginal people in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2010). In a city with such a historical and visible Indigenous presence, it would seem logical that Aboriginal history, culture, and languages would feature prominently in the provincial curriculum. However, I was in my last year of high school the first time I remember hearing someone introduce themselves in an Indigenous language. As part of "Aboriginal Week", students were treated to presentations by and about Aboriginal people, as well as other cultural events. One presenter visited my Japanese class, and began her presentation by introducing herself in the Oji-Cree language. While I was used to the cadence and intonation of the local Aboriginal-English dialect, I did not recognize a single word in the discourse. As I listened and gazed around the room, the ridiculousness of the circumstances slowly dawned on me: I was learning to speak Japanese, a language originating thousands of kilometres away, living in English, a language originating thousands of kilometres away in the opposite direction, and yet, when someone introduced herself in a language originating right in my home province (Delaine, 2010), I understood nothing. Just a few months away from high-school graduation, I was only then being introduced to an Indigenous language, which was not featured alongside French, Spanish, or Japanese as a language course offered in my school. Later, as I consulted the course calendar of the university I would attend in the fall, I learned

that language courses in Cree and Ojibwe were offered each term, but only in the evening, when I and most of my peers would be at our part-time jobs. Other languages, such as Inuktitut and Naskapi, were offered off-campus as part of travel/study programs, and then only if sufficient demand existed. In contrast, Japanese, a language of negligible practical use in my city, was offered at several Winnipeg high schools, universities, and cultural centres, and accessible throughout the day as well as in the evening. Although I now understand that my university was actually quite progressive in offering any Indigenous-language programming, the inconvenient scheduling reflected a message that I was to encounter frequently in the years that followed: Indigenous languages occupy the margins of the education system, academia, and society, if they occupy any space at all.

Still, that visitor's introduction-discourse in Oji-Cree had sparked a curiosity that led me to seek out a group of artists, musicians, writers, historians, professors, and language activists that guided my Indigenous education. While I have had the good fortune to meet only a few of these teachers in person, I am grateful for the local workers – Winnipeg librarians, television and radio program producers, web developers, publishers, and educators – whose creativity and devotion made accessing a wealth of Indigenous-themed materials and resources possible. While I do not wish to diminish the role of particular teachers or professors in supporting my passion for Indigenous literatures, languages and education, it is important to emphasize the extent to which informal, independent research and learning outside of academia, utilizing tools such as fiction, music, self-study language texts, and the Internet, formed the basis of my early "curriculum". My declaration in the introduction-discourse that "I teach myself Ojibwe" is intended less as self-congratulation and more of an acknowledgment that self-study resources fill an important gap left by formal educational institutions (as well as a disclaimer that any improper language usage is due to my own failures as a self-guided student, and not a result of an ineffective teacher!). Learning about living languages and cultures through non-interactive materials such as books, videos, and websites may not be the ideal way to achieve fluency

or communicative ability; yet for those of us who are prevented from accessing immersive language environments or even part-time language classes, it is the only means by which we may attempt to pursue proficiency.

It is my hope that I may contribute to the body of resources that has helped me gain some understanding of the Ojibwe language and culture. There are certainly challenges inherent in revitalizing an Indigenous language, but by meeting those challenges with creativity and resourcefulness, they are surmountable.

Overview

The next chapter is a review of the relevant literature, and explores some pre-existing work that was used to guide the development and design of this study. I describe the factors that have rendered language revitalization necessary and desirable, and the goals of revitalization movements. Next, the importance of a culturally sensitive and relevant approach to Indigenous language revitalization is explained, and the characteristics of a pedagogically sound approach are mentioned. After identifying narrative language-teaching videos as a culturally- and pedagogically-appropriate medium of language instruction, I describe some gaps in the existing research pertaining to video-based language teaching generally.

The following chapter is an overview of the Ojibwe language, intended to provide readers with some context within which this work may be placed. It consists of a brief history of Ojibwe language use, the status of the Ojibwe language today, and some specific aspects of Ojibwe vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation that are relevant to this work. Three research questions are also stated in Chapter Three.

The Methodology describes the design and implementation of the study, which involved showing participants the narrative language-teaching video series and assessing the extent to which they were able to understand and produce specific Ojibwe verbs afterwards. The participants, data set, and methods of analysis are also described.

The Results chapter presents the results of the experiment, and in the Discussion chapter, I attempt to explain the results in terms of my understanding of second language learning, and use these explanations to answer the research questions in as much detail as possible.

The Conclusion chapter summarizes the findings of the experiment. I outline some limitations of the study pertaining to its design and implementation, and provide recommendations regarding the development of similar narrative language-teaching videos as a legitimate and powerful tool capable of making a significant contribution to Indigenous language revitalization on Turtle Island and around the world.

Chapter Two – A Review of the Literature

Language Revitalization

Understanding the challenges pertaining to Ojibwe language revitalization requires an understanding of similar work being done with indigenous and minority (I.M.) languages around the world. This chapter will provide a brief overview of language revitalization as a global movement, some critical considerations inherent in pursuing revitalization work, and some areas in which current research is sparse or lacking.

Language Revitalization as Resistance to Globalization and Assimilation

A worldwide movement aimed at preserving and promoting diverse indigenous and other minority languages has developed as a response to ever-increasing pressures associated with globalization. Harrison notes that in 2001, there were at least 6,912 languages spoken on Earth; only half of these are expected to survive another century (2007, p.1). Around the world, the ten most-spoken languages are attracting speakers at a rapid rate, boasting about half of the world's population; the 83 most-spoken languages on Earth are spoken by almost 80% of the global population (Harrison, 2007, p. 15). The rest of the world's languages have many fewer speakers – some with less than ten – and are unevenly distributed geographically. Generally, places with small populations living in relative isolation from each other, such as Pacific island-nations, tend to have more language diversity, whereas places with high populations living in close proximity, such as Japan, tend to have less (Harrison, 2007, p. 12). This means that as global populations move towards urbanization, industrialization, mass media, and compulsory state education, small language communities lose the conditions under which they may continue to use and develop their languages and language arts[3] (Harrison, 2007, p. 15).

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[3] "Language arts" is used here to denote the linguistic practices by which oral and/or written texts are composed and experienced by members of a language community. These texts may follow conventions of a particular genre, which are designed to meet particular aesthetic, educational, and/or spiritual objectives.

In addition to demographic changes, many I.M. groups around the world have been subjected to governmental and educational policies that are designed to assimilate them into dominant, mainstream society by disrupting the inter-generational transmission of I.M. languages and cultures (Harrison, 2007). As these languages become less politically and economically powerful over time, they become perceived – by those who do not speak them and often even by those who do – as obsolete, backwards, inefficient, and/or unimportant (Harrison, 2007). Those who do fight to save their languages are, like their languages, typically viewed as "powerless, unpopular with outsiders, and querulous amongst themselves", and are therefore not in a position privileged enough to enact any significant governmental policies that may reverse the downward spiral (Fishman, 1990, p. 80). Children of I.M. language speakers, unsurprisingly, choose to abandon such languages and privilege those which provide social and economic rewards. This prioritization of the more prestigious and dominant Language Y over the I.M. Language X initiates a downward trend of language viability, typically called "language shift" (Fishman, 1990).

Language Viability

Although global language patterns are shifting rapidly, the progression from vibrant language to extinct language occurs in stages. Fishman charts this progression towards language death as "language attrition – shift – endangerment – loss – death" (1990, p. 79). He also created the *Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for Threatened Languages* (see Table 2.1), which identifies eight stages of language loss and suggests ways in which inter-generational transmission can be fostered and resumed (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2005, p.85).

Biological metaphors – such as those used by Fishman and other scholars – are often used to describe the process of language shift. Languages which are actively used throughout a community – in employment, at home, in local media, in sports, and so on – are often called *living, healthy*, or *viable*. Those which are diminishing in use are labeled *endangered* or *threatened*, similar to many animal

or plant species with dwindling populations. Finally, languages which are not being learned by children as first languages are labeled *moribund*, which is the first step towards total language loss, also called language *death* or *extinction* (Harrison, 2007).

Table 2.1: Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for Threatened Languages

Stage	Language Status	Suggested Interventions
8	Only a few Elders speak the language	Implement Hinton's (1994) "Language Apprentice" Model where fluent Elders are teamed one-on-one with young adults who want to learn the language.
7	Only adults beyond childbearing age speak the language	Establish "language nests" after the Maori and Hawaiian models where fluent older adults provide pre-school child-care in which children are immersed in their Indigenous language…
6	Some intergenerational use of language	Develop places in community where language is encouraged, protected, and used exclusively. Encourage more young parents to speak the Indigenous language in home with and around their young children.
5	Language is still very much alive and used in community	Offer literacy in minority language. Promote voluntary programs in the schools and other community institutions to improve the prestige and use of the language. Use language in local government functions, especially social services. Give recognition to special local efforts through awards, etc.
4	Language is required in elementary schools.	Teach reading and writing and higher level language skills… Develop two-way bilingual programs where appropriate, where non-speaking elementary students learn the Indigenous language and speakers learn a national or international language. Need to develop Indigenous language text-books to teach literacy and academic subject matter content.
3	Language is used generally in places of business by employees	Promote language by making it the language of work used throughout the community…Develop day-to-day work vocabulary in the Indigenous language.

| 2 | Language is used by local government and in the mass media in the minority community. | Promote use of written forms of language for government and business dealings/records. Promote Indigenous language newsletters, newspapers, radio stations, and television stations. |
| 1 | Some language use by higher levels of government and in higher education | Teach tribal college subject matter classes in the language. Develop an Indigenous language oral and written literature through dramatic presentations and publications. Give tribal/national awards for Indigenous language publications and notable efforts to promote Indigenous languages. |

These types of analogies are somewhat accurate in that languages, like many organisms, are *born* from *parent* languages, *evolve* as they become more complex over time, and sometimes interact with other languages to spawn new *daughter* languages. Those that are *endangered* may be *revitalized*. However, historic examples – like the *revival* of the *dead* language Hebrew in Israel or Welsh in Wales -- suggest that unlike organisms, languages never truly die (Harrison, 2007). Rather, they *sleep*, to be *re-awakened* by individuals passionate enough to work towards these goals. Although the most difficult language work involves *awakening* these *sleeping* languages, *revitalizing* languages which are *endangered* is similarly difficult, but certainly not impossible.

Indigenous Motivations for Language Revitalization

While there is some perception that language loss is a natural and expected consequence of human interaction, and one which does not warrant the investment of time and resources from which other social endeavors would greatly benefit, there is a growing body of literature which details specific reasons why the revitalization, maintenance, and development of these languages are important and desirable. Of course, many (but not all) indigenous people around the world, and Indigenous people in Canada, wish to maintain their languages as a way to resist assimilation into colonizer societies, continue to develop Indigenous language arts and sciences, practice Indigenous spiritual traditions, communicate with extended family members, and transmit important cultural information to children and grandchildren (Cole, 2006; Geniusz, 2009). The centrality of language to Indigenous epistemology and ontology cannot be overstated. Fishman

(1990) claims that "language is both corpus and message and the authentic message without the authentic corpus is as empty as the authentic corpus without the authentic message" (p. 86). McNally (2009) describes how Anishinaabeg believe that the Creator only understands them when they speak Ojibwe; the loss of their language thus represents the loss of a mode of spiritual practices, as well as the information that forms the basis of Anishinaabe worldview. Geniusz (2009) similarly describes how Anishinaabe plant knowledge is often encoded in Ojibwe-language stories featuring animal characters and humorous situations, which serve to entertain children as well as help them learn and recall which local plants are helpful and which are toxic. While translation is theoretically possible and some main points may be accessible in another language, the structural properties of indigenous languages and language arts facilitate the memorization of such content (described in more detail in the "Indigenous Oral Tradition" section below). Therefore, only by understanding the *form* of an Indigenous language can the efficacy and genius of its *meanings* be truly appreciated, and vice versa.

Non-Indigenous Motivations for Language Revitalization

In addition to supporting the socio-political and educational goals of indigenous people, arguments by non-indigenous people in favor of revitalizing indigenous languages emphasize the great extent to which indigenous knowledge is encoded within them, and how the loss of languages represents the loss of potentially useful ecological, historical, narrative, scientific and other knowledge shaped by thousands of years of research and innovation (Harrison, 2007; Cormack, 2005; McNally, 2009; Hinton, 2001). Harrison (2007) places special emphasis on the ways in which indigenous languages are valuable to researchers by providing alternative metrics and classifications of biological taxonomy, mathematics, geography, time, and other phenomena. Further, he suggests that by maintaining and developing indigenous languages and collaborating with indigenous people, the speed of scientific discovery and innovation could be accelerated by eliminating the need for primary research by western academics. To abandon the large number of languages spoken by people whose livelihoods were so intrinsically connected to the land would be equivalent to destroying

entire collections of knowledge of potential use to science and innovation. Crystal (2000) similarly values minority languages as vehicles of cultural identity, unique and diverse perspectives, and history and other knowledge. Cormack (2005) likewise supports minority language media as a way to boost a region's cultural capital by allowing residents to use their language of choice to tell their own stories, stating that "the importance of a community's self-representation in fiction should not be underestimated" (p. 116).

The economic potential of language revitalization is an important but under-researched consideration, given the extent to which most nation-states base policy upon economic benefits. Of course, indigenous and minority languages have been learned by outsiders in order to subvert, exploit, and enslave indigenous people around the world for centuries (Cole, 2006), and Harrison cites that $85 billion in profits are earned annually by drug companies whose products are based on traditional indigenous medicines, accessed by learning and exploiting indigenous languages (2007, p. 17). Of course, this type of exploitation is not ethical or constructive. Further, the social problems inherent in colonial practices such as these would tend to neutralize any economic gains, at least in the long term. Rather, cooperative language revitalization practices that provide mutual economic rewards to both indigenous and non-indigenous groups are possible and desirable. In addition to the cultural value inherent in language revitalization, Crystal (2000) advocates for the study of endangered languages simply because it is rewarding and interesting in itself, which Cormack (2005) claims can become an important source of revenue for local communities by attracting exchange students who might opt for minority-language immersion, receive instruction from local members of the minority-language community, and spend their money locally. Interest in indigenous languages may also create a demand for minority-language learning resources and media, which further empowers local speakers economically. Cormack (2005) provides several compelling reasons for governmental support of minority-language media development, describing how media production projects can inject much-needed money into the economies of disadvantaged and/or remote communities (where most native and fluent speakers

of minority languages are found) by creating media jobs for locals, providing opportunities for local businesses to advertise, and encouraging investment and development by allowing residents to live and work locally. Pietikinen (2008) attests to the benefits of local indigenous-language media production in terms of the Sami of Finland, whose indigenous-language news broadcasts employ local Sami-speakers locally and necessitate the development and maintenance of a local broadcasting infrastructure, all while facilitating the production of Sami-centric newscasts. Such benefits suggest that healthy minority-language communities, though not often associated with large economic gains (Hinton, 2010), may still contribute to the development of micro-economies within dominant colonizer society. Affective, social, and academic benefits are the most ethical reasons for taking action against language loss; however, economic arguments may be helpful in campaigns aimed at securing societal and governmental support for language revitalization.

Intergenerational Transmission as a Goal of Language Revitalization

While such support can be difficult to obtain – be it moral, financial, temporal, or administrative – that which is obtained is best applied towards pursuing clear, achievable goals. As mentioned previously, a viable language is one with a population of speakers in all age groups that is large enough to accommodate its use within education, employment, recreation, and public and personal life (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2005). Accordingly, the most basic component of language revitalization is simply to promote the learning and use of the target language. Granting Indigenous languages official status and increasing their presence within the education system is perhaps one step towards raising their prestige and motivating learners to study and use Indigenous languages, but several attempts to do so have resulted in limited success in places like Ireland, the United States, and South Africa (Delaine, 2010). Such an approach emphasizes public language use, but neglects the fundamental importance of inter-generational transmission. The learning and use of indigenous and minority languages by children, especially as their mother-tongue, is widely acknowledged as the most significant indicator of linguistic viability (Skabewis, 2008; Fishman,

1990; Department of Canadian Heritage, 2005; Hinton, 2003). Therefore, it makes sense that serious efforts at language revitalization be aimed at increasing the extent to which the indigenous or minority language in question can be used by children meaningfully within a variety of social contexts.

There are several ways in which Indigenous language revitalization efforts may be targeted towards increasing language use with and among children. Delaine (2010) explores the extent to which public education, which has played a significant role in the destruction of Indigenous languages, may now play a crucial role in providing a rich and effective language-learning environment for children and youth. While this may form an important component of a holistic language revitalization program, it is important to acknowledge the home as a place where children spend a significant amount of time and likely engage in a significant amount of linguistic interaction with family and friends. Hinton (2010) describes a general paucity of research aimed at understanding and promoting language use within the home, despite its relevance to the aims of revitalization and the potential for such use to foster naturalistic oral language proficiency. Timutimu, Ormsby-Teki and Ellis (2009) lament the fact that many learners of indigenous languages as second languages do not reach a level of fluency necessary to perform higher-level language tasks, such as performing ceremonies. Still, their study, which examined New Zealander families with children who attended Māori immersion schools and English-dominant parents, found that the most significant obstacle to using Māori at home was adult non-fluency, which made children reluctant to use the language with them for fear of isolating or embarrassing their seniors. They stressed the importance of family members— even those who are not fluent – instigating and sustaining the use of Māori within the home, in whatever capacity possible, in order to promote the idea that non-majority languages are useful, relevant, and adaptable.

Best Practices in Indigenous Language Revitalization
Developing L2 proficiency of adult indigenous-language speakers is just one example of the many considerations involved in language planning. However, the

historical, emotional, political, and cultural baggage that comes with learning and revitalizing indigenous languages, including the Indigenous languages of Turtle Island, present yet another layer of complexity and present different challenges to both teachers and learners of these languages. Ratima and May (2011) have identified several "best practices" in indigenous language revitalization. While some of these, such as learners' age, affective needs, experience with and aptitude for language learning, motivation, and student demographics are crucial factors in planning instruction of any language, others are of particular interest to the teaching and learning of indigenous languages. Aspects not often considered in the teaching of non-indigenous languages, such as learners' spiritual needs, the status of the language being taught, and issues pertaining to language planning, should be key components of an indigenous-language program. All of these considerations can be grouped into three main categories: cultural sensitivity, cultural relevance, and pedagogical soundness. An exploration of each category follows to illustrate its meaning and pertinence to indigenous language instruction.

Summary

Language revitalization efforts may be undertaken for a number of reasons, but are becoming more and more necessary as globalization and governmental policies of assimilation threaten the cultures and languages of indigenous peoples around the world. While indigenous people have an obvious motivation to help their languages survive and flourish, non-indigenous people may also benefit from preserving linguistic diversity. Whatever the rationale behind the movement to revitalize indigenous languages, efforts and resources should be targeted towards encouraging intergenerational transmission; specifically, to facilitate indigenous-language use amongst family members. There are several ways to approach this goal, which will be described in the next section.

Achieving Cultural Sensitivity

Becoming familiar with the cultural politics surrounding indigenous language revitalization is an essential part of conducting effective and ethically-responsible research, especially as a non-Indigenous person. While the world's indigenous

populations are incredibly diverse, and their expectations of and openness to non-indigenous people differ considerably, there are some general considerations and issues that must be reconciled in order to ensure that the history of cultural appropriation, exploitation, and destruction is not perpetuated.

Indigenous Languages as Cultural Property

Understanding indigenous ideals of cultural autonomy and ownership is one such consideration, with a significant amount of literature exploring the extent to which indigenous languages are the "property" of indigenous peoples themselves, or that of all humanity (Hill, 2008). If it is the former, then decisions regarding the teaching and learning of indigenous languages should lie exclusively with indigenous communities, meaning non-indigenous people have a moral and perhaps legal obligation to seek permission before attempting to learn or teach these languages. Some indigenous groups, mostly in the United States, have sought legal protection of their languages by limiting access to resources such as dictionaries (Debenport, 2010). Others, such as the Mayans of Chiapas counter the concept of literacy as a logical and inevitable step in linguistic evolution, and instead consider their own rejection of written literacy to be an achievement, since it has prevented the appropriation of their language by those with no connection to members of the language community (Rockwell, 2005). It seems that such protectionist attitudes may stem from the perception that non-indigenous people exploit indigenous languages to further their own interests, while indigenous communities – who provide researchers with the data and information they seek – see few or no benefits. Hinton (2010) attacks those non-Indigenous approaches to revitalization that focus on producing written materials which have little use outside of European-style classrooms and contribute little to increasing actual language use, but which nonetheless are considered an achievement of the non-Indigenous language worker. Cole (2006) similarly condemns non-indigenous academics that advance their careers, receive thousands in government grants, and generally profit from performing research on, rather than with, indigenous people, who continue to live in poverty and suffer cultural and linguistic loss. Indeed, given the extent to which the physical property of Indigenous Turtle Islanders has

been appropriated and exploited by non-Indigenous people, it seems reasonable that such protectionist measures have been adopted by some as a way to preserve and protect their intellectual and cultural property as well. From such a perspective, withholding a language from outsiders who might learn it and perpetuate its use is not at all counter-productive to revitalization efforts, but in fact the only way to ensure the survival of that language and the culture it transmits.

Indigenous Languages as Universal Human Heritage

The other side of the debate holds that since the survival of linguistic and cultural diversity is so important, all humans have an interest in preserving it. From this perspective, to exclude non-indigenous people from the process of reversing language loss is to ignore a potentially significant population of contributors. Contrary to the aforementioned "cultural property" ideology, there is the belief that world languages can be considered "universally owned" (Hill, 2002, p. 121). As languages form part of the grand repertoire of human achievement, everyone has a right and a duty to participate in revitalization efforts in the name of protecting our shared heritage as a species. While some researchers identify problems with such a view (primarily that it alienates the original speakers from their heritage language and cultural identity), they nonetheless admit that promoting this perception of indigenous languages could play a role in gaining public support for their revitalization and maintenance (Hill, 2008; Debenport, 2010). Though he does not mention the role of outsiders in his Disruption Scale, Fishman suggests that they can indeed play an important role in language revitalization efforts. He also asserts that successful revitalization requires abandoning the "X-men with X-ish" concept (1990), or the idea that one's ethnicity should determine the language that one speaks, especially within a context of language decline. A good example of non-indigenous participation in language revitalization might be Paraguay, where Guarani has been implemented in public schooling, and is therefore used and understood by a surprising 90% of the non-indigenous population. This makes Guarani the only language indigenous to the Americas to have mostly non-indigenous speakers (Gynan, 2001). While

there is concern that increased use of Guarani has led to more Spanish influences on the language, the growing support and usage of the language renders concepts of language purity secondary to the preservation of the language itself. While the Guarani language has perhaps helped to unite indigenous and non-indigenous Paraguayans, the potential for all people to appreciate indigenous perspectives through language is still challenged. Scholars like Swisher (1998, in Gresczyk, 2011, p. 51) contend that "only insiders could really understand the struggle for the preservation of language and culture", suggesting an essentialist view. However, non-Indigenous scholar O'Connor (2006) rejects the idea that non-Indigenous people are incapable of coming to understand Indigenous perspectives, and argues that the concept of separateness is, in fact, foreign to many Indigenous cultures, which typically (but certainly not exclusively) employ a philosophy of holism. The ideal role of non-indigenous people in their revitalization and maintenance of indigenous languages is unclear; still, there appears to be some potential and desire for a meaningful and constructive non-indigenous contribution.

Summary

A review of the literature has thus served to clarify some of the reasons why indigenous groups may prefer that non-indigenous people avoid learning indigenous languages. Reasons why non-indigenous learners may feel compelled or even obliged to learn them are also important to consider. Achieving cultural sensitivity appears to be largely a matter of respecting the goals of the language community and being aware of the potential consequences that may arise as a result of learning and using indigenous languages as a non-indigenous person.

Achieving Cultural Relevance

Cultural Competence as a Language Skill

Cultural competence is an essential component of gaining true proficiency in a second language, along with grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Lyster (2007), among others, emphasizes the importance of teaching language in a way that guides learners towards understanding cultural values and achieving

competence in performing realistic tasks in the L2. Language instruction should aim to provide learners with discrete language skills, but should not ignore the socio-cultural competences necessary to employ that language within the social conventions of the speech community. While this is important in the teaching and learning of any language, the necessity is even more pronounced in terms of learning indigenous languages, the mastery and use of which may be dependent upon comprehending concepts that are entirely culture-specific, such as clan totems or the distinction between animate and inanimate objects. Performing language tasks unique to indigenous life, such as conducting ceremonies or performing indigenous language arts, is equally important. It is the properties of the language– which cannot be exactly replicated in another– that make revitalization important and desirable. Therefore, learning and applying culturally-relevant ways to learn and teach indigenous languages are vital components of reversing language loss and preventing cultural appropriation.

Indigenous Methods for Solving Indigenous Problems

Learning what kind of language to revitalize is crucial, but considering how to go about revitalizing it in a culturally-relevant way is also important. Western-style research practices may not be relevant to solving Indigenous problems, and to contribute to the decolonization of Indigenous research, it is necessary to explore frameworks that actively seek to utilize the knowledge, traditions, customs, and cultural objects of Indigenous nations. These aspects of indigenous cultures have often been routinely dismissed by colonizers as obsolete, inaccurate, primitive, inferior, and superstitious, even as they are being increasingly pursued for economic and political gain by non-indigenous pharmaceutical companies, New Age "healers", writers, and environmentalists (Harrison, 2007; Geniusz, 2009). When indigenous researchers utilize their own research practices to pursue valuable endeavors, indigenous knowledge is increasingly recognized as legitimate, important, and fruitful enough to maintain and develop (Geniusz, 2009). As Indigenous nations differ considerably from one to another, their research practices are not "identical from nation to nation to nation" (Cole, 2006, p. 25). Accordingly it is prudent to explore both pan-Indigenous research

practices, if any exist, as well as those that are specific to the target language community in origin and focus.

