Choice, connections, challenges, and continuation: Motivation in language awakening practice

Allison TAYLOR-ADAMS

University of Oregon

Jaeci HALL

Tututni, Coquille Indian Tribe Language Coordinator

EDITORS:

Gabriela PÉREZ BÁEZ (University of Oregon)
Justin SPENCE (University of California, Davis)

ABSTRACT

An individual's motivation to learn their language is what spurs them to put in effort and then sustain that effort over the long term. For language awakening practitioners, motivation may be crucial for facing the unique difficulties that come from learning a language that has become dormant. In this chapter, we look at the motivations that inspire and sustain practitioners who are awakening their languages. Co-author Taylor-Adams highlights the experiences described in interviews with practitioners working on four Indigenous languages of North America and presents an analysis of textual data from the Global Survey of Revitalization Efforts (Pérez Báez et al., 2019). Co-author Hall reflects on her experience awakening her heritage language, Nuu-wee-ya' (Oregon Dene). By combining interview, survey, and ethnographic data and using an Indigenous-framed methodology for interpreting these data (Wilson, 2008), this chapter illustrates 1) the unique challenges of awakening a language, 2) the persistence and effort that practitioners put into the work, and 3) the centrality of community and relationships in L2 motivation for awakening languages.

RESUMEN

La motivación de un individuo por aprender su lengua es lo que le lleva a entregarse al esfuerzo y mantenerlo a largo plazo. Para los que laboran por el despertar de una lengua, la motivación puede ser crucial para enfrentarse a las dificultades únicas que emergen al aprender una lengua después de un periodo en que ha estado dormida. En este capítulo, vemos las motivaciones que inspiran y mantienen la entereza de quienes laboran por el

despertar de su lengua. La co-autora Taylor-Adams resalta las experiencias descritas en entrevistas con individuos trabajando con cuatro lenguas indígenas de Norteamérica y presenta un análisis de datos textuales de la Encuesta Global de Esfuerzos de Revitalización (Pérez Báez et al., 2019). La co-autora Hall piensa sobre su experiencia al despertar su lengua de herencia, Nuu-wee-ya' (Oregon Dene). Al combinar datos de entrevistas, de la encuesta, y datos etnográficos, una metodología dentro de un marco conceptual indígena para interpretar estos datos (Wilson, 2008), este capítulo ilustra 1) los retos únicos del despertar de una lengua, 2) la perseverancia y esfuerzo de los participantes, y 3) la centralidad de la comunidad y de las relaciones en la motivación para el aprendizaje L2 de lenguas que están siendo despertadas.

1. INTRODUCTION

The term *motivation* describes the choice to start a task, the effort put into that task, and the persistence with that task over the long-term (Dörnyei, 2001). In research on second language (L2) learning, motivation has been an important topic starting with the pioneering work of Gardner and colleagues (Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Gardner, 2001; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) and continuing with the influential framework of Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009; Dörnyei et al., 2015a). It has been argued that strong motivation is key to long-term success (e.g., Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998) and necessary for persisting through and overcoming the many challenges that come with the task of second language acquisition. To date, however, research on L2 motivation has almost exclusively focused on learners of well-resourced global languages, particularly L2 learners of English (Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017; Duff, 2017). The experiences and motivations of these learners may not accurately represent the diversity of language learner motivations.[1]

Furthermore, mainstream L2 motivation literature (see, for example, Ushioda 2009) sets up a dualism between individual learners and the contexts in which they learn, framed as "something pre-existing, an independent background variable, outside the individual" (p. 218). This underscores the need to reorient our focus towards a "person-in-context relational view of language motivation," that

---

[1] As one reviewer noted, the literature on L2 motivation is vast and more theoretically diverse than we cover in this brief overview. While such research does not explicitly address awakening language scenarios, there may be relevant insights to be found in, for example, research addressing the motivations of learners of other kinds of minoritized and heritage languages (de Meulder, 2019; DePalma, 2015; Harasta, 2017; Te Huia, 2015). In addition, Norton's work (Norton Pierce, 1995; Darvin & Norton, 2021) on the construct of *investment* is an important and potentially useful counterpoint to mainstream L2 motivation theory for these contexts. A more detailed discussion of this body of theoretical literature is beyond the scope of this current chapter.

is, "a view of motivation as emergent from relations between real persons, with particular social identities, and the unfolding cultural context of activity" (Ushioda, p. 215). This person-in-context relational view is far more coherent with Indigenous research methods and epistemologies, which center on relationality and where "relationships do not merely shape reality, they *are* reality" (Wilson, 2008 p. 7). This view is also consistent with the "rootedness" described by MacIntyre et al. (2017) in their research on L2 motivation in a heritage language learning context in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. In this chapter, we discuss the L2 motivations of language awakeners, recognizing both their unique challenges and needs faced, as well as the relationality and rootedness at the heart of their experiences.