Cole's (2006) description of Indigenous frameworks is especially illustrative of the goals, priorities, considerations, and processes involved in Indigenous research. He emphasizes that Indigenous frameworks are grounded in real-world applicability and designed "with a purpose" (p. 25). In other words, rather than adopting and "translating" Western-style frameworks with the sole intent of gaining approval of Western-trained academics, Indigenous frameworks should serve some practical function and improve the lives of the Indigenous people involved. He alludes to the creation of a sweatlodge, which necessarily involves considering the needs of the builder and community who will use it, but also the needs of the animals, plants, bacteria, viruses, and fungi that are affected by harvesting the raw materials, erecting the structure, and so on. Rather than providing readers with a rigid process to be followed in a lockstep fashion, Cole describes a process in which Indigenous frameworks are constructed organically according to the immediate needs of everyone affected by their construction, all of whom must have a say in the planning and execution, and all of whom must benefit from the finished construction (p. 27). From this perspective, a framework is the "enactment of a respectful relationship" (p. 27). In other words, utilizing an Indigenous research framework is not a matter of finding an existing model and replicating it, but of realizing and acknowledging the realities and abilities of the stakeholders involved in the research, and planning the course of action accordingly in a way that respects and enhances the interrelationships of those parties.

Indigenous Oral Tradition

Most Indigenous language arts of Turtle Island are based on oral genres; therefore, culturally-relevant revitalization strategies might involve introducing learners to rich Indigenous orature[4] and oral traditions. These are practices by which ideas are shaped into an audible form that is stored in the memory of

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[4] Oral literature forms, such as spoken poetry, songs, histories, or narratives.

learners most efficiently (Ong, 1982). Oral tradition plays an important role in all societies, including those that use writing; however, within societies that do not have writing systems, or those that have chosen not to use one, it is the *only* means by which cultural information is transmitted. According to Ong (1982) enhancing the memorability of information is usually accomplished by encoding it in narratives featuring stock characters who engage in unusual or exceptional activities that nonetheless follow a predictable story arc. The main milestones in each story arc are linked by narrative devices, such as cliché, repetition, and alliteration, which serve to organize the information in the mind of the storyteller and lead her or him from one part of the story to the next. Such mnemonic strategies are a hallmark feature of orature; using archetypal and familiar characters, story arcs, symbols and settings minimizes the amount of cognition and memory required to organize and remember an impromptu story, as does the extensive use of cliché, rhyme, and so on. Oral tradition, by its very nature, also requires at least one speaker and one listener, which renders oral genres especially intimate, situational, and context-specific. Storytellers routinely customize each story to suit the needs, level, or interests of the audience by embellishing or elaborating previously-told stories or creating funny, scary, or sexy new tales using familiar characters. The mix of familiar and fantastic is, according to Ong (1982), the key to ensuring listeners remember the story and the embedded cultural knowledge within it.

Narrative as Pedagogical Framework

Storytelling is thus a vital part of Indigenous cultures and has played a central role in traditional pedagogy (Truth & Reconciliation Commission, 2012); therefore, embedding pedagogy within narrative may serve to teach both language and culture. Cole (2009) describes the extent to which the basic character-conflict-resolution structure of most stories is also inherent in most thought patterns and processes:

> The tension in math is one number versus another, whether they are added or subtracted, multiplied or divided, the tension is resolved into some sort of conclusion different from the two numbers representing the original tension. (p. 300)

In doing so, he attempts to show that a narrative structure is an ideal pedagogical framework within which practically any subject may be effectively represented, taught, and learned. Geniusz (2009) illustrates a sequence whereby learners may be educated by actively listening to traditional stories and songs, and then invited to participate in activities that are related to the story. For example, Nenabozho (an important and recurring Anishinaabe trickster-hero character) tried to impress the Anishinaabeg by performing various feats, and discovered that birch bark does not conduct electricity. S/he[5] realizes that this makes her/him immune to the bolts of lightning thrown by the *animikiig* (thunderbirds), and marks the birch trees with symbols of "baby animiikiig" to remind the Anishinaabeg of its non-conductive nature (p. 140). Having heard this exciting story, children might be shown these marks on real birch trees, then taught how to stand beneath them in a storm to prevent being struck by lightning, or how to harvest the bark for use on lightning-proof homes. Such stories illustrate that meeting learning outcomes through a carefully-planned story is possible, feasible, and effective.

Other Characteristics of Indigenous Pedagogy

While narrative is certainly a fundamental component of some traditional Indigenous pedagogy, there are other pedagogical techniques common to many Indigenous cultures that may play an important role in language revitalization. O'Connor (2006) outlines some of these techniques, claiming that most traditional approaches to Indigenous education are holistic, visual, reflective, and collaborative. A holist approach involves teaching concepts in a "whole-to-parts" style, rather than a "parts-to-whole" one. In terms of language teaching, this may suggest a syllabus that begins with teaching functional chunks first, then parsing them into their morphological segments afterwards. A highly visual approach to education requires extensive use of images, graphs, and realia; all of these are also commonly used in western-style language pedagogy. Reflective information

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[5] It is unclear whether Nenabozho is supposed to be male or female in this story, as Ojibwe does not differentiate gender in the third-person pronoun. Although s/he predominantly appears as male in stories, s/he is able to move freely across the gender spectrum and morph into any number of different forms, including female ones. This provides storytellers with a degree of flexibility in their storytelling (Noodin, 2014, personal communication).

processing is essentially a "watch-then-do" type of lesson organization, and may be analogous to the standard "receptive-then-productive" model of second-language lesson planning. Collaborative approaches to education stress teamwork and interpersonal skills that can be called upon to solve problems affecting groups, as opposed to a paradigm in which personal excellence and interpersonal competition are encouraged. Interaction with other speakers of a language is an essential component of effective learning (which will be described in more detail later), and thus must play a prominent role in any culturally-relevant language teaching program. Utilizing these kinds of Indigenous approaches to language teaching is thus not only important in terms of cultural relevance; it is also very much in keeping with the best practices of teaching any second language.

Indigenous Languages and Technology

Until now, I have outlined several aspects of "traditional" Indigenous cultures in general that may help to provide learners with a culturally-relevant language-learning experience that equips them with both linguistic and cultural competence. However, another important consideration in language revitalization is to be familiar with the current context within which target language-learners may be found, which may be considered as "modern" Indigenous culture. Many Indigenous people are not being raised in exclusively traditional ways nor speaking their Indigenous languages; this is the main reason that cultural and language revitalization is necessary at all. As a result, many ethnically-Indigenous people may feel little or no connection to Indigenous methods of teaching and learning. Francis and Reyhner (2012) criticize some literature that claims Indigenous people universally have global-holistic learning styles, are dependent upon kinesthetic activities to learn, do not think analytically, or are subject to their "culturally-determined thought patterns" (p. 106). Although many Indigenous teaching *styles* may value holistic, hands-on approaches to learning with a deeply spiritual dimension, it is inaccurate to assume that all Indigenous people learn languages best in this way. Finally, as Indigenous people become increasingly urbanized and populations around the world are able to access information via technology, it is important to consider that non-Indigenous people may want or

need to learn an Indigenous language, and may not be familiar with those pedagogical techniques that are unique to Indigenous nations. Therefore, while Indigenous values and teaching practices must form the basis of any culturally-sensitive and culturally-relevant language revitalization strategy, non-traditional tools and methods that can help to facilitate the acquisition of Indigenous languages by interested learners can and should be explored.

The development and proliferation of Web 2.0 technology has helped to democratize the process of digital media creation. Whereas early Internet users were passive consumers of information posted to the Internet by programming and design experts, Web 2.0 technology allows practically any user with a computer and Internet connection to create and post their own digital media and share it with anyone else with a computer and Internet connection. Warschauer (1998) describes the shift in Internet design as moving away from a substantive view, in which technology forces diverse cultures and languages to adhere to a western-oriented perspective, to an instrumentalist view, in which the technology itself is devoid of any specific cultural values and instead can be shaped and adapted to the needs of any cultural community. At the same time, he also describes the accessibility paradox of such technology: accessing the Internet requires money, time, and computer and literacy skills; however, once these requirements are satisfied, the user is exponentially empowered.

The democratic nature of Web 2.0 technology therefore offers significant promise to indigenous and minority language communities, and educators are beginning to investigate and embrace the pedagogical potential of tools such as wikis, video sharing sites, social networking tools, and blogging platforms (Tu et al., 2012; Sykes et al., 2008). Many I.M. language advocates are already using sites like Facebook and Youtube to create and share learning resources. Other tools feature I.M. language resources exclusively, such as the Endangered Languages Project, which was created as a resource for teachers and learners of endangered world languages to create and share videos, audio files, documents,

links, and other information pertaining to language revitalization, maintenance, and development.

Summary

Achieving cultural relevance is a matter of integrating traditional Indigenous approaches to research to best meet the needs and interests of contemporary learners. Oral tradition forms the basis of Indigenous approaches to pedagogy, and narrative is a particularly important oral genre. The characteristics of narrative can be applied to language teaching. Web 2.0 tools have been embraced by many Indigenous people, and can be utilized to tell Indigenous stories: this can serve as the medium through which culturally-relevant learning occurs. However, language learning also involves several cognitive processes that must be nurtured through carefully planned instruction informed by research in language acquisition.

Achieving Pedagogical Excellence

It is vital to consider the science of language acquisition if the most effective and efficient approach to revitalization is to be taken. Research pertaining specifically to the science of indigenous language acquisition is scarce in comparison to that of commonly-taught languages such as English. Accordingly, some non-Indigenous-language research will be accepted as valid insight into the conditions necessary for acquisition of a second language by adults. Of course, the unique structures and statuses of indigenous languages warrant an examination of successful adult-oriented, Indigenous-language programming as well. By exploring adult SLA in general, and Indigenous-SLA in particular, the best methods of instruction may be identified and adopted.

Conditions for Language Acquisition

Decades of second language acquisition research suggests that four conditions are required for language learning: comprehensible target-language input and output, opportunities for interaction with other speakers, and some sort of feedback regarding language use (Ellis, 2005). Ideal learning may therefore involve a fluent instructor working within a culturally-relevant learning

environment such as a classroom, who provides interested learners with language input that is highly (but not entirely) comprehensible (Ortega, 2009). The perfect instructor would then encourage learners to produce language both at and slightly above their current level of ability (Swain, 1985 in Ortega, 2009) by creating or role-playing situations in which learners must use the target language to negotiate the completion some sort of communicative task (Ortega, 2009). Learners would receive feedback to confirm or correct language forms – preferably from a fluent speaker, but also possibly from another learner (Ellis, 2005). Although academics continue to debate the ways in which the process of acquisition may be improved by approaching these four conditions in different ways, they generally agree that they should form the basis of a language course curriculum.

Indigenous Language Pedagogy

Most of the research in second language acquisition pertains to the teaching and learning of majority languages; however, as the language revitalization movement gains momentum around the world, more and more literature pertaining to the teaching and learning of indigenous languages is being written and published. Fortunately, the role that adult second-language learners can play in language revitalization programs is also being recognized, and two case studies explore some of the best practices involved in teaching indigenous languages to this important demographic (Norris, 2007). These case studies involve Kanien'keha and Mi'gmaq, which belong to the Iroquoian and Algonquian language families, respectively, but which have commonalities that have led to important observations regarding their effective instruction.

The researchers writing about these case studies have found that basing pedagogical methodologies on the structural features of verb-based Indigenous languages instead of merely adapting methods used to teach noun-based languages such as French or Japanese is essential to teaching languages such as Kanien'keha or Mi'gmaq. Kanien'keha instructors have attested to the efficacy of highlighting the verbs and affixes that are at the heart of the Kanien'keha language (Richards & Kanatawakhon/Maracle; 2002). This approach emphasizes

the primacy of verbs in the target language, which renders the structural differences between English and Kanien'keha noticeable to learners and perhaps encourages them to think as a fluent speaker of the Indigenous language. Further, a verb-based approach empowers learners to produce grammatically-correct utterances early by providing them with the roots and affixes required to generate conjugated verbs, but also nouns; in Kanien'keha, nouns are often described in terms of what they *do*, rather than what they *are*, and so knowing the verb roots of such nouns can help learners to understand and describe objects named in this way. By sequencing instruction with increasing complexity, Indigenous-language educators may foster an appreciation of the unique structural properties that likely shape and reflect the thought processes of native speakers (Maracle, 1996).

Although mastering verbs is essential to becoming proficient in most Indigenous languages, Sarkar and Metallic (2009) describe the successful design and implementation of an indigenous Mi'gmaq syllabus that introduces learners to the grammatical features of the language through nouns. The approach is "grounded in the presentation of a carefully chosen sequence of images" (p. 60), which are used to demonstrate the division of nouns into animate and inanimate classes and which contribute to the development of a specifically Mi'gmaq perspective of reality (Inglis, 2004). After covering the concept of animacy/inanimacy, learners are introduced to the idea that plural forms differ, and that verb conjugations depend upon the animacy of these nouns. As the course progresses, the learners are taught to add meaningful affixes that allow them to describe the images – and reality – in more detail. By organizing the course content according to the structure of the Mi'gmaq language, these educators provide learners with an Indigenous Mi'gmaq lens through which the underlying grammar of the language can be perceived and understood.

The indigenous-language instructors featured in each case study also discuss the importance of prioritizing oral proficiency over literacy skills during the beginning stages of Indigenous language instruction. This may reflect the historically oral nature of most Indigenous languages, but it also is an attempt to

avoid particular problems associated with an early focus on writing. Richards and Kanatawakhon/Maracle (2002) explain that although learners expect to rely on writing as a means of memorizing new language forms, in practice they seldom refer back to their notes in order to do so. Further, the instructors of Kanien'keha interviewed in the case study revealed that learners tend to assign English pronunciations to Kanien'keha letters, which may prevent them from achieving intelligible oral proficiency. These instructors made the decision to emphasize oral skills and utilized several strategies to increase phonemic awareness, such as drill exercises and dictations. Likewise, the Mi'gmaq program described by Sarkar and Metallic (2009) is also primarily oral – in fact, reading and writing are completely absent from most of the course. This approach was chosen partly to avoid the confusion and difficulty associated with learning and using one of the several existing Mi'gmaq orthographies, but also to encourage the development of communicative speaking and listening skills. Perhaps as a result, learners reported "rapid progress in basic comprehension and speaking, after trying and failing in classes that used other approaches" (p. 56). Practices that enhance oral/aural skills may contribute to the perception of writing as a method of recording speech, which is, in fact, the basis of almost any language, rather than the perception that language is primarily written, and *then* represented by speech. If learners are to be made aware and appreciative of Indigenous language arts, this is an important distinction to emphasize, as it reflects the potential of oral forms to fully encode and convey important information without writing. Importantly, this approach frees up valuable contact time to focus on developing the oral/aural skills that allow learners to use their target language to perform daily language tasks.

There are clear advantages to using indigenized approaches to language learning, but there are also challenges inherent in doing so. These challenges seem to stem from the fact that most learners are not familiar with such approaches, and may lack the metalinguistic awareness and/or study skills required to learn within an immersive, oral, and structure-oriented environment. Richards and Kanatawakhon/Maracle (2002) explain that although their initial plan was to immerse learners in Kanien'keha exclusively as a means of accelerating their

acquisition of language forms, they realized that learners needed explanations in their first language – English – to truly understand more complex metalanguage, target forms, and their meanings. Accordingly, English scaffolding became an integral part of the course. The adult Mi'gmaq course also aims to immerse learners within a Mi'gmaq-only environment, yet also relies upon some English scaffolding to assist with comprehension. Such scaffolding does not compromise the Indigenous core of the syllabus, but rather enhances it by rendering the Indigenous-language input comprehensible and allowing learners to notice the similarities and differences between their first language and the target language (Cummins, 2007; Lyster, Collins, & Ballinger, 2009). While total immersion may appear to offer the optimal conditions in which an Indigenous language may be learned, incorporating some elements of learners' L1 may also play an important role.

Another challenge inherent in a largely oral/aural approach is supporting learners as they develop the appropriate study skills necessary to thrive in an oral/aural language-learning environment. The instructors from the Kanien'keha program emphasize the importance of teaching students that memorization is essential to mastering the discrete language forms necessary to become a fluent speaker, even though memorization is not typically enjoyable (Richards & Kanatawakhon/Maracle, 2002). Fostering the memorization of oral forms typically involves the incorporation of many oral drill-type activities into the course, even if such activities are considered dry and irrelevant by learners. The instructors counter such attitudes by explaining that the more interesting Indigenous language and cultural content will only be accessible after mastering the more dry technical aspects that compose it. Participants in the Mi'gmaq program are also taught to memorize through oral drills, and visual learners are able to recall discrete forms within such an environment simply by glancing at the space on the wall where the relevant picture is, or was, posted (Sarkar & Metallic, 2009). In each program, learners are also encouraged to study outside of class not by reviewing written notes, but by thinking in their target language as often as possible, composing target-language utterances within particular situations, and/or

interacting with fluent community members (Richards & Kanatawakhon/Maracle, 2002; Sarkar & Metallic, 2009). The reported success of each program suggests that with strategy training, even learners used to text-based language study can be taught to function within oral/aural language-teaching environments.

While these two case studies represent only a fraction of the entire body of work pertaining to indigenous language instruction, they examine and reveal important considerations in the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages to English-speaking adults in Canada. Since these programs successfully promote oral/aural competence in learners, it makes sense to adopt and adapt some of their principles in the design of an alternative language-learning program.

Independent Language Learning and Indigenous Languages

Theoretically, there are several ways in which adult Indigenous-language learners could access comprehensible input and output, find opportunities to interact with fluent speakers and/or other learners, and receive feedback –ideally embedded within a narrative for cultural relevance. However, the reality is that finding ideal Indigenous-language learning contexts is very difficult. Immersive contexts are often touted as the most promising, but finding an environment in which an Indigenous language is ambient is unrealistic and unfeasible for many potential learners. Indigenous languages appear on many university and college calendars, but such programs are not widespread, and attending university may not be an option for every learner. Provincial education ministries in Canada continue to ignore the value of integrating Indigenous language instruction as part of mandatory curricula for children, and are unlikely to subsidize it as essential training for adults (Battiste, 1998). Learners might then opt for a "language apprentice" model, in which he or she seeks out a fluent speaker (usually older) to provide input, listen to output, interact, and give feedback (Hinton, 2001). Several people have managed to gain proficiency in indigenous languages in this way; however, the approach requires a willing and constantly available "language master" for each eager apprentice, which might not exist. These social and curricular voids contribute to the public perception that the learning of Indigenous

languages is an esoteric hobby at best, and certainly does not warrant an allocation of societal resources – financial, spatial, or temporal. As a result, interested learners of Indigenous languages typically cannot access physical environments in which fluent, qualified, and willing teachers may provide them with the appropriate conditions required to gain proficiency.

Of course, someone who cannot access these learning contexts, but who is still motivated enough to learn an Indigenous language, could rely upon self-study resources such as books, audio-lingual resources, or instructional videos, should any exist. There are some classic examples of adults who have managed to learn additional languages to near-native fluency without taking a formal course (Ortega, 2009), though most research suggests that few people are able to effectively learn languages alone and without a formal learning strategy, even if abundant learning resources are available to them (Nielson, 2011). This is because while many of these resources provide comprehensible input and some output practice, they limit or eliminate the extent to which interaction and feedback may be realized. Popular self-study programs, such as Pimsleur, are often criticized because they emphasize the comprehension and production of set phrases, which do not allow learners to gain sufficient generative proficiency in the target language. Even while some CALL (computer-assisted language learning) products such as Rosetta Stone are often called "comprehensive" courses because they allow speakers to record their voices or select appropriate English translations to receive electronic feedback, few people gain any functional proficiency after using them due to their inability to facilitate *meaningful* opportunities for output, which does not develop an ability to perform realistic language tasks or experiment with non-scripted language forms (Nielson, 2011). At the same time, large language software companies often sacrifice cultural relevance in order to maximize the number of titles they may produce. Practices such as the "cloning" of phrases from one language to another, regardless of their applicability in an authentic target-language-speaking environment, or the imposition of foreign cultural ideals and attitudes limit the extent to which such companies can produce resources that allow users to achieve real proficiency

(Shaughnessy, 2003). Self-study is therefore perhaps the least effective method of language learning; however, it may be the only means by which independent learners can access the conditions required to learn an Indigenous language.

The instrumentalist nature of Web 2.0 tools, which allows them to be used fulfill many storytelling purposes, also allows them to be used to fulfill different pedagogical purposes, including as self-study resources. Indigenous language speaker-teacher-users can use digital tools to tell Indigenous-style narratives annotated with pedagogical supports that promote language acquisition. These videos can then be distributed via the Internet to interested learners, who can use the videos to study the language independently. This simultaneous delivery of content and language is content-based instruction, in which target-language content serves as the means by which new language is learned, and new language serves to open up new target-language content. Lyster and Mori's (2006) counterbalance hypothesis holds that within immersion-classroom contexts (which operate according to a content-based learning model), language learners' attention may be directed towards language forms in a typically content-heavy environment, or content in an environment with a heavy structural language focus, to enhance the development of both competencies. Since the content of digital media is designed and created by users, it can be manipulated to shift focus between story and language forms. In this way, it may help to construct a virtual environment in which the ideals of language learning may be at least partially realized.

Narrative Content as Conducive to Language Acquisition

If viewing a user-created digital video is akin to virtual immersion, examining the ways in which content and language learning occurs through viewing videos can help refine and focus the development of new videos aimed at language revitalization. Although the medium is inherently one-sided and therefore incapable of truly duplicating the dialogic nature of most traditional indigenous oral genres, particular creative and narrative techniques can replicate some aspects of orality within a video medium. For this reason, Ong (1986) describes

visual media as "secondary orality" (p. 3) since some filmmakers are able to create the illusion of speaker-listener interaction and intimacy. The potential for interesting video narratives to engage viewers may also play an important role in language learning because it motivates learners to continue watching, while also requiring them to learn new language to interpret the story as it unfolds. Just as highly-skilled oral storytellers may adjust the content and complexity of their stories to match their audiences (Ong, 1986), designers of content within narrative language-teaching television programming for children must write age-appropriate themes that are complex enough to be intellectually stimulating for viewers, but relatable enough for learners to feel that the language learned will be of practical use (Rice et al., 1990; Lewis, 1983). The pedagogical success of narrative style of programs such as *Dora the Explorer* is attributed to the ways in which children's attention to story and language is maintained through explicit invitations to actively participate by joining in on exciting journeys, helping to resolve conflicts through verbal or physical action, and speaking, singing, and playing with on-screen characters (Carter, 2008; Calvert et al., 2007; Lewis, 1983). Characters speak directly to the camera (also called "breaking the fourth wall") and indicating that responses can be heard (such as by cupping a hand behind the ear or saying "I can't hear you"), which clearly replicates the dialogic nature of oral storytelling. Children's programming also often attempts to immerse viewers in the story by creating the illusion that responding to requests to identify or labeling objects displayed on-screen helps the characters to continue on their adventures and advance the story (Carter, 2008). Although plot devices thus play a major role in helping young viewers maintain focus on the program, other videographic techniques can help keep them engaged. The narrative component of most programming for young children is usually rather linear, with characters overcoming clear obstacles in pursuit of an obvious goal and happy resolution. Still, "camera angles and special sound effects" are also ways in which attention may be directed to particular "object[s] of concern," which can help young viewers to keep up with the storyline and maximize the amount of content knowledge they may glean from it (Uchikoshi, 2009, p. 186). Lemish and Rice

(1986) noted that the "storybook-like" structure of the children's program *Sesame Street* allowed adult co-viewers to engage children in conversation by providing labels to novel objects featured in the program, drawing children's attention to particular objects in order to reinforce such labels, correcting the children's errors, prompting the children to label familiar objects, and confirming correct utterances. By supplementing the existing narrative structure with real-world interactions, these adults demonstrated that the language featured in narrative videos could be integrated into daily family life.

Narrative videos produced specifically to teach language to adults are rare, although there are many studies that examine ways in which instructors can make "authentic" language from video narratives intended for native speakers accessible to learners. Ambard and Ambard (2012) found that adult viewers whose interest and prior knowledge was activated through introductory activities prior to viewing Spanish-language drama reported feeling more engaged throughout the viewing and demonstrated increased comprehension afterward. Van Lommel et al. (2006) found that adult viewers of subtitled films and television programs were able to learn "considerable" amounts of vocabulary (but not grammar) incidentally; this suggests that viewing interesting video in a foreign language can help adults learn new vocabulary with little conscious effort. In South et al.'s (2008) case study examining the design of narrative English-teaching videos, learners viewed short films aimed at portraying contextualized language use within realistic settings. The researchers found that learners reported feeling more engaged in their studies, more certain that the language they were learning was "authentic", and more able to identify with the characters and their struggles (p. 241). Herron, York, Corrie, and Cole (2006) compared the teaching of French to college students via a traditional textbook-based approach to a narrative video-based approach, and found that the learners who followed the video-based course outperformed the textbook-based group on listening-comprehension tests, and improved more from pre- to post-tests of grammar. The researchers attribute the difference to the "narrative structure" of the video, the comprehension of which formed the objective of each lesson, and which therefore

provided learners with an incentive to focus on learning to decode the dialogue in the videos. The potential for video to motivate and engage learners therefore has a very real effect on language learning.

Pedagogical Content as Conducive to Language Acquisition

While learner engagement is therefore important, its presence does not guarantee language proficiency. Narrative video-based approaches for both children and adults can be engaging, but not educational. Linebarger and Walker (2005) noted that children who viewed programming that employed "curricular strategies" within it demonstrated comprehension and learning of more vocabulary than did children who viewed programming without these strategies; some children who watched programming particularly poor in fostering language development were captivated by the program, but actually seemed to regress in their language abilities (p. 639-640). Counterbalancing an engaging narrative that promotes interaction with effective pedagogical devices that foster language learning is therefore crucial to achieving the most efficient narrative-teaching video possible.

These pedagogical devices are those which lead viewers through the process of experiencing comprehensible input, practicing oral output, interacting, and receiving feedback in some way. Uchikoshi (2009) and Rice et al. (1990) describe how effective children's programming replicates the lexical and grammatical simplification strategies exercised by many parents in making the language content of children's series comprehensible and places it within their "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978 in Uchikoshi, 2009). This involves extensive repetition of key vocabulary and phrase-level chunks, the avoidance of "non-literal meanings", and plenty of visual – auditory association (Uchikoshi, 2009, p. 183-184). Video is especially well-suited to providing visual support to auditory input as a means of making input comprehensible, such as displaying an object or action as it is labeled by a voice-over, highlighting text as it is read aloud, augmenting target-language speech with native-language subtitles, and so on (Uchikoshi, 2009; Ambard & Ambard, 2012). The use of text, animation,

sound effects, or other videographic devices can be used to highlight new language forms and help learners notice them; this kind of noticing is a key aspect of rendering input comprehensible (Ortega, 2009). Herron et al.'s (2006) study involved a narrative video that showed learners a clip, explained the grammar in the clip, and then showed the clip again. This setup served to make the language input comprehensible, and also helped to lead into producing comprehensible output, as viewers were able to anticipate and perhaps subvocalize utterances that they knew would occur. Viewers can be further invited to provide level-appropriate output through repetition activities, sing-alongs, or elicitation games (Carter, 2008). Interaction – the most important aspect of a video-based approach – may be facilitated by allowing viewers to engage in virtual dialogue with a "surrogate interlocutor", who invites them to speak and pretends to hear their utterances (Uchikoshi, 2009). They may also be encouraged to use the vocabulary or chunks featured in the video for communicative functions in their real lives with friends, family members, neighbours, or colleagues (see Linebarger & Walker, 2005; Lemish & Rice, 1986; Carter, 2008; Ambard & Ambard, 2012; Hermes & King, 2013). While no research exists regarding providing viewers with corrective feedback in an L2 via video, in theory this may be accomplished through anticipating viewer mistakes and explicitly addressing them in the storyline. Jenkins et al. (2009) describe the participatory and collective nature of Web 2.0, outlining online tools that allow viewers of online content to post comments and respond to it. By incorporating pedagogical devices that foster all of the processes inherent in language learning into a culturally-relevant narrative embedded with devices that encourage viewer engagement and interaction, the most effective and efficient types of narrative language-teaching video can be produced.

Narrative Language-Teaching Videos

Examples of researchers attempting to create video resources that teach adult learners language skills via narrative discourse are rare. However, there are three models that are particularly relevant to this study. Hermes and King's (2013) study of Ojibwe language-teaching software that includes video segments of

native speakers in semi-scripted conversation was intended to explore the possibility of such a resource to contribute to language revitalization. The software itself contained several culturally-sensitive and pedagogically-relevant aspects, but fell short in terms of incorporating engaging narrative structure, even though the video segments were intended to serve as a "naturalistic, simulated language-immersion experience, which could be easily accessed in homes" (p. 128). The researchers were interested in understanding how learners interact with such software, and whether or not users integrate the language learned into their daily lives. Data analysis revealed that the families that completed the study slotted software use into their daily routine as a way to maintain constant exposure. Still, the most language practice and enjoyment came from games and activities that viewers developed on their own, and not from interacting with the software itself. Participants tended to use the "flashcard" feature of the software package most of the time, rather than watching and re-watching the videos. Unfortunately, interaction between family members using the software was almost all in English, and the Ojibwe language chunks featured in the software package were rarely used in the home, and only within a few narrow contexts. The researchers further noted that Ojibwe-language use was not used for communication, but treated as more of a practice drill, call-and-response type of activity. Thus, although the videos featured as part of the software sound promising, the research reveals that users did not consider viewing them as a viable method of language study. Hermes and King further mention that expectations of what constitutes language study and use – formulated by participation in the rote methods of public schooling – contribute to the preference of decontextualized resources (flashcards) and interaction (drills).

South et al.'s (2008) study of "contextualized video narratives" explored the pedagogical potential of video-based language instruction embedded within a story in terms of how it could contribute to better mastery of appropriate language use. Analyzing a set of videos embedded within a software program, the authors labeled them as decontextualized, boring, and contrived examples of how native speakers of English actually communicate. To emphasize cultural and pragmatic

content within a video-based format, the team created two short films that were intended to contextualize language use in more realistic ways; rather than focus on a seconds-long introduction between strangers, one video featured two college students developing a relationship over forty minutes. Extended video narratives with compelling, complex plots were also chosen as a way to engage viewers and perhaps allow them to relate to the characters and apply the target language to similar situations with their own lives in culturally and pragmatically-appropriate ways. In order to ensure that the film plots were "engaging and pedagogically rich at the same time" (p. 238), the researchers involved professional writers, filmmakers, and actors, which contributed to exciting, polished, and engaging final productions. Language experts oversaw most of the writing and filmmaking to ensure that the direction and content of the stories would contribute meaningfully to a language-learning environment and its goals – rejecting, for example, complex or distracting storylines, and mandating the inclusion of directions given in a "step-by-step" fashion (p. 240). After production, the films were integrated into a software package that allowed users to test their comprehension, review vocabulary and grammar principles, skip to particular examples of language in context, and so on. Study participants, who were English language learners, responded positively to the videos, claiming that they were more comprehensible, engaging, informative, and relatable than the non-narrative videos also featured in the software package.

Finally, Herron et al. (2006) conducted a study comparing the listening comprehension and grammar abilities of college-aged learners of French. One group of participants followed a course based on a traditional textbook-based approach, and another followed a video-based approach in which a narrative video formed the foundation upon which grammar (and presumably vocabulary) explanations were based. Each group received the same number of instructional hours, and was tested forty days after their first day of class. The textbook-based group used a textbook/workbook package, which was supplemented with audio CDs, online tools, and some video resources that highlight Francophone culture in various countries around the world. It is important to note that these video

segments are of a "tourist video format", and therefore are not narrative in nature (p. 289). Apart from readings and video clips pertaining to the various French-speaking cultures around the world, language forms were taught in relative isolation of content. In contrast, the group who followed a story-based video format followed a program centred around a feature-length mystery film called *Le Chemin du retour*. A typical class session involved viewing a 2- to 3-minute clip, before and after which particular on-screen activities were featured which allowed viewers to check their comprehension. Grammatical explanations followed onscreen, and featured pauses during which the instructor could provide additional instruction, assign group work, etc. The original clip was watched again, typically followed by another post-viewing activity. This video-based program also utilized a workbook and other supplementary materials that complemented the material highlighted in the video. Both groups in the study received a listening comprehension test and a grammar test. Results showed that the video-based group outperformed the textbook-based group significantly on the listening comprehension test, at no apparent cost to other skills. Further, this group demonstrated a greater improvement between grammar test scores taken at the beginning and end of the course, although the difference between final test scores between the video-based and textbook-based groups did not differ. The researchers conclude that video-based instruction is a viable language-learning model equal to traditional text-based approaches, but one which seems to offer a greater benefit in terms of listening comprehension.

Gaps in Narrative Language-Teaching Video Research

All three of the studies described above are concerned with some aspect of narrative video as a language-learning approach. However, none of them are able to conclude that viewing the video necessarily led to any language acquisition: Hermes and King were interested in how learners interact with the videos and whether or not they used any language they learned, South et al. admit that language forms acquired by the viewers of their videos may have learned those forms from other sources in the English-speaking environment, and Herron et al. augmented their video-based approach with supplemental activities which may

have been the real source of language learning. Further, as Herron et al. tested only listening comprehension and grammar knowledge, the extent to which learners can learn vocabulary and pronunciation skills from such videos remains unexamined.

The three studies described above also do not focus on the extent to which the videos prepare participants to use the language throughout their daily lives. As promoting daily and home use of a language is a key objective in revitalization movements, this is an important skill to encourage and develop. Hermes and King described the extent to which users of the *Ojibwemodaa* software used language which they learned from the videos around the house, but did not encourage the participants to do so or test their ability to plan doing so. South et al. did not test their participants' ability to use language appropriately in context, although the videos they had created were intended to demonstrate contextualized English language use. Herron et al. also did not test their participants in this way.

Finally, only one of the studies above investigated how learners felt about narrative approaches to independent language learning, focusing instead on the benefits or limitations of the form. Hermes and King do collect some qualitative data pertaining to participants' perceptions of independent computer-based learning, but this does not describe their perceptions of the narrative videos embedded within it specifically. South et al. did report participants' views of narrative videos, but did not include information about whether or not learners would choose this method over others for independent study, or if they found any aspects of a narrative approach to be a hindrance. Herron et al. compared two types of course delivery, but participants did not choose their grouping, and therefore the percentage of interested learners who would prefer a narrative-centred approach to a decontextualized rule-based one remains unknown.

Summary

Narrative language-teaching videos appear to offer promising potential in terms of indigenous language revitalization for several reasons. While previous examples of video-based language instruction for adults offer some helpful

suggestions in terms of content and structure, they are also limited in several ways.

The following chapter will provide an overview of the Ojibwe language and language arts, as well as important considerations in its revitalization. I will also describe the process by which I developed an original narrative Ojibwe-teaching video series, the rationale behind the target language forms and thematic content chosen to be featured in the series, and the ways in which this series may contribute to the research and development of language-teaching videos.

Chapter Three – Context

The Ojibwe Language

The core issues and considerations surrounding indigenous language shift and revitalization around the world similarly apply to Ojibwe. At the same time, the language itself is a collection of dialects that have each been shaped by unique socio-historical factors, resulting in a particularly dramatic course of linguistic ebb and flow. An overview of these factors is helpful in understanding the current status of the Ojibwe language, and some challenges inherent in working towards its survival, revitalization, and development.

The Ebb and Flow of Ojibwe Language Use

Ojibwe has been spoken on Turtle Island for thousands of years, although the territory within which the language has been spoken has changed significantly over time. Most sources cite the east coast as the "homeland" of the Anishinaabeg, from where they embarked on a journey northward and westward for "spiritual and economic" reasons, eventually occupying much of the territory surrounding the Great Lakes and the adjoining river systems for the next few centuries (Treuer, 2001, p. 7). Interactions with several other First Nations in the region, such as the Menomini, Potawatomi, Sauk, and Winnebago, resulted in the spread of Ojibwe among these nations, many of whom continue to speak it as a second language (Bakker, 1997). When Europeans arrived in the seventeenth century and began utilizing waterways throughout Anishinaabe-aki, the Ojibwe language became one of the *lingua francas* of the fur trade, thereby gaining significant prestige (Bakker, 1997). The Ojibwe-speaking territory continued to change as intense competition for furs depleted local game populations and European diseases ravaged First Nations villages, pushing many Indigenous people west. The Anishinaabeg actually expanded their territory during this period and brought their language as far as the prairies/plains region (Treuer, 2001). The Ojibwe language continued to be used as a trade language between Europeans and other First Nations, and contributed to the development of the Metis language, Michif (Bakker, 1997). Clearly, the height of Ojibwe-language

use corresponds to the time at which its use was considered economically and socially valuable.

However, its subsequent decline can be linked to European attempts to "settle" the West in the mid-nineteenth century, in pursuit of European economic and political interests (Saul, 2008). Many Indigenous people, including the Anishinaabeg, resented the encroachment of European settler-immigrants onto their land, and staged several acts of resistance (Truth & Reconciliation Commission [TRC], 2012). In the rapidly-growing United States, a militaristic response was utilized to destroy Indigenous claim to the land and transfer title to the government. As a result, brutal slaughters of entire villages ensued, along with the utter devastation of most Indigenous civilizations (Brown, 1971; King, 2012). The Anishinaabeg in the United States escaped the worst of these policies, but lost significant amounts of territory through treaty agreements and policies (Treuer, 2001). The Canadian government, which had far less money with which to wage an "Indian War", pursued a policy which involved negotiating for land with the First Nations to persuade them to relinquish their legal title to it (TRC, 2012). The government promised to provide various incentives, such as annual payments, rations and farming equipment to the First Nations, who would relocate to reserves and share the land with the Europeans in return (TRC, 2012). However, once signed, the government not only reneged on many of their legal duties, but also enacted assimilation policies intended to eradicate the components of Indigenous nationhood, such as language, culture, and law, and replace them with European ones. The rationale was that since treaties are legal documents between *nations*, destroying any semblance of Indigenous nationhood would render the treaties null, and free the government of their legal obligations to provide for the First Nations as promised (TRC, 2012). By significantly reducing the amount of land upon which Anishinaabeg could live, the two governments also reduced the territory within which the Ojibwe language could be spoken.

Still, the Ojibwe language did survive. As powerful symbols of nationhood and conduits of culture, Indigenous languages were primary targets of

governmental assimilationist policies aimed at accessing natural resources and convincing Indigenous people to adopt Eurocentric capitalist values. To expedite the process of Indigenous linguicide, the government began to fund a system of residential schools, which were previously the domain of religious orders and which would continue to be staffed largely by nuns and priests (TRC, 2012). In contrast to a traditional Ojibwe education comprised mostly of oral storytelling and cooperation in "a seamless mixture of teachings, ceremonies, and daily activities" (TRC, 2012, p. 7), Anishinaabe children were instead forcibly removed from their communities and sent to be submerged in a foreign language, religion, and culture. Although some former students report a generally positive experience, a large corpus of testimony shows that students were often victims of psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, the consequences of which continue to plague many of these victims, their children, and their grandchildren (TRC, 2012). Whether a student was a victim of abuse or not, he or she was subject to the constant underlying message that Indigenous languages, cultures, histories and traditions were naturally inferior to those of the Europeans (TRC, 2012). While this may have been enough to convince Indigenous children to abandon their mother-tongues voluntarily, it would take a particularly dedicated child to maintain fluency while being separated from a language community for most of the year throughout childhood and adolescence, while being severely punished for speaking their Indigenous languages at school with their peers (TRC, 2012). Unsurprisingly, many speakers of languages such as Ojibwe became fluent speakers of English; only a few who found ways to speak their languages in secret and were able to visit their families during holidays emerged from the schools with Indigenous-language proficiency (TRC, 2012). Upon returning to their communities, students of the residential schools often found themselves unable to communicate with their families, angry at their parents for "allowing" them to be taken away, repulsed by the "primitive" nature of their local traditions, and unable to utilize the skills they had learned while at school due to the remoteness of their community or discriminatory hiring practices in urban centres (TRC, 2012, p. 79). Being raised as part of a "herd" led by strict adults doling out harsh punishments,

many former students struggled to become good parents or form positive, non-abusive relationships (p. 62; p. 86). This period – lasting until 1996 when the last residential school in Canada was closed down – is among the darkest for the Indigenous languages and cultures; not only was there pressure from the government to assimilate to dominant Euro-centric culture, but some Indigenous people themselves were beginning to reject their Indigenous identity in favour of conformity. Further, the inter-generational transmission of Indigenous languages that is essential for linguistic survival was mostly halted, resulting in the rapid decline of nearly every Indigenous language (Norris, 2007).

Although governmental policies aimed at destroying Indigenous languages and cultures were profoundly detrimental, they were not entirely successful. Inspired by, and contributing to, the Civil Rights Movement in the second half of the twentieth century, many Indigenous people began to fight for their political and human rights in an effort to preserve their sovereignty as nations and therefore equal partners in the treaty agreements. The leaders of the American Indian Movement (AIM), a group of Indigenous activists who organized several protests, acts of civil disobedience, and educational reforms, were mostly Anishinaabeg from Minnesota (Gresczyk, 2011). A significant component of this cultural revitalization necessarily involved bringing awareness to the importance of preserving, revitalizing, and developing Indigenous languages. This period does not necessarily mark the end of Ojibwe language decline, but rather an awareness that some sort of action needed to be taken in order to ensure linguistic and cultural survival.

Accordingly, several important initiatives aimed at improving Ojibwe language use followed, such as the controversial adoption of a standard Ojibwe orthography. This was intended in part to facilitate the sharing of resources among Ojibwe-speaking communities, thereby reducing the cost of publishing Ojibwe-language print resources, but was criticized as subscribing to the same "colonial" assimilationist policies that had led to the decline of the Ojibwe language in the first place (Ningewance, 1996). The Fiero Double Vowel

Orthography, based on the Latin alphabet, was chosen over syllabic, macron, and folk orthographies as the "International Anishinaabe orthography" in 1996 due to its already-widespread use throughout Anishinaabe-aki, the ease with which it could be typed using existing computer software and hardware, and the quick rate at which it can be taught to learners (Ningewance, 1996). Almost all of the delegates from across Anishinaabe-aki chose to adopt the orthography at the conference after participating in a set of activities that demonstrated the ways in which it could be used to write all dialects phonetically (Ningewance, 1996). Although this event is far less dramatic than others in the history of the Ojibwe language, it nonetheless demonstrates once again that the Ojibwe language and its speakers can adapt to changing realities, with economics and technology heavily informing the process. As a result of this adaptation, Ojibwe literature and media will undoubtedly change. A single orthography may help maintain rich dialectical diversity as readers of different dialects become familiar with others through exposure and treat those forms as acceptable synonyms. Or, as the dialects of more prolific writers come to constitute the majority of media resources available to learners, they may become perceived as a standard to which other less-commonly encountered dialects must conform to be understood. In either case, the adoption of a standard orthography is the latest milestone in the unwinding narrative of the resilience of the Ojibwe language and its speakers.

The Ojibwe Language Today

This spirit of resilience has contributed to the continued status of Ojibwe as a living language – even if it and its dialects are conventionally and legally known by several names. Many Anishinaabeg consider "Anishinaabemowin" to be the name of a parent language, from which many local dialects have developed (Noodin, 2014, personal communication). These dialects and the people who speak them are sometimes referred to as Ojibwa, Ojibway, Nishnaabemwin, Chippewa, Algonquin, or Ottawa/Odawa. Saulteaux call their language "nakawewin" (Nichols, 1988; Ningewance, 2004). The degree of mutual intelligibility between dialects seems to be subjective: Ningewance (1996; 2004), a fluent and regular speaker of Ojibwe, seems to suggest that any regional

differences in vocabulary and pronunciation seldom prevent communication and often result in humorous but harmless errors, while Nichols (1988), a linguist and non-speaker, claims that different dialects "may have so many differences between them that people cannot understand each other well or at all" (p. viii). In any case, dialectical patterns are changing as Ojibwe speakers move across and outside Anishinaabe-aki, and although some dialects boast more speakers than others, no dialect is yet considered standard (Hermes & King, 2013; Nichols, 1988). Keeping in mind that the acknowledgement of dialectical diversity is important to speakers of the language, it is useful to refer to the continuum of dialects as a single language, as is standard practice in Ojibwe linguistics. In English, the term "Ojibwe" typically functions in this way (and will be used here), although "Anishinaabemowin" is also increasing in use (Nichols, 1988; Bakker, 1997).

The contemporary Ojibwe-speaking world is concentrated mostly around the Great Lakes region of what are now Canada and the United States (Nichols, 1988), with most Ojibwe-speaking communities located in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota. Still others are located as far away as British Columbia, Alberta, Montana, and Oklahoma (Ningewance, 2004; Hermes & King, 2013). In addition to being widespread in terms of geography, Ojibwe is also the most-spoken indigenous language in central Turtle Island, the second most-spoken First Nations language in Canada, and the fourth most-spoken Indigenous language north of Mexico, though it is not recognized as an official language by any federal, provincial, or state government (United States Census Bureau, 2011; Norris, 2007). Despite the lack of legal protection, there are an estimated 50, 000 to 60,000 first- or second-language speakers of Ojibwe in Canada and the United States (Hermes & King, 2013; Treuer, 2001). Census data indicates 8,371 speakers of "Ojibwa" in the United States, although it is unclear if this refers to native-speakers or both native- and second-language speakers (United States Census Bureau, 2011). The 2001 Canadian census, which is the most recent detailed "long-form" census in Canada, reported 30,505 speakers of "Ojibway", of which 26% (or 7,960 people) were

second-language speakers (Norris, 2007). The 2011 census, which only collected data pertaining to mother-tongue and home language use, indicated that there were 19,275 mother-tongue speakers of Ojibwe, concentrated mostly in Ontario and Manitoba[6] (Norris, 2007; 2012). An additional 5,624 people indicated that they use "Ojibway" as a home language, despite having another language as a mother tongue (Norris, 2012). As there was no census question pertaining to second-language learning, the true number of total Ojibwe speakers remains unclear. The data that is available suggests that although Ojibwe is the third most-common Aboriginal mother-tongue in Canada, its use as a home language by those native speakers is diminishing. Thirty-seven point four percent of those reporting Ojibwe as a mother tongue use the language "most of the time at home", and another 33.9% reported speaking it "regularly at home"(Norris, 2012). This rate of home use among native speakers is not encouraging, but the same census reported that in addition to mother-tongue speakers, about 5,624 people reported speaking Ojibwe at home on a regular basis, even though it was not their mother tongue (Norris, 2012). This tendency for at least some second-language speakers to use Ojibwe as a home language is a promising indication that, should they speak the language with young children, the number of native speakers may actually increase for the first time in decades.

Summary

Considering the periods of language growth and decline described above, comparing Ojibwe language use to a tidal ebb-and-flow is certainly legitimate. Whether the next stage of the history of the Ojibwe language is ebb or flow will depend on the extent to which stakeholders and their allies are willing to invest the time and energy required to support and promote the return of the Ojibwe language to its former glory and beyond. With many people – especially young people – embracing the Ojibwe language and utilizing innovative techniques to

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[6] Although previous censuses indicate a general decline in native speakers of Indigenous languages, it is important to note that many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people and communities choose to not participate in the census, even during mandatory enumerations, for a variety of reasons including mistrust of the federal government (Norris, 2011). As a result, the true number of people with Ojibwe as a mother-tongue may be higher.

learn and teach it, there is every reason to be optimistic that revitalization is possible.

Issues and Considerations in Ojibwe Language Revitalization

Anishinaabe Perspectives on Ojibwe-Language Ownership

With some indigenous nations around the world taking measures to ensure that their languages remain largely unavailable to outsiders, and others supporting the widespread learning and use of their indigenous languages (Hill, 2008), engaging in research pertaining to the Ojibwe language in a culturally-sensitive manner necessarily requires exploring Anishinaabe perspectives regarding non-Anishinaabeg learning Ojibwe.

Opinion seems to fall on both sides of this debate. In his dissertation on Ojibwe "language warriors" (language activists), Gresczyk (2011) cites several sources that describe the importance of Indigenous leadership of revitalization efforts, including a quotation by Crawford (1996, in Gresczyk, 2011) claiming "language shift cannot be reversed by outsiders, however well-meaning" (p. 36). Gresczyk also mentions the significance of Ojibwe spirituality to language revitalization – an area that is typically and rightfully the sole domain of knowledgeable Elders. During his interviews with Ojibwe language warriors, there was some belief that only Anishinaabeg should study or speak Ojibwe, referring specifically to the extent to which outsiders learned the language to convert the Anishinaabeg to Christianity and appropriate aspects of their culture for financial gain. Some of these respondents believed that non-Anishinaabeg did not value language diversity in general and Indigenous languages in particular. Clearly, the mistrust bred out of centuries of political and cultural oppression has resulted in some skepticism of the motives of non-Anishinaabeg learning Ojibwe.

That said, a "majority" of other interviewees supported the idea of non-Anishinaabeg learning the language for a number of reasons (p. 79). Some language warriors described the value of creating a larger body of speakers as a way of increasing opportunities to use Ojibwe in daily life. Others believed that non-Anishinaabeg learners could help to raise awareness of Anishinaabe language

and culture among other non-Anishinaabeg, thereby increasing support for further language initiatives in education and society, especially in urban areas. One Ojibwe teacher seemed to suggest that non-Anishinaabeg could make important contributions that should not be overlooked, stating that "anybody can help out with the language movement…if [they] have a talent for it and a passion for it, [they] definitely have a place in it" (p. 76). The comments of another participant imply a spiritual obligation to share the language, regardless of ethnicity (p.76). Financial and economic benefits are also mentioned, with one interviewee mentioning that it was non-Anishinaabeg registering in Ojibwe-language courses at the university that kept the program operating, since the population of Anishinaabeg alone would not be sufficient to do so (p. 75). Finally, the enthusiastic mention of Europeans learning Ojibwe and creating Ojibwe-language clubs in Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands further implies that sharing the Ojibwe language with non-Anishinaabeg is largely accepted among language warriors. Such acceptance, unsurprisingly, seems to be largely contingent upon the extent to which outsider-learners respect the Ojibwe language and its cultural foundations. The responses of Gresczyk's interviewees suggests an emphasis on motivations for learning Ojibwe, with many feeling that communicating with "friends and neighbors" was a particularly respectful reason to learn, along with general interest and fascination (p. 80).

The preoccupation with well-intentioned learning was echoed by participants in my own past research which was aimed at discovering how teachers of Canadian Indigenous languages feel about non-Indigenous learners. I conducted a small qualitative study of two indigenous language activist-teachers (Mohawk/Kanien'keha and Ojibwe), who described their perceptions of who should have access to their language, and what, if any, role non-Indigenous people could play in language revitalization. Interestingly, both respondents also seemed to categorize insider/outsider status as pertaining more to one's motivations for learning the language and less to one's ethnicity. Both participants denied that interested learners necessarily required permission to study their languages, but also emphasized that as learning a language well requires

interaction with native speakers, tacit encouragement to learn an indigenous language would be provided simply by engaging in conversation with speakers. The Ojibwe-speaking respondent further stressed that Ojibwe was once the lingua franca of central Turtle Island, and so was spoken by many non-Anishinaabeg. He also suggested that those with minimal exposure to or direct experience with Anishinaabe spirituality avoid writing about or learning ceremonial language pertaining to it. However, he stated that learning more secular and transactional language was acceptable and to be encouraged, especially for professionals expecting to interact with Anishinaabeg. Although this study involved only two indigenous-language speakers and educators, it nonetheless suggests that there are culturally sensitive ways for non-Indigenous people to approach the teaching and learning of indigenous languages.