There are two main audiences this chapter is directed towards. One audience includes applied linguists and other scholars who specialize in second language learning; this audience may be particularly interested in how the unique characteristics of learning an awakening language can inform the broader understanding of motivation as well as provide insight to motivation in other language learning scenarios. The other audience consists of other practitioners of language awakening and revitalization; this audience may be interested in understanding how practitioners in other communities become and stay motivated and how this understanding might support their own efforts. Throughout the chapter, we highlight key takeaways for each of these audiences.

1.1 CHAPTER ROADMAP

In this chapter, we share language awakening practitioners' diverse stories and honor the relations that drive their efforts. Before sharing our thematic findings, we discuss how we framed this work in Indigenous methodologies (Section 1.2). We then set forth reasons to look at motivation in language awakening (Section 1.3) and why language awakening motivation is unique (Section 1.4). This section concludes with a description of the researchers, data, and methods that make up the project (Section 1.5).

The main body of our chapter is organized around four interrelated themes to capture the complex nature of motivation within efforts to awaken sleeping languages. These themes emerged from analysis of the data (see section 1.5) and consideration of how they align with components if Indigenous methodologies. The first theme is *Choice* (Section 2), an important factor in any model of motivation; here we discuss how and why individuals choose to begin the journey of awakening their languages. The second theme is *Connection* (Section 3), which covers the immediate learning context (e.g., connection with other learners and teachers) as well as the much larger social and historical context of the language community. Connection also involves personal relationships that affect language work. The third theme is *Challenge* (Section 4), in which practitioners articulate their challenges and discuss how the challenges interact with revitalization work and impact motivation.

The fourth theme is *Continuation* (Section 5), in which we discuss how language awakening requires constant recommitment and is a task beyond the lifetime of any one individual participant. Continuation of language practice – what theories of motivation refer to as "persistence" (Dörnyei, 2001) – draws on strategies, flexibility, and the future vision each individual brings to share. We conclude our chapter with a discussion of how this approach to motivation informs the broader discussion of L2 motivation and provide suggestions for practitioners that we draw from our findings (Section 6).

1.2 FRAMING OUR RESEARCH IN INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGIES

Indigenous methodologies are research frameworks that incorporate Indigenous worldviews and knowledge. Language awakening and the motivation needed for such a challenging activity are intertwined with Indigenous worldviews, some of which practitioners deeply know and some of which practitioners are newly recovering. Due to the strong relationship of awakening languages with culture, and due to our view that academic researchers have a responsibility to support and affirm Indigenous ways of knowing, we frame our research in Indigenous methodologies.

Indigenous knowledge, the underpinning of Indigenous methodologies, is as diverse as the multitudes of sovereign communities from which the views originate. However, all have in common the centrality of relationality, that is, the belief that 'everything is related' (Wilson, 2008: 80). Indeed, Wilson (2001: 178) describes how the primary difference between Western and Indigenous perspectives of research comes from the Indigenous perspectives of relationality. Brayboy et. al (2012) reiterates that relationality is the distinctive feature of Indigenous research methods and describes three other concepts connected to relationality: respect, responsibility, and reciprocity. These four concepts are interwoven components that reflect the Indigenous worldview of the interconnectedness of all and, together, they entail reframing research towards the support of the collective rather than for individual advancement.