Anishinaabe Research Tools

To recycle a quotation cited earlier, "language is both corpus and message and the authentic message without the authentic corpus is as empty as the authentic corpus without the authentic message" (Fishman, 1990, p. 86); in other words, attempting to learn Ojibwe without simultaneously learning the beliefs and practices (i.e., culture) that have shaped it cannot lead to full proficiency. However, as a non-Anishinaabe, I was advised to avoid language pertaining to Anishinaabe spirituality in my studies of the Ojibwe language as a way to respect the expertise of culturally-fluent spiritual leaders and practitioners. Given the extent to which spirituality pervades traditional Anishinaabe daily life (TRC, 2012), it is important to identify some relevant Anishinaabe cultural practices that can contribute to the development of a culturally-relevant revitalization method, without becoming involved with more complex spiritual practices that require intensive training and study to truly understand and discuss.

Fortunately for interested scholars, explicit textual descriptions of indigenous research practices are beginning to appear in Western-style academic works more frequently. However, such a movement towards a one-size-fits-all approach to indigenous research is not in keeping with the beliefs of every indigenous nation.

The Māori of Aotearoa have codified their Kaupapa Māori framework, which has inspired other indigenous nations around the world to agree upon the "language, culture, teachings and philosophy" that can help them to decolonize their minds (Geniusz, 2009, p. 8; Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999). For the Anishinaabeg, the Biskaabiiyang approach to research was developed at the Seven Generations Education Institute through collaboration with Elders from various communities throughout Anishinaabe-aki (Geniusz, 2009; Debassige, 2010). Biskaabiiyang – translated by Geniusz (2009) as "returning to ourselves" (p. 9) and by Gresczyk (2011) as "we are making a round trip" (p. 53) – describes the process of decolonizing Ojibwe research and thought by reflecting upon traditional concepts and applying them to research contexts. There are several concepts – described best in the Ojibwe language – that are meant to inform the planning and execution of research pertaining specifically to Anishinaabe culture and language. Those most relevant to language revitalization include: *Anishinaabemowin*, or the Ojibwe language itself, which is the medium through which ideas pertaining to Ojibwe reality are best processed; *Anishinaabe izhichigewin* or the Anishinaabe way of doing things; and *Anishinaabe enawendiwin,* which is the Anishinaabe way of relating to one another (Debassige, 2010). Several other Biskaabiiyang concepts are explained by Debassige, who also advocates for a deeply holistic spirituality-based approach as Indigenous research methodology; however, these will not be explored here out of the considerations of cultural sensitivity described earlier.

The concepts of *Anishinaabemowin*, *Anishinaabe-izhichigewin,* and *Anishinaabe-enawendiwin* are helpful guideposts in the planning of language revitalization methods. Of course, the task of revitalizing *Anishinaabemowin*, or the Ojibwe language, has been undertaken precisely so that it continues to be used to formulate and interpret thoughts in a way that is unique to that language. The reasons why this is important have been discussed previously, but one especially pertinent reason is that some notions embedded within the words, sounds, and grammatical constructions of Ojibwe are lost in translation to other languages like English. In turn, extracting full meaning from translations of extended Ojibwe-

language discourses – such as narratives, jokes, or speeches – is difficult, since many meaning-making devices, such as alliteration, rhyme, homophones, turns-of-phrase, cultural inside-jokes, and so on, are simply not translatable (Ong, 1982; Nichols, 1988). Similar struggles exist in capturing tone and nuance when translating English-original texts into Ojibwe (Ningewance in Nichols, 1988). Accordingly, culturally-relevant indigenous language revitalization should include a focus on teaching and learning indigenous language *arts* in addition to indigenous languages. In fact, Baloy (2011) noted that most second-language learners of Indigenous languages are mostly interested in understanding ceremonial language, songs, and stories, and not in performing tasks such as banking or renting an apartment, which are common foci in the teaching of majority languages like English or French). Such an approach is also in keeping with the other principles of Biskaabiiyang: focusing on all aspects of *Anishinaabemowin,* including language arts, allows learners to participate in activities that are part of *Anishinaabe-izhichigewin* (how Anishinaabeg do things). Participation within such activities may contribute to a sense of community between people and "all of Creation" (Debassige, 2010), and thereby is also in keeping with the principle of *Anishinaabe-enawendiwin.*

Ojibwe Oral Tradition

As mentioned in the previous chapter, oral tradition is the Indigenous means by which most children were and are educated, made to engage in critical reflection, and entertained. The Biskaabiiyang principle of *Anishinaabe-izhichigewin* involves approaching problem-solving in a way that traditional Anishinaabeg might have done; observing this principle is therefore one way of maintaining cultural relevance in language revitalization practices.

Like other indigenous oratures, Ojibwe oral tradition consists of several unique genres and styles that serve to transmit language and culture orally. Given the huge amount of information involved in such an endeavor, several oral genres have been developed to meet any number of instructional objectives, including stories, oral histories, songs, and even impromptu word-coining (Valentine,

2006). Ojibwe-language stories take a variety of forms. Some are short, impromptu works, while others are too long to be told in a single sitting and are instead told in segments that comprise a larger narrative. Stories can be original, or a re-telling of older classic stories. In any case, Ojibwe stories often involve familiar stock characters finding themselves in some type of conflict, the resolution of which requires formulaic or repetitive action. This resolution may be intended to explain a natural phenomenon, teach protocol, caution listeners against certain acts, or teach them about some aspect of survival (Valentine, 2006; Geniusz, 2009). Although regular people sometimes appear in stories, nonhuman characters more often recur, such as the trickster Nenabozho (sometimes called by other names), the horrifying and cannibalistic *wiindigoowag*, or animals such as Bear, Porcupine, or Wolverine. These also often have qualities consistently associated with them, such as kindness, laziness, or ruthlessness, which ostensibly helps listeners to predict and recall the events within a given story (Valentine, 2006; Oshkaabewis, 2010). Historical events are often "cast in Ojibwe cultural terms and graded by degrees into more formulaic traditional verbal forms" (Valentine, 2006, p. 107) as a way to render them more memorable, giving rise to a rich and entertaining oral history genre. Valentine (2006) also describes the popularity of punning and clever coinages in Ojibwe, comparing the "apt and concise coinage" to "the esthetic economy of expression found in Japanese haiku" (p. 107). Even a brief overview of the vast canon of Ojibwe oral tradition is beyond the scope of this work, but it is important to acknowledge that its genius, richness, and complexity is best understood and appreciated by fluent speakers. Accordingly, gradually introducing learners to some of the conventions of Ojibwe oral tradition is a desirable and necessary step in developing their cultural literacy.

Several structural qualities of Ojibwe stories enhance the ways in which storytelling contributes to learning (Heredia & Francis, 1997). Repetition is the most pronounced of these. Stories often recount the repeated attempts of a character to resolve a conflict, often by performing the same action in different scenarios (much like the Big Bad Wolf trying to blow down three types of houses in the European story 'The Three Little Pigs'). In doing so, the narrator must

repeat the same types of grammatical constructions and vocabulary items several times, which may serve to scaffold any new language forms and facilitate their acquisition (Heredia & Francis, 1997; Francis & Reyhner, 2002). Further, each repetition helps listeners to hone prediction skills as they anticipate future actions, which is a key component of comprehending both oral and written texts (Heredia & Francis, 1997). Such narratives also feature "key content word items [and] limited concept load" (Heredia & Francis, p. 52), which allow listeners to familiarize themselves with some culturally-significant vocabulary as it is recycled throughout the story, without over-exhausting their cognitive resources. The use of familiar stock characters, such as Nenabozho, and the familiar narrative arc – having a problem, taking actions to solve it, then finally solving it – allow listeners to rely upon their prior knowledge to fill in any narrative gaps, which in turn may allow them to focus their cognitive energy and attention on new language and how to reconcile it with their existing internal grammar. The genius of such a self-contained pedagogical model demonstrates the clear relationship between narrative and skill development, and it is in keeping with Cole's earlier description of Indigenous frameworks being the result of people forging relationships with one another and with nature in the pursuit of survival, as well as the *Anishinaabe-enawendiwin* aspect of the Biskaabiiyang framework.

Technology in Ojibwe Language Revitalization

Many indigenous language activists have embraced Internet tools for the possibilities they can offer in terms of language teaching and learning, as well as the exciting potential for digital media to contribute to the development of indigenous language arts (see above). Although some Indigenous nations probably reject computer technology as a feasible way of saving their languages, Anishinaabe culture seems to be rather open to it. Noori (2011) describes the extent to which technology has been and continues to be an important part of Ojibwe-language learning, even claiming:

"If [Anishinaabe cultural hero] Nanabozhoo were among us (and he might be) working to keep the language alive, he would be a hacker, a gamer, a

halfhuman, half shape-shifting avatar. And he would be interested in collective intelligence, game theory, and digital media" (p. 18).

Noori also describes the extent to which various websites such as Facebook contribute to the creation of an online Ojibwe-speaking and -learning community, as well as how this has led to the development of new vocabulary that is conceptually appropriate to operating within it. For example, she discusses how the word for *Facebook* in Ojibwe is currently a literal translation, *Dengwe-Mazinaigan*, but conceptually should be something like *Boochiwe ankwat* [Chat-Cloud], to reflect the cloud-based nature of the social media site. The proliferation of smartphone apps allowing users to learn Ojibwe vocabulary items, play word games, and send text messages in Ojibwe is a further indication that technology is being embraced by Ojibwe speakers. Such practices may contribute to the proliferation of Indigenous-language use because they provide meaningful, rewarding, and exciting opportunities to incorporate the language into learners' daily lives. Their strategic incorporation into language revitalization is therefore, in my opinion, essential.

Summary

Issues of cultural sensitivity and relevance are vital considerations in the planning of Ojibwe language revitalization. Finding a place as a non-Anishinaabe in the revitalization movement is possible, even if slightly controversial. A culturally-appropriate yet secular Anishinaabe-centric approach to language teaching and learning can take the form of narrative, carefully written to incorporate particular structure features which promote language learning and created using the nearly limitless potential of modern digital technology.

The Development of *Bamitaagewin* as a Narrative Ojibwe-Teaching Video Series

In the previous chapter, I described some research into the pedagogical efficacy and potential of narrative video. This section will detail how I developed a narrative video series entitled *Bamitaagewin*, which was an attempt to create a learning resource for independent learners of Ojibwe.

Rationale for Target Language Forms

Imperative and negative-imperative intransitive verbs were chosen as the target language forms in the series because of their potential usefulness within the home, their formal simplicity, and the extent to which they may serve as a foundation for future Ojibwe language development. Commands are probably one of the most commonly-used grammatical forms between caregivers and children of any culture, with commands such as *"Tidy up!"* and *"Eat!"* commonly uttered parent to child. Therefore, learning them would empower both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences to incorporate Ojibwe language use within their homes; a vital component of revitalization (Noori, 2009). In terms of Ojibwe culture, Peltier (2011) notes that more traditional Ojibwe parents value listening skills in children, and tend to discourage their children from superfluous talk and the questioning of orders given by adults. This suggests that Ojibwe children are often expected to heed commands and instructions provided by their parents. The cultural relevance of command forms within an Ojibwe home is also represented in other self-study resources. For example, Patricia Ningewance's (1993) Ojibwe-language textbook *Anishinaabemodaa* features a dialogue in which an annoyed mother tries to wake up her children, and another in which a woman commands her boyfriend to *"Biindigen!"* (Come in!) and "*Namadabin!*" (Sit down!). *Talking Gookom's Language* (Ningewance, 2004) also features dialogues and texts that involve giving and receiving commands in various contexts, like offering invitations to a friend and listening to a doctor's orders. These texts attest to the cultural appropriateness of imperative verbs, their natural and common usage within an Ojibwe-speaking home, and therefore their suitability for inclusion within a video aimed at increasing Indigenous-language proficiency and home use.

Apart from their practical and cultural relevance, imperative verbs are relatively short and simple to conjugate, which may make them ideal for a chunk-to-parsing approach to grammar instruction via video. As in other polysynthetic languages, it is possible to encode as much meaning onto a single word in Ojibwe as is found in an entire sentence in a non-polysynthetic language like English.

Therefore, memorizing a single conjugated verb in Ojibwe as a "chunk" allows learners to understand an entire meaningful phrase and apply it to the completion of a language task without requiring them to know all or any of the grammar embedded in the phrase. Learners who have acquired a repertoire of usable vocabulary chunks can also be taught to analyze them as exemplars and construct grammatical rules, which they may then apply towards creating novel constructions (Myles, 2004; N. Ellis, 2008, in Ortega, 2009; Taguchi, 2007). In Ojibwe, vocabulary and grammar are so closely related – indeed, often inseparable – that analysis and parsing of the meaningful grammatical morphemes from lexical roots may even occur at earlier stages in the learning process than it does in other, less structured languages (O'Shannessy, 2011). Intransitive imperative and negative-imperative verbs in Ojibwe contain verb roots with short suffixes, with negative-imperative verbs being additionally preceded by the word *gego*. As grammaticized lexical items, Ojibwe commands are conducive to chunk memorization and immediate use.

Ojibwe commands are therefore a practical and simple focus for a narrative language-teaching video, but they also serve as an important foundation upon which future Ojibwe language-learning may be based. As simple examples of polysynthetic verb forms, they may illustrate the process of verb-building using roots and affixes before more complex verbs with multiple affixes are introduced. Gaining an awareness of the language's phonological properties is another important fundamental skill. Imperative and negative-imperative verbs are capable of representing each vowel and consonant sound in Ojibwe – the mastery of which is sometimes necessary to understand and apply more advanced grammatical rules.

Target Language Forms

With practical home-use in mind, seventeen verb roots were chosen as the target lexical items based on their imagined potential within a contemporary home context. All of the target words were verbs that could be conjugated as commands, with the exception of *miigwech*, meaning *thank you,* which was

included several times as a relevant and useful component of giving and obeying commands. Each episode introduced at least one new vocabulary item and recycled all or some of those featured in previous episodes. All verb roots did not appear in every possible conjugation, and no effort was made to ensure that each root appeared the same number of times. A verb root was counted as having appeared if it was spoken aloud or printed onscreen. If a word was spoken and appeared onscreen simultaneously, it was counted as one appearance. Table 3.1 contains all verb roots featured in the series, as well as the number of times they appeared per episode.

Table 3.1 – Animate Intransitive Verb Roots and Number of Appearances in Bamitaagewin *by Episode*

Verb Root	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
Goshkozi- s/he wakes up	13	9	10	7	14
Giziibiigazhe – s/he showers	8	4	5	1	4
Maajaa – s/he goes	6	1	5	5	5
Nibaa – s/he sleeps	7	4	7	1	3
Miinishin/Give me _____!	--	12	1	--	1
Ikido – s/he says	1	4	5	3	5
Zagakinige – s/he tidies up	--	3	5	1	3
Niimi – s/he dances	--	--	--	4	3
Bamitaage – s/he obeys	--	--	2	2	5
Wiisini – s/he eats	9	5	7	3	5
Anokii – s/he works	9	3	7	4	4
Biindige – s/he enters	5	1	2	4	2
Dadibaajimo – s/he tells a story	--	2	1	2	1
Bizindam – s/he listens	1	1	9	5	3
Animichige – s/he reads	--	1	--	--	3

Ambe – s/he comes	--	--	--	1	--
Ishke – s/he looks	--	--	--	1	3
*Miigwech – "Thank you"	3	2	1	1	--

Constructing correctly-conjugated imperative and negative-imperative animate intransitive verbs was a focus of the video. Verbs in Ojibwe (and other Algonquian languages) fall into four main categories – animate intransitive, animate transitive, inanimate intransitive, and inanimate transitive (Ningewance, 2004). The simplest commands involve intransitive verbs, since they involve only one subject (the listener). Of course, all commands used to address people or animals would be of the animate gender (except when used creatively as a literary device). As mentioned previously, the rules for conjugating commands is not complex (see Table 3.2)

Table 3.2 – Conjugating Animate Intransitive Verb Roots into Singular and Plural Imperative Forms

Verb Root	Singular Imperative Form: Verb Root + --n	Plural Imperative Form: Verb Root + --g
Goshkozi – *s/he wakes up*	Goshkozi<u>n</u>! – *Wake up!*	Goshkozi<u>g</u>! – *Wake up! [pl]*
Wiisini – *s/he eats*	Wiisini<u>n</u>! – *Eat!*	Wiisini<u>g</u>! – *Eat! [pl]*
Giziibiigazhe – *s/he showers*	Giziibiigazhe<u>n</u>! – *Shower!*	Giziibiigazhe<u>g</u>! – *Shower! [pl]*
Niimi – *s/he dances*	Niimi<u>n</u>! – *Dance!*	Niimi<u>g</u>! – *Dance! [pl]*

It also seemed important to include the forms for negative commands for practical use within the home. They also follow simple rules and are easy to conjugate (see Table 3.3). While regular animate intransitive verbs comprised the majority of those featured in the series, some irregular animate intransitive verbs, and one transitive verb, were also included for their functional potential within a home setting. The irregular commands *ambe* [come!] and *ishke* [look!] are idiomatic and do not use the –n suffix described above to create singular

commands, although they do require a –*g* suffix for plural commands. The word *bizindam* [he listens] also conjugates as *gego bizindangen/gego bizindangeg* [Don't listen!/Don't listen!*(pl)*] instead of *bizindanken/bizindankeg*.

Table 3.3 – Conjugating Animate Intransitive Verb Roots into Singular and Plural Negative-Imperative Forms

Verb Root	Singular Negative-Imperative Form: Gego + Verb Root + --ke**n**	Plural Negative-Imperative Form: Gego + Verb Root + --ke**g**
Ikido – *s/he says*	Gego ikidoken! – *Don't say [it]!*	Gego ikidokeg! – *Don't say [it]! [pl]*
Maajaa – *s/he goes*	Gego maajaaken! – *Don't go!*	Gego maajaakeg! – *Don't go! [pl]*
Dadibaajimo – *s/he tells a story*	Gego dadibaajimoken! – *Don't tell a story!*	Gego dadibaajimokeg! – *Don't tell a story! [pl]*

The one imperative transitive verb, *miinishin* _____ [give me _____] was also featured in the series, as was the word *miigwech* [thank you]. For simplicity, these irregularities were treated as language chunks, with no explicit grammatical explanations provided.

Rationale for Target Thematic Concepts

Given the etymological relationship between the words "imperative" and "imperial"[7] (Oxford English Dictionary, 1899), it was not difficult to see that imperative and negative-imperative verb instruction could be feasibly embedded within a narrative that explores dichotomies of authority and subjectivity, obedience and rebellion, and proactivity and passivity. Connecting these dichotomies to language revitalization was also not difficult, given the power imbalances and forms of active resistance that are an inherent part of language loss and renewal (see Chapter Two). At the same time, it was important to make

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[7] Both terms are derived from the Latin root "imperium" ['command', 'absolute power']

sure that these issues could be integrated into a narrative in which the characters, plot, and setting were relatable and emotionally engaging to viewers. Another challenge was ensuring that the themes could be relevant to Anishinaabe tradition without alienating Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences unfamiliar with Anishinaabe culture. The idea of "bamitaagewin" (*obedience*) was chosen as a way to address all of these needs.

It was a priority to highlight the power imbalances that are inherent in language shift through the narrative. In order to promote proactivity within the Ojibwe revitalization movement, I wanted to encourage viewers to make a conscious choice to learn and use Ojibwe in their daily lives in order to subvert assimilationist practices and create a space for Indigenous languages amidst the media onslaught of majority languages. Accordingly, each episode of the series is based on a character interacting with the Ojibwe language while they struggle to assert control over their own lives as citizens, family members, public figures, activists, and individuals. Appendix 1: *Bamitaagewin* Episode Guide contains a summary of the plot line of each episode.

Telling an engaging story with relevant themes was very important, but it is also essential that it reflects some cultural relevance in terms of structure and content. Although video is not truly fully capable of replicating oral traditions, it is possible to integrate several characteristics of orature in general, and Ojibwe oral tradition in particular. Table 3.6 outlines some of these structural characteristics, as well as the ways in which they were integrated into *Bamitaagewin*.While some structural elements of oral tradition were thus integrated into the structure of *Bamitaagewin,* the series is not truly representative of more traditional Ojibwe language arts. Accordingly, it was important to implement some concrete examples of Ojibwe oral genres. As these examples needed to feature content that was secular in nature and pertained to the overall theme of obedience, and that also adhered, as closely as possible, to Ojibwe structural conventions, two oral forms were chosen that could be meaningfully integrated into *Bamitaagewin*. The first of these, a song, was modeled after other

Ojibwe-language songs (Gibbs, 2010). An examination of the lyrics in the found exemplars revealed several recurring qualities in terms of structure and content.

With these observations as guidelines, I wrote a song entitled "Gego" (*Don't*) to be incorporated into the plot of an episode. As the focus was on language, and not on ethnomusicology, no music was written for the song; a copyright-free instrumental song was chosen to accompany the lyrics. Still, by using an Ojibwe lyrical structure to frame an original Ojibwe-language song, viewers of *Bamitaagewin* could observe the use of a semi-traditional Ojibwe language art, while also reinforcing the target language (negative imperative verbs) and content themes (disobedience).

I felt it was important to also incorporate a traditional Nenabozho story, given that character's central status within Ojibwe oral tradition. At the same time, it was essential to adhere to the conventions of Nenabozho stories to avoid misappropriating or misrepresenting the character, which led to the decision to feature an existing story rather than create an original one or integrate him/her into the larger narrative arc. One particular Nenabozho story involves his/her attempt to eat as many ducklings as possible by convincing them to dance in a circle with their eyes closed. His/her plan is successful until one duckling opens his eyes, realizes what is happening, and warns the others to escape, which they do. It was possible to integrate several target vocabulary words into this story, and the theme of literally blind obedience was poignant and relevant. Since I had encountered this story in a variety of contexts not specifically intended for Anishinaabe audiences, I was fairly sure that it was not considered to be one that should be only told orally, at a specific time of the year, or in a spiritual or ceremonial context (King, 2012; Scofield, 1999). Although the majority of the story is told in English, it is an authentic example of orature and Ojibwe storytelling conventions. Further, its thematic content and the possibility to integrate target language forms made it an essential part of *Bamitaagewin*.

Table 3.6 – Characteristics of Ojibwe Oral Tradition and Their Application in Bamitaagewin

Characteristic	Application in Video
Stock characters who represent a particular quality or idea	Writing characters who are suggestive of concepts pertaining to power and (dis)obedience: • A soldier – unwavering obedience to government/authority • A runaway – disobedience to familial authority • A celebrity – great societal influence • A computer hacker – societal disobedience and self-authorized exercise of power • A reporter – obedience to authority, but influence on society
Conflict which requires some sort of formulaic or repetitive action to be resolved	• A soldier tries to find ways to relieve feelings of regret after blind obedience • A runaway must complete several tasks in order to placate a disobedient family member as a sort of karmic punishment • A celebrity resists various personal pressures to delve into new territory, spawning a social phenomenon • A computer hacker pursues several legal channels to achieve his ends, but resorts to an illegal one in desperation • An anchorwoman makes several reports intended to suppress rebellion, but unwittingly supports the cause
Resolution of conflicts is an explanation of natural phenomenon, life lesson, or warning	• Soldier – individual efforts at revitalization have larger repercussions • Runaway – language revitalization requires the (re)formation and nurturing of relationships • Celebrity – there are consequences to disobedience, as well as rewards • Computer Hacker – taking drastic action towards revitalization provokes drastic responses • Reporter – Representation of Indigenous languages in the media contributes to their use and appreciation
Other important characteristics	• Nenabozho (cultural trickster figure) embedded within an episode as an illustration of disobedience • Mix of familiar and fantastic – integration of magical realism in the form of an unborn baby sending Ojibwe-language text messages • Technology – demonstrating that the Ojibwe language is compatible with devices, if there is a push to incorporate it • Holism – all episodes are part of a greater narrative arc • Dialogic and reflective – viewers are often addressed directly and encouraged to reflect upon the issues raised in the series

Integrating Videographic and Narrative Devices into Bamitaagewin

The Ojibwe oral genres described above are a small-scale example of what *Bamitaagewin* is intended to be: artistic forms that serve as vehicles for language instruction. Each episode of the series was planned as one segment of a larger story arc, and within each episode certain devices were embedded as a way to promote viewers' acquisition of language and content objectives. These devices can be classified as either videographic or narrative, although in practice, they often overlap (i.e., an onscreen vocabulary exercise occurs as part of the storyline). Videographic devices include subtitling, graphics, and interactive games. Narrative devices refer to the ways in which plot, character, and setting contribute to language development. Videographic and narrative devices can also be used effectively to promote a familiarity with target content; however, the focus in this work will be on language acquisition.

Subtitling was used extensively to promote vocabulary acquisition, in keeping with the literature summarized in the previous chapter. Sequences in which several vocabulary items are presented via subtitles one after another were utilized as a means of enhancing noticeability and allowing learners to focus their attention on memorization. To enhance the noticeability and comprehensibility of the Ojibwe-language input, the subtitles consisted of the Ojibwe form next to an English gloss. As the presentation sequences recurred throughout an episode, letters from the English gloss gradually disappeared, encouraging viewers to memorize the Ojibwe verbs before their English translations were removed completely. Subtitling was also used to direct viewers' attention to pronunciation by employing a strategy whereby each target word was presented three times. The first time, the first half of the word appeared as the whole word was said aloud, but the second half of the word was missing. Next, the second half of the word appeared as the whole word was spoken aloud, but with the first half of the word missing. The third time the word was said, the whole word appeared as the word was said. This structure was intended to focus viewers' attention on a specific portion of each word so that they could begin to notice how the writing system encodes spoken forms. Sometimes, subtitles occurred "naturally" as part of the

narrative. For example, a vocabulary review took the form of an infomercial, in which the Ojibwe verbs and an English gloss were re-introduced as names of a fictional band and song title, respectively. In addition to providing bilingual comprehensible input, this device could also serve as an opportunity for comprehensible output, if viewers chose to repeat the "band names" after the announcer, as well as a form of feedback if they guessed the meaning of each verb and checked it against the "song name", or English gloss featured next to it. Subtitling was thus used throughout the series in various ways to promote vocabulary development.

Coloured subtitling was also used to facilitate grammar instruction. In keeping with an Indigenous whole-to-parts approach to learning, target vocabulary words were introduced as chunks to be memorized and parsed in the future. After the concept of verb roots and affixes was explained to viewers, subtitles were used to draw viewers' attention to the fact that the vocabulary items they had learned as chunks could now be parsed into a verb root in one colour and a command-forming affix in another. As new grammatical concepts were introduced (for example, the negative construction "gego _____-ken" [*don't _____!]*, different colours would be used to help viewers distinguish the verb root from the affixes and/or singular/plural markers. This was intended as visual support for grammar acquisition.

Onscreen graphics were also used as videographic devices. Digital onscreen graphics were used during the "newscasts" featured in certain episodes as a way to summarize Ojibwe grammatical rules in tables, and to present viewers with mnemonic devices with which they could memorize specific commands, such as remembering the phrase "Gimme, gimme, gi-miinishin" to recall the verb "miinishin" (*give me*). A karaoke version of the original song written for the series, presented as onscreen sheet music, provides viewers with the opportunity to practice singing or chanting in Ojibwe. Importantly, onscreen graphics are one benefit of utilizing a video medium; it would be impossible to provide these visual supports in a purely oral format.

One of the most important and pedagogically-relevant characteristics of *Bamitaagewin* is the incorporation of interactive games, as they provide the proactive viewer with an opportunity to produce output, interact in some way with a "listener", and/or receive some form of corrective feedback. These games took several forms. The interactive "commercial" at the beginning of one episode features short video clips of characters performing some action, along with a prompt to say the appropriate command demonstrated in the clip. After a few seconds, the correct imperative verb appears, allowing viewer-participants to check their responses. In another episode, the "disappearing translations" game requires viewers to analyze the featured Ojibwe verb's root and affixes, and then select the correct English translation from a list of four choices. The correct translation is revealed after the three incorrect answers disappear one by one. In another interactive game, viewers see an Ojibwe verb root and a list of the four conjugations in their English translations. Each translation is highlighted in red, and the Ojibwe verb conjugates accordingly, allowing viewers to anticipate and check their grammar. The next phase of the game involves providing viewers with an English phrase, for which they must formulate an Ojibwe command. After a few seconds, the appropriate command appears and verifies or corrects viewers' guesses. These devices were intended to provide learners with opportunities to produce target-language output through interacting with the game as a sort of surrogate listener, then receive feedback by comparing their answer with the correct one featured onscreen. Accordingly, they are a vital component of a language-teaching video.

In addition to videographic techniques, narrative devices can contribute to language acquisition. In *Bamitaagewin*, plot was used to guide the trajectory of instruction from simple verb memorization to more complex parsing and conjugation. For example, the character in the first episode is introduced to the Ojibwe language via a media campaign, and finds learning very basic commands to be a liberating experience. A few episodes later, growing civil unrest has led another character to write a resistance song, which necessarily introduced viewers to the negative imperative form. Later, as the campaign gains even more

momentum and more people are affected by it, introducing plural forms becomes logical. Plot can thus serve as a syllabus outline, reflecting again the ideal marriage of narrative and pedagogy.

Characterization was a device used to help meet the potential affective needs of viewers. For example, one character is a learner of English and speaks with an accent, for which he is ridiculed. However, the character is not deterred from continuing to use the language, even as he continues to make pronunciation and grammar errors. In fact, many of his lines were written to demonstrate that he is actually a very insightful and intelligent person, which he is able to convey through his use of English as a second language. This character was intended to reduce the stigma faced by many learners of Indigenous languages who are reluctant to interact with fluent speakers, and thereby increase the likelihood of achieving fluency.

The contemporary, urban setting of *Bamitaagewin* was intended to help learners relate to the characters and the situation onscreen as a model of possible language use and study. Highlighting the ways in which Indigenous languages and technology are compatible may contribute to the adoption of digital devices as learning tools. In keeping with the research in Indigenous-language pedagogy that recommended study-skill instruction, a contemporary, high-tech setting was used as a narrative device to encourage the development of such skills. For example, in one episode, new vocabulary items were introduced via text messages sent to a character. The character uses several resources, such as an Internet search engine and an online dictionary, to learn the meanings of these words, thereby modeling the process and informing the viewer as to the existence of such resources. Setting was also used to show homier and more low-tech study options. For example, one character leads the viewer-participant through a review of verb roots, by holding up paper cards. Next, she uses adhesive note papers to demonstrate how affixes are attached to verb roots to create commands. This demonstration serves to review the target language, but also provides viewers

with suggestions regarding effective study techniques. In this way, setting is a tool by which viewers can be supported in their independent language study.

Summary

The target language and content forms featured in the Ojibwe-teaching series *Bamitaagewin* were chosen based on their relevance to language revitalization, especially in terms of home use. Imperative verbs and an overarching theme of obedience form the basis of the series, which integrates videographic and narrative techniques aimed at fostering language acquisition.

Addressing Research Gaps with *Bamitaagewin*

Gaps in Narrative Language-Teaching Video Research

The studies by Hermes and King (2013), South et al. (2008), and Herron et al. (2006) each investigated some aspect of narrative video as a language-learning approach. However, none of them are able to conclude that viewing the video necessarily led to any language acquisition: Hermes and King were interested in how learners interact with the videos and whether or not they used any language they learned, South et al. admit that language forms acquired by the viewers of their videos may have learned those forms from other sources in the English-speaking environment, and Herron et al. augmented their video-based approach with supplemental activities which may have been the real source of language learning. Further, as Herron et al. tested only listening comprehension and grammar knowledge, the extent to which learners can learn vocabulary and pronunciation skills from such videos remains unexamined.

The three studies described above also do not focus on the extent to which the videos prepare participants to use the language throughout their daily lives. As promoting daily and home use of a language is a key objective in revitalization movements, this is an important skill to encourage and develop. Hermes and King described the extent to which users of the *Ojibwemodaa* software used language which they learned from the videos around the house, but did not encourage the participants to do so or test their ability to plan doing so. South et al. did not test their participants' ability to use language appropriately in context, although the

videos they had created were intended to demonstrate contextualized English language use. Herron et al. also did not test their participants in this way.

Finally, only one of the studies above investigated how learners felt about narrative approaches to independent language learning, focusing instead on the benefits or limitations of the form. Hermes and King do collect some qualitative data pertaining to participants' perceptions of independent computer-based learning, but this does not describe their perceptions of the narrative videos embedded within it specifically. South et al. did report participants' views of narrative videos, but did not include information about whether or not learners would choose this method over others for independent study, or if they found any aspects of a narrative approach to be a hindrance. Herron et al. compared two types of course delivery, but participants did not choose their grouping, and therefore the percentage of interested learners who would prefer a narrative-centred approach to a decontextualized rule-based one remains unknown.

Research Questions

The following research questions emerge as a focus of the study regarding narrative Indigenous-language teaching videos:

1. Do adult viewers of Ojibwe language-teaching videos which contain vocabulary- and grammar-teaching pedagogical and narrative devices demonstrate learning of these elements on immediate and delayed post-tests?

2. Do viewers of Ojibwe language-teaching videos demonstrate an ability to apply the vocabulary and grammar featured in the video to imaginary but plausible real-world situations on immediate and delayed post-tests?

3. What are learners' self-reported perceptions of how a narrative approach to language instruction affects their Ojibwe language development?

Chapter Four – Methodology

Overview of the Study

The target language forms and thematic content objectives featured in *Bamitaagewin* were chosen based on the extent to which they could contribute to Ojibwe language revitalization. Imperative and negative-imperative verbs can be meaningfully and quickly applied to performing language tasks within a home setting. Promoting an awareness of power dynamics, (dis)obedience, and the implications of being proactive or passive in terms of language use and decline are also important components of promoting language revitalization, and these ideas can be presented to viewers through story. Featuring specific examples of Ojibwe language arts within the larger narrative was also an objective, as these genres feature target language use within authentic Indigenous forms. Each episode used a narrative framework which was capable of supporting integrated content and language instruction facilitated by videographic and narrative means.

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which viewers of *Bamitaagewin* were able to (a) demonstrate learning of discrete language forms in Ojibwe through viewing alone and (b) apply these skills towards completing an imaginary language task. These viewers were also asked to describe (c) the ways in which they felt that using narrative language-teaching videos to learn Ojibwe – as opposed to other methods of language learning – helped their acquisition of the language, or hindered it.

Twenty adult participants, none of whom knew any Ojibwe or reported any heritage relationship with the language, were recruited to watch the entire series of videos. To understand the effects of participating in oral-production activities on language development, participants were divided into Group A, who were asked to respond aloud to anything they interpreted in the video as a prompt to do so, and Group B, who were instructed to remain silent. After viewing, viewers from both groups completed a series of tests designed to measure their ability to understand and produce specific Ojibwe-language forms, as well as their ability to imagine applying those forms to performing some sort of Ojibwe-language

transaction. Each set of tests consisted of an oral production/recall test, a listening comprehension test, a verb conjugation test, and a "role play" test. Participants also participated in a recorded interview, in which they were asked open-ended questions pertaining to their experience as learner-viewers. Two weeks later, participants returned to the test site, answered a few questions, and completed a delayed post-test (the "cold" delayed post-test) to measure the specific language forms they had retained during the interim period. After re-viewing the final episode of *Bamitaagewin*, learners completed a third set of tests (the "warm" delayed post-test) as well as a third interview.

Data consisted of each participant's immediate post-test results, their "cold" delayed post-test results, and their "warm" delayed post-test results. Their interviews were also recorded, transcribed, and coded. Addressing research questions 1 and 2 consisted of analyzing each participant's three post-tests for evidence that language forms have been acquired and sustained over time. The coded transcriptions of the interview were analyzed qualitatively to gain insight into research question 3. Data analysis yielded results that can be used to refine and improve future narrative language-teaching videos. Table 4.1 summarizes the data collection process.

Table 4.1 – Summary of data collection by session

Step	Session 1	Session 2
1	Consent Form	Qualitative Interview 2
2	Viewing of *Bamitaagewin*	Cold delayed post-test (Oral Production, Listening Comprehension, Grammar, Role Play)
3	Immediate delayed post-test (Oral Production, Listening Comprehension, Grammar, Role Play)	Viewing of *Bamitaagewin* episode 5
4	Qualitative Interview 1	Warm delayed post-test (Oral Production, Listening Comprehension, Grammar, Role Play)
5		Qualitative Interview 2

Participants

Twenty adult participants were recruited to participate in this study through a combination of in-class presentations aimed at soliciting volunteers, and an online classified advertisement. Those who responded were then divided into two groups of ten. To ensure a sufficient number of participants, very few controls were implemented: if someone was an adult and did not already speak Ojibwe, they were eligible for participation. The participants varied in age from early adulthood to middle age, and they spoke a variety of first and additional languages – although all participants spoke English, their fluency varied considerably, with some participants speaking English as a mother tongue and others requiring significant amounts of simplification and support to understand interview questions and instructions. Most of the participants were university students, although some were members of the larger Montreal community whose education levels are unknown, as more specific biographical data was not collected.

Participants were divided into two groups, which were formed randomly at first (every odd-numbered participant was assigned to Group A, and every even-numbered participant was assigned to Group B). However, participants were later assigned to groups in a way that assured each group contained a roughly equal number of men and women.

Participants were paid $25.00 in cash after completing both parts of the study, including those who volunteered before compensation was offered. All but one participant completed both parts; one participant – a native speaker of English – scored zero on the first post-test, and was not invited back to the second session. The diversity of participants (in terms of gender, origin, age, and L1) suggests that their performance on the tests can be considered indicative of the potential for videos to support Indigenous language acquisition by a wide range of adult learners.

Procedures

Each participant was required to attend two sessions. During the first session, the participant was taken to a small private room in a building on campus and

seated at a desk with a laptop computer and headphones. After signing an informed consent form (see Appendix 2: Informed Consent Form), the participant was provided with headphones (or invited to use their own) and viewing instructions: Those assigned to Group A were asked to respond aloud to everything they interpreted as prompts to do so, and those in Group B were asked to remain silent. Participants then viewed all five episodes of *Bamitaagewin* consecutively. During the viewing, the researcher sat at the side of the same large desk, but was engaged in other tasks such as reading, working on another laptop, or listening to music with headphones (the purpose of this was to ensure that participants actually watched the series, without making them feel as if they were being scrutinized). After the last episode was over, participants removed the headphones and were immediately administered the Immediate Post-Test (see Appendix 3: Oral Production Scoring Sheet and Appendix 4: Immediate Post-Test Listening Comprehension, Grammar, and Role Play Scoring Sheet).

The Immediate Post-Test consisted of five parts. The first part was an oral production test, designed to measure the number of verb roots retained by participants as a result of viewing the series. Participants were asked to list the vocabulary items that they could remember from the videos along with the meaning of that item. Afterward, the researcher provided prompts to the participants for the verb roots they did not recite by providing them with the first or first two syllables of the root. For example, *zagakinige* ['s/he tidies up'] was prompted by the researcher saying, *zaga*…. Participants could then recite the word in any conjugation or pass. All responses were recorded on an Oral Production Scoring Sheet (see Appendix 3), which was not seen by participants. Responses fell into one of six categories. A response was deemed "correct" if it was elicited without a prompt, conjugated in any way, pronounced appropriately, and translated correctly into English. The "correct with prompt" category was reserved for "correct" responses that required the researcher to provide a hint. A response was classified as "intelligible" if the response was delivered without a prompt, was conjugated appropriately, and translated into English correctly, but which contained a pronunciation error that did not significantly affect

intelligibility. If a similar response occurred after a hint was given, it was classified as "intelligible with prompt". If a response was not correctly translated to English or was completely unintelligible, it was classified as "error".

Following the oral production test, participants were given the Immediate Post-Test Listening Comprehension, Grammar, and Role Play Scoring Sheet (see Appendix 4), on which they provided their answers for the listening comprehension, grammar, and role-play tests. The listening comprehension test was designed to measure the extent to which learners could understand the verb roots featured in the video, as well as the meanings of grammatical affixes *–n, –g, gego, –ken*, and *–keg*. The researcher read out twelve conjugated verbs in Ojibwe from a list, repeating each one upon request. Participants were asked to record an English translation in the space provided on the Scoring Sheet.

The grammar portion of the test was designed to measure participants' ability to conjugate Ojibwe verbs using their knowledge of grammar rules featured in the video. Participants were presented with four new Ojibwe verbs that did not appear in the series. Each verb was paired with a target form. For example, question seven states, "*Moojigizi* is the Ojibwe word for 's/he has fun'. How do I say 'Have fun!' to more than one person?" Participants wrote their answers in the space provided on the Scoring Sheet.

The next part of the test was designed to measure the extent to which participants were able to apply a particular Ojibwe command to complete a specific language task. The role-play section of the immediate post-test consisted of a series of hypothetical situations. Participants were asked to provide a suitable Ojibwe command that could be used realistically within that situation and record it on the Scoring Sheet. Participants were encouraged to be creative, and were also told that multiple responses were possible. For example, waking up children could be accomplished by saying, *Goshkozig, Gego nibaakeg, Giziibiigazheg* or even perhaps *Ambeg* [*"Wake up (pl)!", "Don't sleep (pl)!", "Shower (pl)!",* and *"Come (pl)!"* respectively]. After completing this portion of the test, the

Immediate Post-Test Listening Comprehension, Grammar, and Role Play Scoring Sheet was collected.

The final part of the first session was devoted to a semi-structured interview, which was intended to understand the ways in which participants felt empowered or hindered by a video-based approach to language learning. Before the interview, participants were informed that they would be recorded using a digital voice recorder. Although a set of questions was prepared for each group, these were not asked in lockstep fashion; as a result, the focus of each interview was slightly different. However, most interviews involved asking participants how they felt about responding aloud to the prompts (if they were in Group A), or remaining silent (if they were in Group B, or if they were assigned to Group A but did not respond to any prompts), as well as how they felt about learning via video as opposed to within a classroom. Most participants were asked how they could maximize their learning via video, and how they felt the video could be improved. Participants were also asked to identify and justify their favorite character(s). After the interviews were completed, participants were thanked and reminded to return in 14 days to participate in the second part of the study. The recorded interviews were then transferred from the digital voice recorders to a computer hard-drive, and later transcribed.

When participants returned for the second session two weeks later, they were informed that they would be recorded for another interview. The purpose of this interview was to establish if participants had engaged in any Ojibwe-language learning in the interim period, and also to measure how much of the target content participants could remember over the same period. Participants were asked to discuss their Ojibwe-language use over the previous two weeks, as well as any research they had undertaken regarding the Ojibwe language. Next, participants were asked to summarize the events in each episode in as much or as little detail as they wished. Other relevant questions were asked on an *ad hoc* basis.

Next, participants were administered a cold delayed post-test (Appendix 3: Oral Production Scoring Sheet and Appendix 5: Delayed Post-Test Listening

Comprehension, Grammar, and Role-Play Scoring Sheet), which consisted of the same elements as the immediate post-test completed two weeks earlier, and which was designed to establish how much of the language content viewers had retained in the interim period. The content of each sub-test was altered to eliminate the possibility that learners provided responses they had memorized from the previous test. The oral production test was repeated, and responses recorded in the same way. The listening comprehension test featured different verb roots conjugated in different ways, but the testing procedure remained unchanged. For the grammar test, participants were presented with the same four verbs that were featured in the previous test, but they were asked to conjugate them in different ways. The role-play test differed somewhat from the immediate post-test, in that participants were provided with an Ojibwe command and asked to think of a situation in which that command could be realistically used. After completing each sub-test, the response sheet was collected.

Next, participants viewed only the final episode of *Bamitaagewin*, which was preceded by a short recap of the previous four episodes. Participants were also provided with instructions specific to their group and asked to observe them. After viewing, participants were administered a "warm" delayed post-test, which was identical to the cold delayed post-test. All sub-tests were repeated and recorded in the same way.

Finally, participants were asked to participate in a final interview, at which time they were recorded and asked another series of questions. These questions tended to focus on participants' understanding of the narrative and the significance of the title *Bamitaagewin*, as well as their feelings about the Ojibwe language and any plans to continue learning it. Again, the flow of each interview differed, and participants were encouraged to talk about their impressions and concerns as they thought of them. After the final interview, participants were paid and thanked for their participation.

Analysis

Post-Tests

Results of the immediate and delayed post-tests were compiled after checking each sub-section against an answer key. The Oral Production sub-test responses were recorded and coded as they were uttered by participants, and accordingly, analysis of this sub-test required only a tally of each response type.

Interpreting the Listening Comprehension Test results involved checking each response for two characteristics: first, an accurate English translation of the corresponding Ojibwe verb root uttered by me (to indicate vocabulary acquisition); and second, a correct indication of singularity or plurality AND an indication that the command spoken was affirmative or negative (to indicate grammar acquisition). Singularity or plurality was indicated by writing (s) or (p)/(pl) somewhere on the line; however, if a participant only wrote (p)/(pl) without writing (s) after singular commands, it was presumed that the participant understood the difference between singular and plural, and scores were allocated as if they had indicated singularity overtly. Affirmative and negative commands were indicated by the exclusion or inclusion of the word "Don't" in the response. For each response, it was possible to earn one point for a correctly-translated verb root, and another for correctly identifying the meaning of the grammatical affixes attached to that root. These scores were not combined; a participant could demonstrate acquisition of each verb root, even if they did not demonstrate an acquisition of grammar forms, and scores on this sub-test would reflect that differentiation.

The scores on the Grammar Test were analyzed simply by checking the participants' responses to each question against an answer key. A point was given only if the verb was conjugated appropriately to the specifications outlined in the question.

The responses for the Role Play section were analyzed differently on the immediate and delayed post-tests, since the tasks on each post-test differed slightly. On the immediate post-test, responses consisted of a single word that

could be used within the situation provided. If a participant's response was judged feasible by me within that context, it was considered correct. On the two delayed post-tests, responses took the form of a situation in which a given command could be uttered. Again, I made a judgment regarding the appropriateness of each response, and designated each one correct or incorrect in this way. Since each Role Play sub-test was the only opportunity participants had to practice writing in Ojibwe, spelling conventions were disregarded; erroneous spellings never affected the intelligibility of responses.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Analyzing the data generated from the interviews first involved transcribing each recorded interview session (three sessions per participant). Next, I skimmed each transcript to identify overarching themes that emerged from each participant's interview, such as "interaction" or "perceptions of subtitling". I organized these themes within a table, and then reviewed each transcript to find relevant passages pertaining to each overarching theme. Any relevant passage was summarized and inserted into the table. This process created a table which provided a visual representation of participants' perceptions organized by theme. Using the table as a guide, I could effectively identify trends, conflicts, and exceptions among participant responses (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Summary

This study was designed to measure the efficacy of narrative language-teaching videos and the perceptions of video users. Participants demonstrated their learning of the target language forms by completing three cycles of testing; each cycle consisted of an oral production test, a listening comprehension test, a verb conjugation test, and a role play test. Semi-structured interviews also generated data regarding participants' perceptions of video-based language learning. The following chapter presents the results of each test, as well as a summary of the information gathered from the interview sessions.

Chapter Five – Results

Overview

Recap of Research Questions

This study was executed in pursuit of answers to the following research questions:

1. Do adult viewers of Ojibwe language-teaching videos which contain vocabulary- and grammar-teaching pedagogical and narrative devices demonstrate learning of these elements on immediate and delayed post-tests?

2. Do viewers of Ojibwe language-teaching videos demonstrate an ability to apply the vocabulary and grammar featured in the video to imaginary but plausible real-world situations on immediate and delayed post-tests?

3. What are learners' self-reported perceptions of how a narrative approach to language instruction affects their Ojibwe language development?

An Overview of the Data

Data pertaining to participants' command of Ojibwe vocabulary and grammar, as well as their ability to use the target language in context, consists of their scores on the immediate and delayed post-tests. Generally, the scores achieved on the cold delayed post-test were lower than those attained on the immediate post-test; the scores on the warm delayed post-test were generally higher than both previous tests (apart from a few exceptions discussed later). The results of each post-test are summarized in Table 5.1. The table outlines the target skills to be assessed on each post-test, and the sub-tests that were designed to do so. The third column states the maximum score possible in each sub-test. The next three cells contain the average correct responses achieved by the group on each sub-test. A deeper discussion of results is featured in each sub-section below. Data pertaining to participants' perceptions regarding narrative video as a learning resource were extracted from the transcripts of the three interviews conducted with each participant.

Table 5.1 – Summary of Immediate and Delayed Post-Test Scores

Skill	Sub-Test	Max. Possible Score	Average Correct Responses		
			Immediate Post-Test	Cold Delayed Post-Test	Warm Delayed Post-Test
Vocabulary	Oral Production[8]	17	2.95	1.26	4.21
	Listening Comprehension	12	5.84	2.58	5.32
Grammar	Listening Comprehension	12	9.16	5.26	9.11
	Grammar	4	2.53	1.47	2.74
Use in Context	Role Play	6	2	2.05	3.21

The interview sessions yielded some insights into narrative-video users' perceptions. Table 5.2 features the amount of data generated by each participant (in words) to reflect the depth with which each participant engaged with the interview questions. The topics discussed by each participant during these interviews differed somewhat, but overlapping themes did emerge. These could be broadly classified as:

- Comments pertaining to <u>interaction</u>
  - o Reported interaction with onscreen prompts
  - o Feelings regarding interacting with onscreen prompts

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[8] These figures represent the responses classified as "correct", which do not include partially-correct responses, or those responses elicited correctly by prompting. See the appropriate section below for a more detailed discussion of results.

Table 5.2 – Qualitative Interview Length in Words by Participant

Participant	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
A01	380	381	-[9]
A02	523	250	431
A03	280	284	273
A04	813	271	1,630
A06	587	264	557
A07	567	246	263
A08	395	382	919
A09	639	289	500
A10	614	325	1,367
B01	232	367	587
B02	674	336	525
B03	1,298	711	1,683
B04	556	358	254
B05	424	203	502
B06	736	398	877
B07	437	308	755
B08	578	412	304
B09[10]	905	-	-
B10	575	538	611
B11	562	430	447

[9] Although this participant did complete a third interview, the recording was lost, and therefore no transcription was made.

[10] Due to a score of 0 on the immediate post-test, this participant was not invited to participate in the second testing session, but did participate in one qualitative interview. The interview data were included in the data set, but the immediate post-test results were not.

- Ways in which a narrative video approach <u>helped</u> or <u>hindered</u> language learning

  o Perceived helpfulness of videographic techniques such as subtitling and interactive games

  o Perceived helpfulness of an oral/aural approach vs. a text-based approach

  o Perceived helpfulness of a narrative video-based approach vs. a more traditional classroom-based approach

  o Perception of a narrative video as a sole learning resource or a complementary resource

  o Survey of strategies employed to use a narrative video as a sole resource

- Comments pertaining to the <u>secondary benefits</u> of a narrative video-based approach

  o Extent to which the video series prompted further research, use, or interest in the Ojibwe language (or other Indigenous/indigenous languages)

  o Extent to which the video series enhanced awareness of or involvement in issues relevant to Indigenous language revitalization

  o Extent to which participants felt they would continue to learn Ojibwe

Individual differences in participants' language-learning aptitude may account for their performance on the post-tests, just as personal experiences may have influenced their perceptions of the feasibility of a narrative video-based approach to language learning (Skehan, 1989). Still, the data points towards the idea that carefully-planned videos can contribute to language revitalization by providing adults with useful language forms that can be employed within a home setting. The following sections describe how this conclusion was reached.