Following this framework, we center the belief that everything is related. Thus, we as researchers are related to the work of language awakening and to the communities doing this work and must center the idea of reciprocity in giving back to our communities through our research and writing. We address this reciprocity by aiming our findings towards our two primary audiences: applied linguists (e.g., those who specialize in L2 learning and motivation theory) and language awakening practitioners themselves. Additionally, we acknowledge that the themes that we find in the data, Choice, Connection, Challenge, and Continuity are related to the characteristics of Indigenous research methods. *Choice* connects to *Respect*, as to make a choice to do something indicates a measure of respect for the activity or process to be undertaken. *Connection* corresponds to *Relationality*, as relationality refers to connectedness and a view that nothing exists in isolation. *Challenge* is related to *Responsibility,* as it takes a measure of responsibility to face and surpass challenges. *Continuation* is related to *Reciprocity*,

because only through continuation can the benefits of reciprocity, for a community, for an individual, for academia be felt.

In this paper, while we present these themes in the order described above, we acknowledge that they are not discrete but deeply interconnected. Choice is a component of each of the other three themes because there is the need to regularly choose to connect, face challenges, and continue. Connection causes choice and can help or hinder challenges and continuation. Challenges come from the choice, in the connections, and through continuation. Continuation occurs because of a choice and through connections and withstanding challenges. In discussing these interrelated themes, we shed light on the complex and unique nature of motivation in language awakening.

1.3 WHY MOTIVATION IN LANGUAGE AWAKENING?

In the mainstream second language acquisition literature, motivation is often referred to as an 'individual difference' variable – that is, an individual characteristic might account for the variability in speed and ultimate attainment in second language learning (Dörnyei, 2009b). In this chapter, we discuss in detail the importance of community and relationships in language awakening, and other chapters in this volume highlight the centrality of community as well. In fact, we argue that relationships and relationality are fundamental to these contexts (Wilson, 2001; see section 1.2). Given this, it might seem incongruous to focus on an 'individual' variable. But we agree with McIvor's (2020) argument that:

> Just as with SLA itself, the necessary approach to ILR [=Indigenous Language Revitalization] is simultaneously individualistic and collective in nature. Each learning journey begins with one person, who must be personally motivated and interested and have the necessary access to high-quality learning opportunities, based on proven practices, underpinned by what is known about additional language learning. Equally, there must be an understanding of the barriers and collective contextual factors at play and necessary supports in place to manage them. (McIvor, p. 87)

Furthermore, we note that in many language awakening contexts, language communities often rely on the hard work of individual practitioners (see section 3.3; see also Hall, 2021; Taylor-Adams, 2019). That is, focusing on individual differences in language revitalization practice does not entail "individualism" in opposition to collectivism or communalism. Rather, by acknowledging the key roles individuals play in their communities and networks of relationships, we can better understand the individual practitioner and, as a result, more effectively support both the individual *and* the community.

We also acknowledge the inspiration we take from our colleague Carson Viles (cf. Viles in this special issue), who participated in a multilingual community of revitalization practice and conducted

research on motivation in that context. In his writing, he argues that "[w]e can use motivation as a lens for understanding larger issues within language revitalization, such as the existence of worldviews within endangered languages, the role of the family in learning, and the importance of community support in deterring or enabling successful language revitalization efforts" (Viles 2013:28). That is, because individuals are so key to community revitalization efforts and because motivation is so difficult to sustain in challenging circumstances, understanding motivation in these contexts can help us better support practitioners. At the same time, understanding motivation helps us better understand the nature of language revitalization itself, as both an individual and a relational enterprise. By learning more about motivation in the context of awakening languages, we will be better equipped to support such efforts by encouraging individual learners and teachers and identifying and removing obstacles to success.

1.4 WHY IS LANGUAGE AWAKENING MOTIVATION UNIQUE?

An awakening language is one that has fallen asleep. A community's language falls asleep due to social inequalities and/or traumas that caused people to choose or be forced to stop speaking their language. This inherent component of language awakening highlights features that uniquely impact the practice of language awakening and thus the motivation of practitioners in these contexts. One feature is a lack of resources, both the resource of other speakers and the resource of prepared language learning materials. This feature makes the learning process much more difficult than a language learning scenario that involves a well-documented and commonly spoken global language. A second feature is the reality of intergenerational trauma; this wounding brings in a highly emotional element to the language learning process that can deeply challenge a learner. A third feature is the response to the trauma and wounding; that is, the pursuit of awakening a language provides an avenue for healing, not only an individual's wounds but that of their community. Thus, while language awakening presents many practical and emotional challenges that may hinder motivation, it also provides unique individual and collective benefits that aid in motivation.