Research Question 1: Demonstrated Evidence of Vocabulary Learning

The Oral Production and Listening Comprehension Test scores indicate that participants (*n* = 19) learned some Ojibwe vocabulary as a result of viewing the narrative video series. As true beginners of Ojibwe-language study, participants' ability to provide some correct responses is a sign that the videos were successful in fostering vocabulary uptake to some extent. Scores obtained after the immediate post-viewing test indicate vocabulary recall after a single viewing of all five episodes. Scores on the first delayed post-test suggest the extent to which these vocabulary items were retained in memory two weeks after a single viewing of the narrative Ojibwe-teaching series *Bamitaagewin*. Scores on the second delayed post-test were higher than the immediate and "cold" delayed post-tests, suggesting that re-viewing a narrative language-teaching video series may contribute to vocabulary learning.

Oral Production Test: Results

Participants demonstrated learning of lexical items on the Oral Production Test by uttering the correct form and providing the correct meaning of vocabulary items featured within the series. Responses containing errors in form that did not affect intelligibility also indicate some learning. Responses elicited through prompts suggest that learners harbored latent knowledge of the vocabulary item. Incorrect responses indicate that the participant made an error in identifying the correct form and/or meaning of a particular vocabulary item, and do not indicate learning of lexical forms. If a participant did not mention a verb root from memory or recall it when prompted, it was considered an "omit"; omits were not considered a true response, and were not counted as such. Table 5.3 summarizes the group scores of participants on the Oral Production section of the immediate, cold delayed, and warm delayed post-tests; values represent one recorded response for that category.

As a group, the participants were able to demonstrate learning of Ojibwe verb roots featured in *Bamitaagewin* immediately after viewing the series. When asked to recite as many of the seventeen Ojibwe commands as possible, and provide an English translation for each one, the nineteen participants were able to do so in 56

instances. They were also able to match 37 other Ojibwe commands with English translations correctly after hearing a prompt. Participants also uttered 36 erroneous but intelligible responses from memory. Twenty more erroneous but intelligible responses were provided after hearing a prompt. Thirty-seven responses were erroneous beyond intelligibility, or constituted a mismatch of form and meaning.

The cold delayed post-test was administered two weeks after the immediate post-test before viewing the review episode as a way to evaluate the longer-term retention of the target lexis. Unsurprisingly, the group of participants was able to recall far fewer vocabulary items on the cold delayed post-test than on the immediate post-test. However, the participants did demonstrate an ability to recall 24 of the verb roots and their meanings correctly, and almost the same number of erroneous but intelligible responses (22). On the cold delayed post-test, prompts were slightly less effective in aiding participants to recall the forms, although they did contribute to the elicitation of 15 correct responses. This post-test also contained a high number of erroneous responses recorded on the cold delayed post-test (61).

The warm delayed post-test was completed after viewing the final review episode two weeks after viewing all five episodes in the series. The group of participants was able to recall as many verb roots on the warm delayed post-test (80) as they did on the immediate post-test (56) and the cold delayed post-test (24) combined. When prompted, participants were able to identify additional verb roots correctly from memory, but proportionally less than on prior post-tests. Relatively fewer intelligible errors were made on the warm delayed post-test than on other tests; prompts elicited about the same number (28 and 21, respectively). Although more correct responses were recorded on the Oral Production section of the warm delayed post-test than on the prior post-tests, more incorrect errors were also recorded (65). Table 5.3 summarizes the results of the Oral Production Test.

Table 5.3 – Oral Production Test Results

Response Type	Immediate Post-Test	Cold Delayed Post-Test	Warm Delayed Post-Test
Correct	56	24	80
Correct with Prompt	37	15	25
Intelligible Error	36	22	28
Intelligible Error with Prompt	20	9	21
Incorrect	37	61	65

The classification and frequency of Oral Production Test response types suggests that vocabulary learning occurred as a result of viewing *Bamitaagewin*. However, to understand the extent to which embedded pedagogical and narrative devices contributed to vocabulary learning, it is also useful to know which particular verb roots were elicited correctly from viewers, and how often. Accordingly, a scoring system was devised in which the number of times each target vocabulary item was presented to viewers via a pedagogical or narrative device was recorded. Then, a score of 1 was assigned to each correctly-elicited verb root, and a score of .5 was assigned to each verb root correctly elicited with a prompt. Table 5.4 shows the number of presentations and elicitations.

A Pearson's r calculation was performed to assess the power of the correlation between the number of verb root presentations in the series and the total number of correct and prompted-correct elicitations. The calculation yielded r = 0.87, which suggests a fairly strong correlation between frequency and recall. The verb root *goshkozi* [s/he wakes up] was, by far, the most frequently-presented vocabulary item in the series, with 53 distinct appearances. It was also the most commonly-elicited verb root amongst both groups. The root *wiisini* [s/he eats], was the second-most presented vocabulary item, and was elicited the second-most amount of times. In contrast, the root *ambe* [s/he comes] was only presented once

to viewers, and was never correctly recalled on the Oral Production Test. Although there are some striking exceptions (see the next chapter), the data reinforce the idea that the frequency with which particular vocabulary items are featured in the video series is correlated with the extent to which viewers can recall those items.

Table 5.4 – Frequency of Verb Roots Correctly Elicited and Correctly Elicited with a Prompt, by Total Number of Elicitations

Verb Root	Number of Presentations	Total Elicitations
Goshkozi [s/he wakes up]	53	41.5
Wiisini [s/he eats]	29	30.5
Maajaa [s/he goes]	22	28
Nibaa [s/he sleeps]	22	25.5
Anokii [s/he works]	27	17.5
Ikido [s/he says]	18	13
Giiziibiigazhe [s/he showers]	22	10.5
Niimi [s/he dances]	7	9
Miinishin [s/he gives s.t.]	14	8
Bamitaage [s/he obeys]	9	7
Biindige [s/he enters]	14	3.5
Ishke [s/he looks]	4	3
Zagakinige [s/he tidies up]	12	2
Bizindam [s/he listens]	19	2
Animichige [s/he reads]	4	1
Dadibaajimo [s/he tells a story]	6	0.5
Ambe [s/he comes]	1	0

Listening Comprehension Test: Results (Vocabulary)

The Listening Comprehension section of each post-test required each participant to listen to an Ojibwe-language command and record an English-language translation on a scoring sheet. Accurate comprehension required participants to understand both the verb roots and grammatical conjugations in which they appeared. Accordingly, a participant who correctly identified the verb root in the utterance can be said to have learned that vocabulary form, even if they did not understand the grammatical affixes that affect its meaning. Therefore, by indicating the correct verb root contained in each utterance that constituted the Listening Comprehension section of each post-test, participants demonstrated vocabulary learning.

Twelve commands comprised the immediate and delayed post-tests; however, the commands featured on the immediate post-test differed from those contained on the delayed post-tests. The mean score for participants on the immediate post-test was 5.84 words, with a standard deviation of 2.03. The highest score was 10, obtained by two participants, and the lowest was 3, obtained by three participants. The mean score for participants on the cold delayed post-test was 2.58, with a standard deviation of 1.61. The highest score was 6, obtained by a single participant, and one student scored zero. The warm delayed post-test yielded a mean of 5.32, with a standard deviation of 2.43. The highest score was 11, obtained by a single student, and the lowest was 1, also scored by a single student.

No statistically significant differences, with an alpha level set at 0.05, were found between Group A, who were asked to respond orally to each prompt, and Group B, who were asked to remain silent, on the Listening Comprehension Test.

Summary

The fact that participants scored better than zero on the Oral Production and Listening Comprehension sections of the post-tests demonstrates that vocabulary learning can occur as a result of viewing narrative language-teaching videos that contain pedagogical and narrative devices. Devices which integrate target

vocabulary items into the narrative frequently and meaningfully appear to support learning of those items the most.

Research Question 1: Demonstrated Evidence of Grammar Learning

As part of each post-test, participants completed a Listening Comprehension and Grammar sub-test to measure the extent to which they understood the grammar concepts featured in the videos and their ability to apply those concepts towards conjugating new verbs. High scores on this test can be used as evidence to support the claim that narrative language-teaching videos can contribute to grammar learning in adult viewers.

Listening Comprehension Test: Results

Participants demonstrated learning of grammar forms by correctly writing an English translation of the spoken commands on the scoring sheet. Twelve different commands were uttered by the researcher; the immediate post-test set was different from that in the delayed post-tests. Participants were told to include as much information as possible in their responses; even if they did not know the meaning of the verb root, they could indicate whether the command was conjugated for singular or plural, negative or affirmative. This was done to ensure that grammar knowledge could be tested separately from vocabulary knowledge. The results below discuss only the participants' ability to identify the grammar constructions, and not their ability to understand the verb roots to which they were attached.

Participants demonstrated their comprehension of Ojibwe grammar structures by indicating on a scoring sheet whether the command that they heard spoken was conjugated for singular or plural and if it was an affirmative or negative command. One point was given for each correct response, with 12 being the highest possible score. On the immediate post-test, the mean score was 9.16 correctly-identified grammar forms, with a standard deviation of 2.06. Four participants managed to correctly identify all of the grammar constructions. The lowest score was 5. The cold delayed post-test results were lower and more spread out; participants achieved a group mean of only 5.26, with a standard deviation of

3.23. One participant achieved a perfect score, although one scored zero. However, on the warm delayed post-test, which was identical to the cold post-test, participants' scores had a mean of 9.11, with a standard deviation of 2.02, which is similar to the scores achieved on the immediate post-test. Two participants scored perfectly, and the lowest score was 5.

Figure 5.1 summarizes the scores by post-test. The points on the scatterplots provide a visual representation of how similar the participants' scores were; the immediate and warm delayed post-tests results are much more similar than those on the cold delayed post-test. This reflects the extent to which an individual's language-learning aptitude affects recall ability over the long term, but also the extent to which viewing and re-viewing a narrative language-teaching video contributed to most participants' ability to conjugate Ojibwe imperative verbs. The distribution of points in Figure 5.1a suggests that viewing the entire series contributed to participants' ability to understand the meaning of grammatical affixes, albeit to different extents. The distribution of points in Figure 5.1b reveals that an ability to recall grammatical affixes two weeks after viewing the series may be highly individual; although some participants achieved high scores, others were not able to demonstrate their comprehension of imperative grammatical affixes. However, the closer distribution of points on Figure 4.1c reaffirms the idea that repeated viewing of narrative language-teaching videos contributes to listening comprehension ability.

Grammar Test: Results

Participants also demonstrated their command of the Ojibwe grammar structures highlighted in *Bamitaagewin* by correctly applying their knowledge to conjugate four new Ojibwe verbs in a particular imperative form: singular affirmative, singular negative, plural affirmative, or plural negative. The four verbs to be conjugated were the same across all three post-tests, but the required conjugations on the immediate and delayed post-tests differed. One point was given for each correctly conjugated command, and 4 was the maximum score possible on each post-test.

On the immediate post-test, participants achieved a mean score of 2.53, with a standard deviation of 1.50. The singular imperative command form was the conjugation most often performed correctly, with the other three conjugations being performed correctly at the same rate as each other. Seven participants achieved a perfect score, while three were unable to perform any conjugations correctly. On the cold delayed post-test, participants were only able to conjugate 1.47 verbs correctly on average, with a standard deviation of 1.31. Again, singular imperative commands were those most frequently conjugated correctly, followed by plural imperative commands, singular negative commands, and plural negative commands.

Figure 5.1 – Grammar Comprehension Scores on the Listening Comprehension Test

a)

b)

**Grammar Scores on Listening Comprehension Section
of Warm Delayed Post-Test**

c)
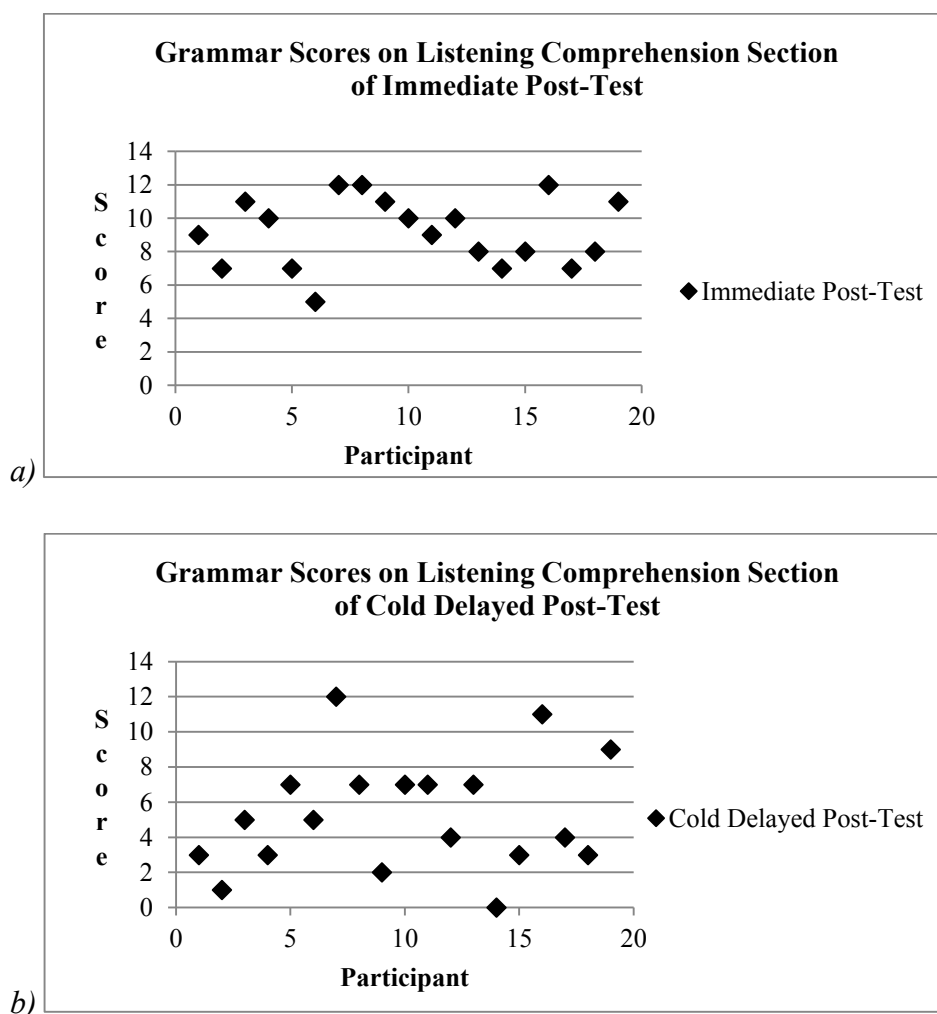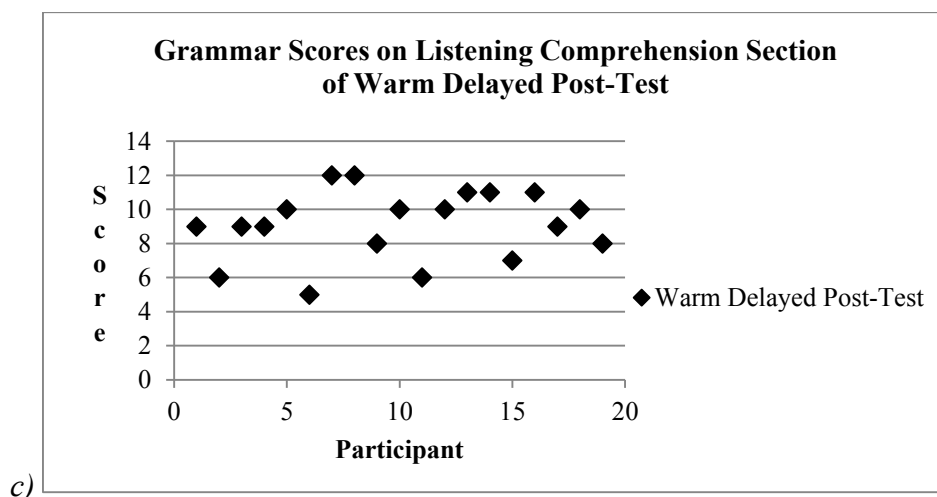
Only two participants demonstrated mastery of the grammar constructions by achieving a full score, and five scored zero. However, on the warm delayed post-test, participants outperformed themselves, achieving a group average of 2.74 correct conjugations, with a standard deviation of 1.37. Again, the singular imperative command form was that most frequently conjugated by participants, and interestingly, the other three forms were all conjugated correctly at exactly the same, slightly lower rate. Nine participants conjugated all of the verbs correctly, and only one was completely unable to conjugate any.

Summary

This section provided further evidence that pedagogical and narrative devices embedded within the Ojibwe language-teaching series *Bamitaagewin* succeeded in providing grammar instruction that enabled some viewers to demonstrate understanding of Ojibwe commands and conjugate previously-unknown verbs correctly.

Research Question 2: Demonstrated Evidence of an Ability to Conduct Language Tasks

Participants demonstrated their ability to apply their knowledge of the Ojibwe language on the Role Play section of each post-test by matching an appropriate Ojibwe-language command to a given situation (on the immediate post-test) or by providing a plausible situation in which a given Ojibwe word could be applied (on

both delayed post-tests). A participant's success on this test necessarily depended largely on their command of vocabulary and grammar structures. Therefore, one point was assigned for each response in which the verb root, conjugation, and situation were plausibly appropriate. Since the word *"Gego!"* was sometimes presented as "Don't!" in the series, responses consisting of the word *"Gego!"* without accompanying properly-conjugated verb roots were accepted, if appropriate. Participants who scored on the Role Play section of each post-test demonstrated an ability to contextualize the Ojibwe language – an essential component of revitalization efforts.

Role Play Test: Results

The immediate post-test required participants to provide an Ojibwe command to use within the six hypothetical situations provided. Sometimes, more than one response was possible: for example, saying *"Goshkozig"* [wake up [pl]!] or *"Gego nibaakeg!"* [don't sleep [pl]!] could both be used to wake up one's children. As a group, the participants were able to apply an appropriate Ojibwe command to perform a communicative task 38 times on the immediate post-test. On average, each participant was able to provide a correctly-conjugated Ojibwe verb root for two of the situations. The highest-scoring participant identified four relevant Ojibwe commands; the lowest was unsuccessful in identifying any.

Results from the cold delayed post-test were similar to those of the immediate post-test. However, this Role Play section required participants to provide a plausible situation in which a given Ojibwe word could be applied. Still, the group managed to identify 39 scenarios in which their Ojibwe knowledge could be meaningfully applied. The mean score on this section was 2.05, and this time, three participants were able to find a plausible use for four Ojibwe commands. Two participants were unable to do so at all. The ability to apply Ojibwe language knowledge towards completing language tasks was therefore demonstrated to only a limited extent.

Participants' performance on the warm delayed post-test demonstrates an increased ability to contextualize Ojibwe commands after a single re-viewing of

one episode. Although each section of the post-test was identical to the cold post-test, participants were able to identify many more relevant uses for the given Ojibwe commands. The mean score on this post-test was 3.21, with the highest-scoring participant finding a plausible use for each Ojibwe command, and the lowest performer finding just one. However, participants were collectively able to identify 61 potential uses for given Ojibwe commands after viewing the review episode. In this way, participants demonstrated that viewing a narrative video series can contribute to some ability to apply and contextualize acquired forms to perform real-life tasks.

Summary

This section described the Role Play section of each post-test, and the extent to which participants were able to find links between their Ojibwe language knowledge and situations in which it may be meaningfully applied. Although many participants were able to score rather highly on the test, the quality of the responses suggests that modeling language use is an important component of ensuring that the target language becomes a tool for real-life communication.

Research Question 3: Participants' Perceptions of How Narrative Videos Affect Language Development

Participants were invited to participate in a recorded interview, during which time they were asked several questions pertaining to their experiences as viewers of narrative language-teaching videos; specifically, the ways in which they felt that learning languages via video was an effective and feasible alternative to traditional classroom-based language study. These recorded interviews were transcribed and recurring themes were identified and tabulated (see Chapter Four). Trends and contrasts among responses were identified, and form the basis of the findings described here.

Generally speaking, participants felt that using narrative videos as a language-learning resource was an engaging and low-stress method that offered some significant advantages over classroom instruction. At the same time, participants also identified some ways in which narrative videos are limited in their

pedagogical potential. Participants also described their perceptions of how specific pedagogical devices embedded within the *Bamitaagewin* series contributed to their language learning, as well as ways in which they could be improved. Finally, participants offered suggestions regarding how they felt the use of narrative videos as a learning resource could be maximized.

Narrative Language-Teaching Videos as an Alternative to Classroom-Based Instruction

Participants identified several ways in which they felt a narrative approach to language learning contributed positively to their acquisition of Ojibwe forms. Many participants felt that the potential for narrative videos to engage language learners and provide them with memorable examples of language use was the most important and valuable aspect of the genre. Many reported that viewing the videos was an interesting and low-anxiety alternative to traditional classrooms, which participants felt was an essential component of maintaining motivation in the language-learning process. Several participants mentioned that the story-based series successfully "humanized" the language forms in a way that a more rule-based approach could not. That is, the vocabulary and grammar forms were situated within a useful context, which some participants believed promoted communication and language use. The value of a thematically and conceptually complex narrative as a learning framework was also mentioned by one participant as a way to respect the intellectual capacities of adult viewers and avoid the oversimplification and patronization that characterizes some adult language-learning materials. Several participants also noted that a narrative-based approach to language learning could appeal to a larger body of viewers than a classroom- or rule-centred approach, which could play an important role in "spreading" the Ojibwe language and issues pertaining to its revitalization.

Participants also identified several ways in which the narrative videos were limited in their pedagogical potential. Rather than perceiving the oral-aural style of *Bamitaagewin* as a feasible method of indigenous language learning, participants tended to consider it a "starting point" from which more "serious" language study could follow. About three quarters of participants perceived oral

skills-based series like *Bamitaagewin* to be useful in developing language skills, but only as one component of a language-learning program. Nearly all participants believed that they would have learned more vocabulary and grammar forms correctly if they had been allowed to write notes while viewing, and many believed that supplementing the video series with materials like flashcards or textbooks would maximize its pedagogical potential. A few participants also lamented the lack of meaningful interaction inherent in a video format, and suggested that future videos integrate narrative devices that include the viewer in a way that actually affects the storyline or requires them to perform some sort of virtual communicative task.

Participants also reported that although narrative is an interesting and potentially motivating language-learning framework, it is less efficient than a classroom. Several participants felt that the approach to vocabulary instruction was largely implicit, requiring viewers to invest more mental energy than they would if vocabulary were presented in a more straightforward manner. A few participants perceived the amount of thematic content in *Bamitaagewin* to be excessive, and reported that a greater focus on discrete language forms would help viewers to acquire language forms more easily, while the thematic content could be explored in less detail. However, this perception was not held by all participants, and some highlighted the thematic content as a feature that promoted their ability to recall specific target forms.

Several participants mentioned that individuals' preferred learning style may determine the extent to which narrative language-teaching videos can be successfully utilized by students of indigenous languages. The variety of responses that were elicited during the qualitative interview portion of the study seems to suggest that this may be true.

Participants' Perceptions of Pedagogical Devices

Participants provided responses that described their perceptions regarding the pedagogical efficacy of the subtitling, listen-and-repeat sequences and other speak-aloud prompts, and the interactive games that were embedded within the

series. Subtitling was used extensively throughout *Bamitaagewin* in several ways. A few participants noted that the subtitles with English translations that gradually disappeared upon each presentation provided an important push to memorize the Ojibwe forms. One participant explained that his ability to later recall the vocabulary items was partly due to his ability to visualize specific screen shots from the series in which subtitles labeled the actors' onscreen actions. While disappearing translations were considered effective by several participants, many more reported that the subtitles which combined onscreen text with a voiceover that modeled pronunciation were the most effective in terms of vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation development, especially given the potentially intimidating length of some Ojibwe words. Some participants reported that they came to recognize parts of the written Ojibwe forms, but relied on the voiceovers to assist with vocabulary memorization and pronunciation. Participant A06 described the way in which hearing the rhythm of spoken Ojibwe and being required to practice it aloud helped her to recall those forms that had appeared long and cumbersome in text. Originally describing Ojibwe pronunciation as "circular", she provided the following explanation when asked to clarify:

> A06: It's hard to explain. It's just that some words in the language are like – connects throughout the entire word. It's like, it's hard to explain […] Like, the word seems very long, but then it, you can say it really quickly. And it just flows very well within the word. Like, 'goshkozin', it's like, if you say "wake up", it's "wake…up", it's like separate, and then kinda it has a strict borderline between the two words, just to make one meaning out of it. But then, I think Ojibwe's like kinda bound together.

Aural-visual subtitling was just one of several devices that prompted participants to speak aloud. The series also featured musical vocabulary sequences that prompted participants to "listen and repeat", invitations to engage in virtual dialogue with particular characters, an opportunity to sing an Ojibwe-language song, and interactive games. The interview data suggest that there are ways in which the pedagogical devices may be improved. Participants from both groups suggested that more explicit instructions to speak aloud be implemented as

a way to ensure that each prompt is maximized – for example, the karaoke version of the "Gego" song written especially for the series and featured onscreen twice in its entirety was not recognized as a prompt to speak aloud by any participant. Respondents also suggested that more response time follow each item in the musical vocabulary sequences, as the average three second period in *Bamitaagewin* was not always sufficient to recognize the prompt as such, formulate a response, and say it before the next one appeared. Participants also felt that the musical sequences should have featured and prompted each vocabulary item an equal number of times. Some participants specifically mentioned the interactive games as a particularly helpful device that they could use to confirm their language skills and practice speaking aloud. However, they also suggested that these interactive games should contain more explicit directions and longer response times. A few students suggested that more interactive games integrated into the series would enhance its potential as a language-learning resource.

The two groups of participants interacted with these prompts differently in many ways, and therefore perceived them differently. Group A was the only group encouraged to speak aloud when prompted, and only two participants in that group failed to do so. Many Group A participants reported feeling awkward speaking aloud to the prompts for three main reasons: they were not always sure of what constituted a prompt, they felt uncomfortable reading an onscreen word aloud when no pronunciation was modeled, and the research setting – in which they were sitting alone with the researcher in a small room – was not particularly familiar and raised their inhibitions. Most Group A participants believed that they would speak aloud more frequently, take more risks speaking aloud, and feel more comfortable speaking aloud if they were viewing *Bamitaagewin* from the comfort of their own home. Further, most of the participants who did speak aloud felt that it got easier and more comfortable as the viewing session progressed. Many members of Group A felt that speaking aloud contributed to their language learning and pronunciation development, although at least two participants reported feeling that the requirement to speak aloud at every prompt was a

distraction that forced them to divert some of their concentration away from memorizing or analyzing the onscreen forms. At the same time, members of Group B overwhelmingly reported feeling hindered by the requirement to stay silent. Still, all but one member remained silent as they viewed the series; the one who did speak whispered, but was still audible. Many Group B participants reported that they sub-vocalized as they viewed as an alternative to speaking aloud, and almost all of them claimed that if they were viewing the series at home, or if the researcher had not told them to remain silent, they would have responded to the prompts aloud. The fact that some Group A participants perceived the prompts as an inconvenience, while some Group B participants felt that they were deprived of the opportunity to fully exploit them, suggests that individual learning preferences determine the best use of such devices.

Participants' Perceptions of Narrative Devices

Several participants commented that they were surprised by the complexity and content of the narrative videos, and admitted that they were prepared to view a series of grammatical explanations illustrated by charts and perhaps contextualized within short dramatic skits. However, the response to the narrative and its thematic content was overwhelmingly positive. Before the cold delayed post-test, participants were asked to summarize the events in each episode, and most were able to accurately recount the most important plot elements as they affected each character. Some participants were also asked to describe some recurring motifs and themes, such as obedience, non-indigenous learners of indigenous languages, and language activism. At least one participant asked if future episodes would be made, and others asked if the current episodes would be available online to re-view. Such feedback suggests that participants were engaged in the unfolding storyline, and that the narrative devices aimed at exploring thematic content pertaining to Ojibwe language revitalization were successful.

However, some participants felt that the ratio of thematic content to language content was uneven, and that such a complex storyline did not prioritize language

development. Accordingly, these respondents suggested increasing the number of narrative devices like character, dialogue, and plot that contributed directly to language development. Participants suggested including the viewer more frequently as a character in the narrative and requiring the viewer to produce language, as was done to some extent in the third and fifth episodes. A few participants also noted that although the storyline of *Bamitaagewin* was interesting, it did not always highlight realistic language use and might be improved by the inclusion of more mundane, practical examples of people using Ojibwe in their lives. Participants also suggested that dialogue include more Ojibwe and mnemonics devices to assist in memorization. A generally more explicit description of target language forms was another way in which participants felt the narrative component of the series could be improved.

At the same time, the perception that the narrative was topical, interesting, and dynamic may have contributed to viewers' engagement in critical reflection and discussion of Indigenous-language issues. One participant disclosed that, like the soldier, she thought about the Ojibwe commands as she was performing her daily routines. Another commented that she heard one character's voice in her head when she thought about particular scenes. Several participants revealed that they had discussed *Bamitaagewin* with other participants and non-participant friends outside of the viewing sessions, and that these discussions frequently involved describing the narrative along with the verb roots featured in the video. One participant even recited a verb root on the Oral Production section of the cold delayed post-test that she had completely omitted on the immediate post-test; she admitted that she had learned the verb root "wiisini" (*s/he eats*) with a friend while baking. Although this may seem to compromise the results of the cold delayed post-test, it does show that a narrative video series can initiate discussion of Indigenous languages like Ojibwe and encourage viewers to practice *and use* them outside of a formal language-learning environment. One participant's comments are especially demonstrative of the potential for gripping narrative to promote an interest and involvement in language revitalization:

I've been talking about the videos to a lot of friends, I shared it on Facebook – the study – because I thought it's like, it's really worthwhile, both in terms of the language and the message. I was also talking about it with a friend who saw the videos and we were talking about which words we remembered, and as I was telling you before, thinking about "Thank You" and what words were useful to us in the moment. And I've also been paying more attention to language revitalization things in the media, and other friends – another friend of mine – do you know F-----? Yeah, she's working in language revitalization too and she shared the link about that panel yesterday [an online webinar about language revitalization]. So anyways, it's been like, it's kinda neat how like, it wasn't something that I'd been particularly interested in until I did it. But then, now, it's kinda like, in my radar!

 Accordingly, it appears that narrative language-teaching videos are capable of promoting the acquisition of indigenous-language vocabulary and grammar directly through viewing, but also indirectly by prompting discussion and interaction after viewing.

Summary

This section summarized the data obtained from interviews conducted with participants, who identified several ways in which the narrative framework, pedagogical devices, and narrative devices contributed to their language development. The data also showed ways in which these things could be improved. The discussion of the results highlighted the importance of knowing what users expect from narrative videos as a language resource, and working with that knowledge to maximize learners' success in gaining proficiency.

Summary of Results

Participants in this study generated data by completing immediate and delayed post-tests and participating in semi-structured interviews. Each sub-section of the post-tests was designed to assess the extent to which participants were able to recognize, produce, or apply the vocabulary and/or grammar forms featured within the *Bamitaagewin* narrative language-teaching series. The interviews were intended to reveal the ways in which participants felt a narrative video-based

approach to language learning helped and/or hindered their Ojibwe-learning experience.

The immediate post-test scores revealed that participants were able to learn some Ojibwe vocabulary and grammar after a single viewing of the series. Two weeks later, their scores on the delayed post-test demonstrated an ability to recall some of the verb roots and verb conjugations featured in the videos. After viewing a review episode, the participants repeated the delayed post-test, and scored higher than on either previous test. The scores suggest that vocabulary learning via video is best fostered through the frequent and meaningful integration of target lexical items into the narrative. Similarly, a grammar-teaching approach that combined chunk-based learning with explicit instruction on chunk parsing and analysis into the narrative was successful in promoting viewers' acquisition of the target grammar rules. Apart from demonstrating that vocabulary and grammar instruction can occur via video, participants also revealed the ways in which they felt a narrative video-based method of language learning could contribute to their acquisition of an L2. At the same time, participants shared their opinions regarding the ways in which the video series could be improved; these perceptions suggest that meeting learners' expectations of what constitutes a language-learning program – or at least preparing learners for a less traditional one – is an important component of creating a successful language-teaching video series.

Chapter Six – Discussion

Overview

The data generated by each post-test and the semi-structured interview sessions reveal participants' ability to engage with a narrative Ojibwe language-teaching video as a language-learning resource. The immediate, cold delayed, and warm delayed post-tests all contained sub-sections in which study participants could demonstrate that they had learned discrete vocabulary items and grammar constructions from viewing an Ojibwe language-teaching video. Results from the Oral Production, Listening Comprehension, Grammar, and Role Play sections of each post-test point to the conclusion that video-based narratives can foster the uptake of Ojibwe vocabulary and grammar structures. An analysis of the semi-structured interviews reveals that for many learners, a narrative-video framework could serve as an engaging and effective language-learning resource.

Research Question 1: Demonstrated Learning of Vocabulary and Grammar

Immediate Post-Test

Participants' scores on the immediate post-test strongly suggest that the narrative and pedagogical devices embedded within the series contributed to uptake of Ojibwe verb roots and imperative verbs. As participants were not able to take notes during their viewing session, make recordings of the dialogue, or consult the videos during testing, it is nearly certain that any demonstrated command of the Ojibwe language on the immediate post-test is an indication that learning occurred solely from watching *Bamitaagewin*.

The scores on the Oral Production section of the immediate post-test show that simply viewing a five-episode series that features particular narrative and pedagogical devices can facilitate at least short-term vocabulary recall in viewers. The higher rate of vocabulary comprehension demonstrated on the Listening Comprehension section, and the fact that every participant correctly translated at least three Ojibwe commands after a single exposure to the language, are further evidence that the vocabulary-teaching devices employed in the series were successful in promoting uptake. This evidence suggests that techniques embedded

within the narrative video series and used to highlight target language forms enabled viewers to produce and understand Ojibwe vocabulary. The mean number of correct responses on the Oral Production Test was only 2.93, which is low in terms of how many vocabulary items most adults can be expected to learn in one lesson. That said, the average score (for vocabulary comprehension) on the Listening Comprehension section of the immediate post-test was 5.84, which is closer to the "seven, plus or minus two" rule of thumb used by many language instructors as a maximum number of target vocabulary to present per lesson (Rachael Fecyk-Lamb, personal communication, October, 2006). This suggests that viewers of *Bamitaagewin* had latent knowledge of the target vocabulary, even if they were not able or willing to produce it.

Pedagogical and narrative devices were also used to provide explicit and implicit grammar instruction, and the immediate post-test results also show that viewers had learned enough grammar to understand and produce some Ojibwe-language commands immediately after viewing the series once. On the Listening Comprehension Test, participants indicated that they had learned the significance of the particular grammatical affixes *–n*, *–g*, *gego*, *–ken*, and *–keg* by writing their interpretations of spoken commands on the scoring sheet. Participants demonstrated an ability to understand the meaning of these affixes in spoken commands about 75% of the time, on average. Importantly, all of the participants were able to recognize the meaning of grammatical affixes in at least five spoken commands, suggesting that the ways in which grammatical rules and opportunities to practice them were featured in the series contributed to viewers' grammar learning. The Grammar Test section of the immediate post-test also contains evidence that participants had learned the rules of constructing imperative and negative imperative verbs in Ojibwe. By correctly applying grammar rules to verbs that were not featured in the video, seven of the 19 participants demonstrated that they had learned the function of Ojibwe imperative affixes and could employ them to generate new commands that they had never seen or heard before; the other participants demonstrated this ability to a lesser extent. This would seem to prove that participants had learned to parse verbs for

meaningful segments and were not relying on memorized chunks for communication; if so, the pedagogical devices that visually represented the verb roots as separate from grammatical affixes and the narrative devices that described the process of applying affixes to the dictionary form of verbs were successful in providing grammar instruction. For these reasons, the immediate post-test results are evidence that pedagogical and narrative devices embedded within narrative videos allowed viewers to acquire some aspects of Ojibwe grammar.

The results of the immediate post-test are not dramatic in terms of participants' scores. Still, it is important to recall that although narrative video series are a poor substitute for intensive/immersive language training, they may also be the only resource by which some learners may access the Ojibwe language. Further, learning and testing conditions could be considered less than ideal: participants reported no prior exposure to Ojibwe and likely lacked any prior knowledge with which to make predictions or associations, they were probably unfamiliar with a narrative video-based format of language learning, they were not allowed to write, they could only view the episodes once, and several participants even reported that they did not know that they would later be tested – despite being told so in the study recruitment advertisement, the consent form, and orally before the viewing began! Still, these participants managed to score higher than zero on the immediate post-test, which suggests that a motivated learner lacking the limitations described may conceivably be able to perform substantially better after a single viewing.

Cold Delayed Post-Test Results

The results of the cold delayed post-test are important because they reveal the extent to which participants could or could not recall the target language forms weeks after the initial exposure, and therefore constitute evidence that narrative videos can contribute to vocabulary and grammar acquisition in an Indigenous language. Despite a two-week hiatus, participants in this study were able to produce, understand, translate, and conjugate Ojibwe verb roots, lending credence

to the idea that these forms were acquired, and not simply stored in short-term memory. Despite the lower scores on the Oral Production, Listening Comprehension, and Grammar sections of the cold delayed post-test, participants who viewed *Bamitaagewin* were able to demonstrate that they could produce and understand some Ojibwe two weeks later. This suggests that at least some of the narrative and pedagogical devices embedded within the series were effective in promoting uptake.

Participants demonstrated that they could remember some vocabulary items two weeks after a single viewing. Of course, given the length of time between viewing sessions, participants were expected to perform more poorly on the cold delayed post-test than on the immediate post-test; they produced fewer verb roots on the Oral Production section, and surprisingly, providing them with prompts to elicit a correct response was not as effective as anticipated. Relatively fewer responses "with prompt" were recorded in comparison with the immediate post-test. This may reflect the possibility that scores during the immediate post-test were higher because of the immediacy of testing after exposure to the video series; the target verb roots were remembered short-term, but were not acquired and therefore not recalled weeks later. Participants also provided significantly more incorrect responses on this Oral Production Test than the immediate post-test, which indicates a disassociation of form and meaning or a response that is unintelligible. The lower scores on the Listening Comprehension Test would seem to suggest that the time lapse resulted in some vocabulary loss; however, the lexical items featured on this test are different from those featured on the immediate post-test, making direct comparisons impossible because the new list of commands included lesser-featured lexical items. Still, some loss of vocabulary is to be expected, given the amount of time between viewers' previous encounter with the Ojibwe language forms and/or the paucity or lack of practice opportunities available to them outside of the viewing sessions. The sharp increase in incorrect responses may also be a result of the participants' becoming more comfortable with the researcher and research context and therefore more willing to take risks with elicitations. This would lead to fewer "omit" responses,

which were not recorded, but also more incorrect responses, which were recorded. Certainly, participants engaged in more friendly conversation before and after the second testing session than they did during the first one, and provided lengthier and more detailed qualitative interview responses during the second session; these may be indications that participants were less nervous and/or hesitant to engage in linguistic risk-taking.

Although scores on the cold delayed post-test were lower than those of the immediate post-test, they do not imply that participants did not learn grammar from their first viewing experience. Instead, the errors produced by participants on the Listening Comprehension and Grammar sections of the post-test indicate that they recalled the form of some of the grammatical affixes, but did not correctly recall the function of each one. On both sections, most participants correctly identified *gego* as a negation marker, but also incorrectly indicated that they understood the suffixes *–ken* or *–keg* to be plurality markers, instead of negation suffixes. Some participants seemed to recall that *–n* and *–g* suffixes are meaningful singular/plural markers in Ojibwe, but sometimes confused which was which. Despite these common errors, some participants demonstrated that they had retained knowledge of Ojibwe imperative and negative imperative verbs over the two-week interval. Participants were able to understand the grammatical constructions in about 42% of the utterances spoken on the Listening Comprehension test, and demonstrated a limited ability to apply those constructions to create new commands on the Grammar test. The fact that the errors produced were so uniform suggests that pedagogical and narrative devices in future narrative Ojibwe language-teaching videos should attempt to highlight grammatical affixes, but also to provide viewers with methods of associating form with function. In this way, the pedagogical and narrative devices may contribute to viewers' grammatical proficiency over longer periods of non-exposure.

Warm Delayed Post-Test Results

The participants' scores on the warm delayed post-test are suggestive that repeated engagement with narrative and pedagogical devices is an important

component of learning via narrative language-teaching videos. The Oral Production scores show that after re-viewing only the final episode of *Bamitaagewin*, participants could correctly recall more vocabulary items than they could on either previous post-test, and they relied less often on prompts to do so. Scores on the Listening Comprehension test also indicate that participants were able to understand more Ojibwe commands than they were on the cold delayed post-test. Comparing the scores on the cold delayed post-test to those on the warm delayed post-test suggests that viewing the review episode substantially increased participants' command of Ojibwe verb roots on the vocabulary-testing sub-sections of each test. Similarly, participants' demonstrated ability to understand and utilize Ojibwe grammar rules more accurately after viewing a review episode containing several pedagogical and narrative devices is further evidence that such devices can contribute to grammar acquisition in Indigenous languages.

Apart from the immediacy effect, there are likely several other reasons why re-viewing the final episode of *Bamitaagewin* helped participants to increase their vocabulary and grammar scores. The episode includes all verb roots and conjugations featured in the series, allowing viewers to focus on filling the gaps in their ability that they noticed during the identical cold delayed post-test. Since their knowledge of the narrative structure allowed them to invest less cognitive energy in understanding it, participants were able to concentrate on using those pedagogical and narrative devices from which they could assume or verify their command of the items on their mental checklist. Participants were also able to re-engage with the various videographic and narrative techniques, which may have strengthened any tenuous mental associations and confirmed previous unknowns. It is also possible that the re-viewing of the episode is analogous to the re-listening of a story – the chief virtues of which are the "key content word items [and] limited concept load" (Heredia & Francis, 1997, p. 52) that are inherent in the practice. Students of oral genres benefit from repeated exposure to the same stories because knowing the narrative content allows them to direct their attention and cognitive resources – which would be otherwise focused on the story – to

noticing, memorizing, and using new language forms used by the storyteller. The semi-oral nature of video (see Chapter Two) may require viewer-listeners to engage in the same study practices as viewer-listeners of any oral genre; if so, multiple viewing is essential to fully maximizing the pedagogical value of video. Accordingly, viewers of *Bamitaagewin* may have been able to redirect their attention away from the thematic content of the story and towards noticing, memorizing, and eventually producing the vocabulary and grammar forms featured therein. Qualitative data confirms that most participants recalled the most pertinent details of each storyline, and that some of them created a mental checklist of vocabulary and grammatical affixes that had proved troublesome on the cold delayed post-test (see the "Perceptions" sections below).The considerable increase in scores between the cold and warm delayed post-tests suggests that this strategy is effective.

Participants have demonstrated that learning vocabulary from narrative videos containing pedagogical and narrative devices is possible. However, the ways in which these devices contribute to learning is still worthy of investigation. Participants' scores on the vocabulary-testing sections of the post-tests reinforce the idea that pedagogical and narrative devices in narrative videos that highlight vocabulary items and feature them frequently and prominently as part of the narrative can trigger (or catalyze) lexical development, even in the case of true beginners . Certainly, increasing the frequency at which each target vocabulary item is presented to viewers (via pedagogical devices such as subtitles and interactive games) seems to increase the extent to which those items are later recalled. A Pearson's r score of 0.87 represents a rather strong correlation between frequency and recall, with commonly-featured words being elicited frequently on the Oral Production Test, and lesser-featured words being generally more incomprehensible on the Listening Comprehension Test (see Table 4.2). However, there are some exceptions that suggest frequency of presentation in itself is not a good predictor of later recall. For example, although *nibaa* [s/he sleeps] and *giziibiigazhe* [s/he showers] both appear 22 times in the narrative, they are not elicited at the same rate. Participants also reported that differentiating

similar vocabulary items, such as *bizindam*, *biindige*, and *bamitaage* was difficult; however, they were featured at different rates: 19, 14, and 9 times, respectively. Still, their elicitation scores rank them in the opposite order. In fact, *bizindam* [s/he listens] was featured 19 times in the series, but received an elicitation score lower than *ishke* [s/he looks], which was only featured four times. *Bamitaage* [s/he obeys], on the other hand, was mentioned the most. Frequency, in and of itself, is therefore not the only predictor of how well viewers will recall a particular vocabulary item.

Other factors may account for the differences in recall frequency among words. One factor may be the appearance of Ojibwe words in print, which can seem cumbersome and overwhelming to those unfamiliar with Ojibwe orthography. Indeed, the interview data indicate that some participants found that matching the sounds to the written form of Ojibwe words was tricky:

A11: …the length of the words is daunting at times, and there's a lot of repetitive letters which kinda messes with my ability to pronounce. It's like, "Okay, I can say that, but there's two s's next to each other, followed by a j, followed by two a's".

A09: I felt like I knew the word, but when I actually had to do it, I was like "Oh, I know just fragments of the word", because the words are so long I don't know how to write them all out.

B06: Yeah, it's harder to connect, being the longer words. There are so many alphabets, so sometimes it happens that I forget the initial, or the last of the word.

These responses suggest that those Ojibwe verb roots that appear more "foreign", such as *giziibiigazhe*, may be more difficult to recall simply because of their striking difference from any English word. In contrast, some participants revealed that their vocabulary-memorizing strategies sometimes involved recalling familiar-looking segments of the Ojibwe words and connecting them to some English word as a mnemonic. Importantly, the written form of *ikido* does not seem that foreign to an English speaker, and one participant recounted that she

remembered the meaning of *ikido* [s/he says] by recalling the first part of the word and associating it with the English phrase "I kid", as if someone *said* a joke and later explained it as such. The appearance of Ojibwe words (some similar to English words, others not) may therefore account for differences in recall frequency.

It is also essential to recognize that narrative devices such as plot, character, and symbol seemed to influence vocabulary recall on the Oral Production section of the post-tests. That is, those words which were featured more prominently as part of the story arc(s) were typically recalled more often than those that were not. *Goshkozi* [s/he awakens], the most commonly-elicited correct response, appeared frequently throughout the series, but as an integral part of the plot: the "Goshkozin Movement" was a major plot element, characters used the word several times, and the concept of "awakening" featured prominently throughout the series. *Nibaa* [s/he sleeps] and *giziibiigazhe* [s/he showers] were featured the same number of times. *Nibaa* was highlighted in the narrative, contextualized within a mnemonic pun, and used metaphorically during a scene, whereas *giziibiigazhe* was featured only in its most literal sense and did not appear in any particularly emotional story arc; as a result, the elicitation scores of each word are very different. The root *bamitaage* [s/he obeys] – which is also the root in the series title *Bamitaagewin* – occurred as a command only in the final three episodes, but all of these episodes involved emotionally-charged topics about resistance. In contrast, the root *biindigen* [s/he enters] was limited to its most literal meaning and appeared only in the musical vocabulary sequences along with other verbs. *Bizindam* [s/he listens] appeared many times throughout the series, often in a metaphorical and negative imperative sense of "don't listen", but apparently lacked the positioning within the narrative that would have rendered it memorable to viewers. These examples illustrate the ways in which carefully-planned narrative-based instruction can be effectively utilized not only as an enjoyable and culturally-relevant method of teaching and learning indigenous languages, but also as a means of actively facilitating the uptake of target vocabulary items.

Research Question 2: Demonstrated Evidence of an Ability to Conduct Language Tasks

The two-week interval period may have affected participants' ability to produce and understand some Ojibwe vocabulary and grammar, but the results of the Role Play test suggest that participants did spend time thinking about how they could utilize the forms that they did remember. That is, the Role Play section is the only one on which participants maintained (and actually slightly increased) their immediate post-test score. Although only one participant was able to match a real-life situation with an Ojibwe command four times on the previous post-test, three participants were able to do it on the cold delayed post-test. Although two participants scored zero on this section on the cold delayed post-test, the group mean increased from 2.05 to 3.21, and the standard deviation of the entire group actually decreased – suggesting that many participants somehow became more able to use Ojibwe in context. It is possible that the slight difference in task – participants now had to provide a situation within which a given Ojibwe command could be used – was easier, thereby allowing them to increase their scores despite the two-week interval.

Participants were able to identify some ways in which the Ojibwe language forms featured in the series could be applied to communicate within hypothetical situations. Whereas some responses were wildly creative – such as suggesting that *"Miinishin doodooshaboo"* [Give me milk!] could be used by a farmer and directed towards an uncooperative cow, or *"Goshkozin"* could be used by a boxing coach to revive a knocked-out prizefighter – such responses were rare. Instead, when asked to list a situation in which a particular Ojibwe command could be used on the delayed post-tests, many participants provided responses that were nearly identical to those featured as the situations for which a verb must be applied on the immediate post-test. One participant mentioned that *"miinishin"* could be used to call up an app on an electronic device that had been infected with Goshkozin Movement audio tags. This may suggest that the average viewer relies on examples of language use to know how and when language forms may be meaningfully used. Therefore, narrative language-teaching videos need to

showcase indigenous languages being used in a variety of situations – both mundane and extraordinary – as a way to ensure that viewers actively apply their new language skills towards meaningful communication. Admittedly, *Bamitaagewin* featured rather narrative-specific ways in which the Ojibwe language could be used, which may have limited the extent to which some participants recognized potential uses for their commands in daily life or even within hypothetical situations.

It is also important to note that an inability to provide a vocabulary word to use within a given situation, or a situation for a given vocabulary word, might be due to the participant not knowing the appropriate verb root or appropriate verb conjugation, and not simply an inability to apply the language to performing a task. If participants had been invited to contextualize commands of their own choosing, instead of being forced to use those provided, results may have been different.

Research Question 3: Participants' Perceptions of How Narrative Videos Affect Language Development

The qualitative interviews conducted as part of the post-tests reveal that the perceived efficacy of *Bamitaagewin* as a legitimate language-learning resource depends largely upon the extent to which it meets learners' expectations of what second language learning means and how it should look. It appears that for most participants, learning a language is a process of moving from orality to literacy as quickly as possible in order to demonstrate and be validated for a command of the written language. In order to do this, participants seemed to expect that the process of learning a language necessarily involves writing, dry busywork, explicit instructions, and intermittent progress assessments. In other words, it seems that participants perceive the efficacy of a narrative language-teaching video in terms of how much it resembles a traditional classroom-based approach. Successful narrative language-teaching videos therefore need to either cater to users' expectations of what language practice looks like, or they need to highlight

the potential of less commonly-utilized strategies to contribute to users' language development and change those expectations.

Participants' perceptions of the benefits and limitations of narrative approaches to language learning may also reveal their expectations of what language learning entails, with familiar strategies and approaches being welcomed and embraced as helpful more frequently and fully than those that seem foreign. Perhaps because of the number of years of formal education most participants had undertaken, embedding language instruction within a complex and intriguing narrative was new to them. They tended to feel that the chief benefits of a narrative framework were its potential to maintain learner motivation, contribute to an enjoyable learning environment, and contextualize language use: a welcome alternative to the demotivating, uninteresting, and abstract process that they had expected. At the same time, one recurring criticism of the narrative approach was that it was far less efficient at providing the target language forms in a clear and explicit manner than more familiar classroom methods, which supposedly would present the target vocabulary and grammar targets in a more timely and explicit fashion. Although some participants believed that the narrative component of the videos was extraneous material that detracted from the pedagogical value of the series, it is also interesting to consider that viewing less than 90 minutes of video was sufficient to enable some participants to understand and produce most of the target Ojibwe imperative and negative imperative verbs correctly – in fact, only one participant (who was particularly critical of the narrative approach) was unable to score above zero on the immediate post-test. Although the rate at which participants learned these forms was perhaps less than perfect, re-viewing the videos seemed to improve uptake; viewing the entire series of *Bamitaagewin* twice would take up about as much time as attending a three-credit university-level language course for a week, with multiple viewings potentially resulting in the acquisition of up to 17 verb roots, four grammatical conjugations, and exposure to almost every Ojibwe vowel and consonant sound. I venture to state that some participants perceived the narrative content of the series to be inefficient and extraneous because their previous experience with second-

language learning in university-mediated contexts has meant that they do not expect effective language instruction to be enjoyable, nor for it to move at a leisurely pace.

Participants' expectations of what language practice entails also seemed to affect their perceptions of the utility and feasibility of pedagogical and narrative devices within a narrative series. The types of pedagogical devices that participants enjoyed, such as the listen-and-repeat sequences and periodic testing via the interactive games, are not unlike the call-response sequences and quizzes frequently found in classrooms. However, more implicit suggestions to practice Ojibwe that were featured in the video, like using online dictionaries or sending text messages in Ojibwe, were not noticed by participants – at least, they did not report doing these things. Such an understated approach to "homework" is certainly not something participants would expect in most traditional classrooms; accordingly, participants did not mention these activities as real language practice.

The influence of expectations on the perception of resource efficacy is best illustrated by the great extent to which participants believed writing down the vocabulary items would help them remember more words. It is also a testament to the mainstream impression that language learning is primarily mediated by writing. Despite the fact that participants demonstrated that they had managed to learn vocabulary items solely through listening to them being spoken and practicing them orally or through sub-vocalizing, most of them maintained that a purely oral approach was a "starting point" to be augmented and enhanced through the creation and use of written texts. One explanation is that their prior experiences with language learning have likely been centred upon understanding and creating written texts. Another is that in purely oral learning contexts, learners are forced to maintain focus on the present moment – the only time in which spoken words exist. In writing, it is possible to record sounds uttered in the present moment and review it later at leisure. Of course, writing and reviewing a list of vocabulary items requires less time and energy than re-viewing a video, but many participants also mentioned that seeing subtitles without accompanying

audio limited their ability to master the Ojibwe vocabulary and pronunciation forms; therefore, it is logically unclear why they would believe that reviewing a written list of vocabulary items – which of course do not have accompanying audio – would allow them to master those forms more quickly or easily. It is likely that the primacy of written language in mainstream society has contributed to the impression that learning in general, and language-learning in particular, necessarily and inevitably involves writing. Accordingly, the fact that viewing *Bamitaagewin* did not entail writing may have affected the extent to which participants believed it was a viable language-learning resource, since it did not meet their expectations of what language practice looks like.

Knowing that expectations may play such a primary role in some indigenous language-teaching video users' perceptions of their efficacy, designers of these videos are faced with a dilemma if they wish to address the needs of all potential learners. Although they may not be representative of some Indigenous learners who may be used to other methods of teaching and learning, most participants in this study identified taking notes, re-viewing the videos, finding more supplementary resources, creating projects, and speaking aloud often as the strategies by which they would use narrative videos as a language-learning resource. Finding ways to integrate these expectations of how videos should be used into a culturally-relevant narrative will be a challenge of future creators of indigenous narrative language-teaching videos who may wish to address the needs of such learners. They could choose to cater to those expectations and risk sacrificing cultural relevance in the name of perceived efficiency and pedagogical value, or they could integrate specific narrative devices aimed at teaching viewers how to more effectively utilize oral genres as a learning resource, but risk losing the engaging narrative focus that motivates viewers to continue utilizing the videos. The most creative may find ways to accomplish the latter, while the less-so may wish to pursue the former. As most participants in this study indicated that their interest and awareness of the Ojibwe language and issues pertaining to its revitalization have increased after viewing the series, it is possible that even low-

budget, experimental videos can contribute to increased indigenous language learning and use.

Summary

Participants in this study demonstrated their learning of Ojibwe vocabulary and grammar, which was likely due to their viewing of the narrative language-teaching video series *Bamitaagewin*. Participants also demonstrated some ability to apply that knowledge towards communicating in hypothetical situations, although several design limitations obscure the true extent to which this may be possible. Finally, semi-structured interview data reveal a generally positive perception of narrative video-based teaching, while also offering ways in which such an approach may be refined and improved.

Chapter Seven – Conclusion

Summary

The first phase of this study involved creating a dramatic mini-series called *Bamitaagewin* that was aimed at teaching practical Ojibwe-language forms via narrative. The second phase consisted of showing *Bamitaagewin* to adult learners and evaluating the potential of such a series to foster the acquisition of Ojibwe vocabulary and grammar. Findings showed that, after watching the series, participants in the study were able to produce, understand, conjugate, and contextualize some Ojibwe imperative verbs. Delayed testing indicated that several viewer-participants were able to retain some of this ability over two weeks, despite no exposure to the instructional videos in the interim. After re-viewing a final, review episode of the series, many participants performed better on a "warm delayed" post-test than they did on the two previous tests. These results suggest that watching narrative videos can contribute to vocabulary and grammar acquisition in an Indigenous language, especially when viewers are able to re-view the videos.

The third phase of the study involved investigating the ways in which participants felt a narrative video approach helped or hindered their Ojibwe-language-learning experience. Semi-structured interviews revealed that most learners considered the approach valuable for its potential to entertain and educate simultaneously, as well as appreciating the potential to view the videos whenever and wherever desired. The participants also provided some insight regarding the limitations of a video-based approach, which can be helpful to designers of similar videos in the future.

Although viewing the videos did not result in each participant mastering every verb root and conjugation featured in the series, the study does hint at the potential for narrative language-teaching videos to serve as a resource for independent learners. Combined with instruction in video-based learning and study strategies, such resources may comprise an important addition to

Indigenous-language learning libraries. Further, particularly well-written narrative videos may also contribute to Indigenous nations' canon of language arts.

Limitations

Although the video series contributed to viewers' acquisition of some Ojibwe vocabulary and grammar, there are some specific limitations to consider in using *Bamitaagewin* and/or this research as a model for future language revitalization endeavours.

The most obvious limitation is the fact that I am a low-level, non-fluent speaker of Ojibwe, and a non-Anishinaabe person. Accordingly, the content of *Bamitaagewin* may be compromised in terms of linguistic accuracy and cultural appropriateness. Barring approval from a native- or highly-fluent speaker, and perhaps even a re-dubbing of the spoken Ojibwe forms featured in the video, the potential use of *Bamitaagewin* as a resource to be widely distributed and used by independent learners is to be pursued with caution.

There are also certain design elements in the study that warrant mention as potential limitations to the results and conclusions reached in the previous chapter. First, the Listening Comprehension and Role Play sections of the immediate post-test were different than those on the delayed post-tests. This was intended to prevent learners from simply memorizing their responses on the immediate post-test (which they had completed after viewing the entire series) and reproducing them on the cold delayed post-test. However, this approach makes a direct comparison between the immediate and delayed post-tests impossible, as the difficulty level of each post-test may differ. Further, the Role Play section of each post-test provided the participants with pre-selected situations with which to match a command, or with commands to be contextualized. If a participant was unable to recall an appropriate command or understand a provided chunk, they would not score a point; it is possible that a participant's low score on the Role Play test is therefore not the result of an inability to contextualize language, but rather an inability to understand or use the specific language provided. A more effective approach may have involved asking

participants to provide their own situations and commands to demonstrate their ability to contextualize the language forms that they had mastered.

Finally, language learning is a highly individual process, and the method by which participants were asked to view and study the series may not fully reflect the pedagogical potential of narrative language-teaching videos to foster development in an Indigenous language. If participants had watched the videos in an environment of their choosing, as many times as they wished, and using the strategies with which they are most comfortable, the findings would perhaps be more indicative of the results to be expected by real-world users of similar videos.

Future Directions

It is my hope that fluent speaker-teachers of Indigenous/indigenous languages will use this research as a foundation upon which more culturally-authentic narrative videos may be based. *Bamitaagewin* was written, produced, and disseminated using non-professional equipment and software; hopefully, this demonstrates that significant expense does not have to be incurred in the creation of effective pedagogical resources. Rather, creativity is perhaps the most important resource: innovative means of supporting Indigenous language learning via narrative are surely to be found in the traditions and practices of largely oral societies.

Future research should endeavor to find more ways in which viewers of narrative language-teaching videos can be made to interact more meaningfully with the videos. Finding ways to provide corrective feedback via video would also be useful. Although some form of interactive computer-based resource may be the ideal solution, researchers and developers must retain a grassroots focus that minimizes or eliminates production costs and allows anyone with basic computer skills and technological tools to create culturally-appropriate and pedagogically-effective media.

Conclusion

As a contribution to the worldwide movement towards revitalizing and developing indigenous languages, as well as the more local Ojibwe language revitalization movement, I offer narrative indigenous-language-teaching videos as a potentially effective tool. As a medium capable of portraying culturally-appropriate and pedagogically-effective instructional narratives, user-created video can be a powerful learning resource for motivated adult learners of Indigenous languages. I hope that future research delves further into the pedagogical potential of narrative as a framework for language instruction, and that this study contributes to further development of pedagogical and narrative devices that can enrich the language-learning experience for viewers of narrative Indigenous-language teaching videos. The results of this study suggest that although a narrative approach to language instruction is accompanied by its own unique challenges and considerations, it is nonetheless an important path worthy of further investigation.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: *Bamitaagewin* Episode Guide

Overview

The series takes place in an unnamed city somewhere in *Anishinaabe-aki* [Anishinaabe territory], where a mysterious group, known as the Goshkozin Movement, has managed to plant audio tags on electronic devices. These tags force those who wish to use the devices to provide input in Ojibwe, thereby forcing the general population to learn and use the language in their everyday lives. Each of the five episodes portrays the experiences of different characters as they respond to this new reality.

Episode One:

The first episode follows Ruslan, an ex-soldier who is haunted by feelings of guilt and shame as a result of his involvement as part of the Russian army in a war in Chechnya. Ruslan hears commands in his head, dictating to him when he should wake, eat, shower, and so on. As an immigrant to Anishinaabe-aki, Ruslan attends English lessons with a cruel teacher, who berates his language skills while praising English monolingualism. After hearing a radio transmission describing the Goshkozin Movement, Ruslan repeats an Ojibwe word to the teacher, who physically attacks him and forbids him to use the language again. Flustered, Ruslan leaves and continues to be plagued by the voices. The next day, he visits a psychiatrist, where he explains his history as a perpetrator of war crimes, necessitated by his unquestioning obedience to his commanders. The psychiatrist suggests that the voices in his head can be silenced by using a doll as a surrogate victim; by caring for the doll, his feelings of guilt may be alleviated. Reluctantly, Ruslan attempts the therapy, but becomes frustrated by the lack of real impact that the process has in terms of reversing the negative consequences of blind obedience. After turning on the television in despair, Ruslan sees a news program describing the Goshkozin Movement, and decides to visit the website. He learns about the Ojibwe language, and decides to participate in its revitalization as a way to "resist, simply by living". This does not completely eliminate the voices in his head, but has resulted in them speaking to him in the Ojibwe language, which he embraces as an act of resistance.

Episode Two

The second episode begins with a reporter, Juno Bewitaagoz, explaining more about the audio tags that have been implanted on electronic devices such as computers, phones, and even dishwashers and microwaves. Juno emphasizes that the station is not in solidarity with the Goshkozin Movement (which has been condemned by police and government officials), but explains the process by which Ojibwe commands can be formed by attaching the suffix –n to the dictionary form of a verb. The camera shifts to a woman, Sam, who is watching the news on her computer. Relieved to learn how to render her devices usable once more, Sam follows Juno's instructions and activates her phone. However, when trying to use the command "miinishin" in order to access her voicemail, her mispronunciation prevents her from doing so. After re-viewing the newscast, she

realizes her mistake and manages to hear her messages. The first message is from her sister, who expresses concern that Sam has dropped contact with her family and asks if her husband has relapsed on drugs. The next message is from the doctor's office, and the audience learns that Sam has been having trouble sleeping and keeping food down due to her pregnancy. The doctor encourages her to listen to her body as a way to feel better. A frustrated Sam hangs up the phone and addresses her unborn child, relating that she has become estranged from her family after disobeying their wishes and pursuing a relationship with her husband, who has left her after becoming addicted to drugs. After noting the irony that her eating and sleeping habits are to be dictated by her child after she herself disobeyed her own parents, she decides to go to sleep. She is finally awakened by an incoming text message that appears to be sent from the baby. A series of texts follow, ordering her to eat, tidy up the kitchen, shower, and tell a story. Sam decides to tell the baby about the regrets she suffers as a result of her disobedience. Before falling asleep once more, Sam makes a phone call to her parents, suggesting a desire to reconcile with them again.

Episode Three

The third episode began with the first of several onscreen games, framed as a commercial advertisement paid for by the Goshkozin Movement. Following this, Juno Bewitaagoz appears as the host of a segment in which local celebrities are interviewed. Her guest, Ann Angosh, had achieved fame by writing songs that featured Ojibwe commands as lyrics. Dismissing accusations of cultural appropriation, Ann reasons that if she can prove that Indigenous languages like Ojibwe can be used for commercial gain, others are more likely to embrace them. Further, she haughtily explains, finding ways to use Ojibwe at work and in life is the only way that true revitalization is possible, given the rushed nature of contemporary urban life. After the interview, Ann addresses the camera directly, as if speaking to someone sitting with her in the room, apologizing to the viewer-interlocutor for the interruption and describing her upcoming song, "Gego". Ann "notices" that the viewer-interlocutor seems confused, and initiates a review of the verbs featured in the series so far, then demonstrates with flashcards and adhesive note papers how to conjugate negative imperative verbs from the verb roots. Afterwards, Ann describes how she was inspired to write "Gego", having suffered from a childhood filled with pressures associated with being a child star – parents, teachers and agents demanded that she conform to their expectations. Having been inspired by the Goshkozin Movement, Ann decided to rebel and her celebrity status was cemented. The episode ends with a sing-along karaoke version of the single "Gego".

Episode Four

The fourth episode opens with an animation intended to replicate the experience of visiting the Goshkozin website, leading viewers through an "online" exercise aimed at reviewing and practicing the negative imperative verbs featured in the previous episode. Afterwards, a man appears on camera and identifies himself as Todd Bazigwii – the orchestrator of the Goshkozin Movement. He recounts his near-death experience, at which time he was struck by the terrifying realization that the cumulative knowledge and wisdom acquired throughout his life was to be lost upon his death. Just as he was about to

die, he felt a hand slapping his face and heard a voice saying, "Goshkozin!", prompting him back to consciousness. As he recovered, he attempted to record his life and learn more about the language that he heard as he lay dying; however, he realizes that on his own, he is unable to learn enough Ojibwe to make a significant difference in the movement to revitalize it. He then tells a story, which is Plato's "Parable of the Cave", in which several people are chained to chairs in an underground cave and forced to stare at the wall as others behind them cast shadows upon it. The prisoners come to accept the shadows as reality, even after one prisoner escapes, discovers the real world, and returns to tell the others about the world outside of the cave. Refusing to believe him, they murder him and return to their life as shadow-watchers. Todd equates himself to the escaped prisoner, but instead of being silenced, he attempted to raise awareness about Indigenous languages among all members of society. He tries letter-writing campaigns and other legal means of affecting change, but soon realizes the futility of an approach. Instead, he decides that forcing individuals to use Indigenous languages is the only way to ensure their use. Accordingly, he uses his computer skills to create the audio tags and spread them throughout the country. He then tells the Nenabozho story described earlier, in which the duckling that defiantly opens his eyes saves the group of ducklings from being eaten by Nenabozho. Afterwards, Todd explains that he will turn himself in to police, and encourages Goshkozin Movement followers to continue their efforts. The episode ends with Juno Bewitaagoz explaining that Todd did turn himself in, but was acquitted and released following mass protests. She also signs off by saying, "Miigwech" (*Thank you*).

Episode Five

The final episode of the *Bamitaagewin* series was designed to bring together each character's storyline to represent holism and interconnectedness; core principles in many Indigenous and Ojibwe philosophies. The episode begins with another animated interactive game/"commercial", which is interrupted by a special news bulletin. Juno Bewitaagoz announces that Ann Angosh has been murdered, possibly as the result of her refusal to stop using the Ojibwe language to make commercially-successful music, or by federal authorities threatened by her language activism. The reporter translates some threatening online posts directed to Ann, which are conjugated in the negative plural imperative form. Afterwards, she explicitly describes the process of conjugating plural forms of imperative and negative imperative verbs as a way for viewers to understand the posts for themselves. Juno then interviews Todd Bazigwii, who feels guilt over the role that he played in facilitating Ann's appropriation of the language and dissemination of her music on the Goshkozin website. Despite Juno's suggestion that the Goshkozin Movement has resulted in widespread awareness and appreciation of Indigenous languages, Todd announces that he will immediately disable the audio tags and take down the website to prevent future problems. The newscast ends and the "programming" that was in progress resumes. Afterward, an alarm clock is shown, and the camera shifts to Ruslan waking up to an alarm clock – evidence that his insomnia has ended. He tries to turn the alarm off using an Ojibwe command, but is surprised to see that it doesn't work. As he turns on the radio, he hears the tail-end of the newscast that relates Todd's decision

to disable the audio tags. Ruslan is faced with a crisis, and tries to decide if he should use violence to force Todd to re-activate the tags to keep the Goshkozin Movement alive. He looks at the camera directly and encourages viewers to tell him what to do (using Ojibwe commands). Finally, he makes his way to Todd's apartment and forces his way in, with the implication that he attacked Todd. Suddenly, Sam is shown talking to her mother on the phone, and explains that "something" prompted Todd to reactivate the tags. She tells her mother that she has chosen to use Ojibwe on her devices and with her baby, even though they have become optional, and passionately defends her decision as her mother objects. Sam delivers a monologue about the relationship between freedom and choice, and suggests that using Ojibwe, even if it is not mandatory, is an expression of liberty. Finally, the series ends as Sam looks directly into the camera and challenges viewers to consider her argument in terms of their own lives.

Appendix 2: Informed Consent Form

Contextualizing Indigenous-Language Instruction through Narrative Videos

Researcher: Brent Delaine, MA Student

Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University

Please read this consent agreement carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

About the study

I am conducting this research as a second-year Master of Arts student in the Faculty of Education at McGill University. The data generated from the study will comprise the basis for my MA thesis, which pertains to the teaching and learning of indigenous languages.

Below is an outline of the objectives of the study, what your participation in the study will require you to do, an outline of the risks and benefits of your participation. If you require any other information, you may contact me using the contact information provided at the end of this document. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, you can also contact the McGill Research Ethics Board via the information provided below.

Purpose of the research study:

This study is aimed at understanding the efficacy of media-based approaches in providing adult viewers with functional chunks in the Ojibwe language (also called Anishinaabemowin). Specifically, I am interested in understanding if video can be used to teach a second language to adults utilizing the same devices and techniques that have been proven effective in children's programming.

What your participation entails:

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

- View the entire season of *Bamitaagewin* (about 1 hour of video).
- Complete an Ojibwe language test after viewing the videos (no more than 20 minutes). This will consist of an oral production test, a listening comprehension test, a grammatical knowledge test, and a role-play.
- Participate in an oral interview about your experiences watching the video and learning the Ojibwe language (about 10 minutes). This oral interview will be recorded and transcribed for analysis.
- Return in two weeks for another meeting for another test and interview (no more than 90 minutes). The format and content of these tests will be similar, but not identical.

Benefits:

By engaging in this study, you will be able to experience how it feels to learn a language that is probably very different from your mother tongue. This may provide you with valuable experience in terms of identifying with your future students from around the world. Also, you will be contributing to research that will help to advance the teaching and learning of endangered languages as you begin your career as a teacher of English and French, which are languages that

have helped to displace indigenous languages in North America and around the world.

Risks:

      There are no anticipated risks in this study. Your decision to participate or not will not affect any of your course grades or your academic standing in any way.

Right to withdraw from the study:

      Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time, even if you have already begun to participate. Further, you may request that your data be excluded from analysis after your participation.

Contact:

Researcher:	Brent Delaine	Faculty Advisor:	Dr. Mela Sarkar
	Faculty of Education		Faculty of Education
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I have read this informed consent document and the material contained within it has been explained to me verbally. All my questions have been answered and I freely and voluntarily choose to participate. I have received a copy of this form for my records.

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Signature of Participant

_____   _____

Printed Name of Participant   Printed Name of Participant

_____   _____

Date   Date

Appendix 3: Oral Production Test Scoring Sheet

Participant No: _____

Session No: _____

AS	AP	NS	NP	Verb Root
				Goshkozi- s/he wakes up
				Giziibiigazhe – s/he showers
				Maajaa – s/he goes
				Nibaa – s/he sleeps
				Miinishin/Give me _____!
				Ikido – s/he says
				Zagakinige – s/he tidies up
				Niimi – s/he dances
				Bamitaage – s/he obeys
				Wiisini – s/he eats
				Anokii – s/he works
				Biindige – s/he enters
				Dadibaajimo – s/he tells a story
				Bizindam – s/he listens
				Animichige – s/he reads
				Ambe – s/he comes
				Ishke – s/he looks

Appendix 4: Immediate Post-Test Listening Comprehension, Grammar, and Role Play Scoring Sheet

Participant No: _____

1. Please listen to the Ojibwe commands. Write the meaning of each command in English in the spaces below. If you think the command is intended for more than one listener, write (pl) after the command.
Eg. i. Get dressed! (pl)

   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____
   d. _____
   e. _____
   f. _____
   g. _____
   h. _____
   i. _____
   j. _____
   k. _____
   l. _____

2. "Minikwe" is the Ojibwe word for "s/he drinks". How do I say "Don't drink!" to one person?

3. "Giiwe" is the Ojibwe word for "s/he goes home". How do I say "Don't go home!" to more than one person?

4. "Nagamo" is the Ojibwe word for "s/he sings". How do I say "Sing!" to one person?

5. "Moojigizi" is the Ojibwe word for "s/he has fun". How do I say "Have fun!" to more than one person?

6. Role play: What would you say in the following situations?
   a. You are a parent trying to wake up your child<u>ren</u>.
   b. You are changing and you hear some<u>one</u> about to open the door of your room.
   c. Your partner has just returned from exercising, and is drenched with sweat.
   d. You're having a party, and your guest<u>s</u> are being shy and not touching the snacks you've laid out for them.
   e. You want some<u>one</u> to give you some blueberries (miinan).
   f. You popped in to visit your friends, but now they are apologizing about their messy place and are busy straightening up. You want <u>them</u> to stop cleaning up.

Appendix 5: Delayed Post-Test Listening Comprehension, Grammar and Role Play Scoring Sheet

Participant No: _____

1. Please listen to the Ojibwe commands. Write the meaning of each command in English in the spaces below. If you think the command is intended for more than one listener, write (pl) after the command.

Eg. i. <u>Get dressed! (pl)</u>

    a. _____
    b. _____
    c. _____
    d. _____
    e. _____
    f. _____
    g. _____
    h. _____
    i. _____
    j. _____
    k. _____
    l. _____

2. "Minikwe" is the Ojibwe word for "s/he drinks". How do I say "Don't drink!" to more than one person?

3. "Giiwe" is the Ojibwe word for "s/he goes home". How do I say "Don't go home!" to one person?

4. "Nagamo" is the Ojibwe word for "s/he sings". How do I say "Sing!" to more than one person?

5. "Moojigizi" is the Ojibwe word for "s/he has fun". How do I say "Have fun!" to one person?

6. Role play: Please write a short description of a situation in which you could use the following commands.

    a. Goshkozin!
    b. Gego biindigeken
    c. Giziibiigazhen!
    d. Wiisinig!
    e. Miinishin doodooshaboo!
    f. Gego zagakinigeg!

Appendix 6: Qualitative Interview Questions

Group A, Immediate Post-Test Interview
1. Before you watched the video, I asked you to respond to all of the prompts asking you to listen and repeat, guess the words, identify the errors, and so on. Did you do this? Why or why not?
2. How did you feel when you were responding to the prompts? Did you enjoy the activities?
3. Do you think you would have responded to the prompts, even if I hadn't asked you to? Why or why not?
4. Do you feel that responding to the prompts aloud helped you to remember the words in the video? Why or why not?
5. Do you feel that the storyline had any effect on your learning of Ojibwe? For example, does the story of the "Nanaboozhoo and the Ducklings" remind you of any particular vocabulary or grammar? Do you find any of the characters memorable? If so, in what ways are the memorable? Do you associate any specific vocabulary or grammar with the characters?

Group B, Immediate Post-Test Interview

1. Before you watched the video, I asked you to remain silent throughout the video. Did you do this?
2. How did you feel when the prompts were onscreen? Did you participate in the activities silently? Did you subvocalize (i.e. "say the words in your head")? Did you feel compelled to speak aloud?
3. Do you think you would have responded to the prompts aloud if I had given you no special instructions? Why or why not?
4. Do you feel that your test score would have been different if you had responded to the prompts aloud? If so, in what ways? If not, why not?
5. Do you feel that the storyline had any effect on your learning of Ojibwe? For example, does the story of the "Nanaboozhoo and the Ducklings" remind you of any particular vocabulary or grammar? Do you find any of the characters memorable? If so, in what ways are the memorable? Do you associate any specific vocabulary or grammar with the characters?

Cold Delayed Post-Test Interview (Both Groups)

1. Since I've seen you last, have you thought about the Ojibwe language at all? If so, in what ways? Have you used or practiced Ojibwe? If so, in what ways? If not, why not?
2. Do you remember any of the storylines from the series? Can you summarize them briefly?

Delayed Post-Test Interview (Both Groups)

1. If you were going to continue learning Ojibwe independently (i.e. not in a classroom with a teacher), would you prefer to learn from a video series like this, or from another method, such as a book, CD, or website? Why?
2. If someone you knew was going to use this series to learn commands in Ojibwe, what advice would you give them to maximize their learning?