1.5 RESEARCHERS, DATA, AND METHODS

We (the authors) are friends and colleagues from our shared time as graduate students in the doctoral program in the Linguistics Department at the University of Oregon (UO)and from our shared work at the Northwest Indian Language Institute. Of relevance to this paper is the fact that both authors are scholars of language revitalization whose research, outreach, and approaches have benefitted from their relationship. Allison (Taylor-Adams) is a non-Indigenous applied linguist. Originally from Oklahoma, since coming to the UO she has worked alongside many community members revitalizing and awakening languages of the Pacific Northwest. Allison became interested in the topic of motivation

after listening to and reading the words of language revitalization practitioners at the UO (including Jaeci), many of whom discussed both the need for long-term motivation in their language learning journeys and the challenges they face in sustaining motivation and effort. Jaeci (Hall) is a member of the Confederated Tribes of Lower Rogue, an unrecognized tribe from southern Oregon. She came to the UO to seek understanding about her ancestral language Nuu-wee-ya' so that she might speak it and support her family and community in speaking. Fueled by a fire fed by her ancestors and her community's desire to learn, Jaeci analyzed archival texts of her language, described the grammatical components found in the texts, and framed her work through the lens of Indigenous methodologies for her dissertation (Hall, 2021).

There are three strands of data that inform this chapter. The first are interviews conducted by Taylor-Adams for her dissertation research (2022), who interviewed language revitalization practitioners from many different communities about their motivations, with questions centered around why practitioners get started, how they pursue their language journeys, what goals they hope to attain, and how they continue in the face of external challenges and internal discouragement. These interviews were conducted over Zoom (videoconference software) in the summers of 2020 and 2021 and included fourteen practitioners working on four different awakening languages of North America. Some interviews took place between Allison and someone she has known well for many years; in other cases, these interviews were the first time Allison had spoken with that practitioner. The interview data shared in this chapter come from 18 hours of audio recordings and transcriptions of these interviews.[2]

The second strand of data comes from text responses from the Global Survey of Revitalization Efforts (Pérez Báez et al., 2019), conducted by another team of researchers and shared with Allison for secondary analysis. This survey instrument collected a rich set of descriptive information about language revitalization efforts around the world. In this chapter, we use data from the 18 survey respondents who are awakening their languages[3] to provide contextual details to our qualitative findings, particularly around the theme of Community.

---

[2] All transcripts of interviews were checked and approved by the interviewees. Interviewees had the option to remain anonymous or not, so quotes may include personal names or only the name of the language they work on. Responses have been mildly regularized for readability.

[3] We note that though the Global Survey collected responses from every region of the world, the Awakening Languages responses reported here come from just four regions: Australia (5), Europe (3), North America (7), and South America (3). This specificity in region may reflect both the impacts of a shared history of colonization as well as a growing common vision for practice shared across these continents; the regional specificity of the idea of "awakening languages" will be examined in other parts of this volume.

The third strand comes from co-author Hall's personal reflections on her own experience as a language awakener, using an autoethnographic approach. Autoethnography is a method utilized in many fields including education (Gannon, 2017), second language learning (Keleş, 2022), and Indigenous studies (McIvor, 2010), and has been used as a way for Indigenous scholars to "push back" against colonialism in traditional approaches to scholarship (Bishop, 2021). Jaeci's autoethnographic reflections provide a rich, micro-level examination of the struggles and motivations of one language awakener and an important first-person voice from an Indigenous language practitioner, which introduces a critical counterbalance to Allison's positionality with respect to the language communities.

Allison analyzed the interview transcripts and survey responses using a Constant Comparative Method approach (Glaser, 1965; Charmaz, 2014) to identify common themes and to build overarching categories in a bottom-up, emic-to-etic process. Allison and Jaeci then worked to weave all three data strands together, and to identify the four core themes that anchor the analysis presented in this paper. We interweave these strands of data to show how practitioners' experiences relate to each other and, in particular, the ways that Jaeci's autoethnographic account resonates with other language awakeners. We hope this chapter serves as a model for the collaborative writing and thinking that we as co-authors have valued so highly in working with each other.

2. CHOICE AND RESPECT

The first theme in motivation in language awakening contexts is *Choice*. Choice is deeply intertwined with the concept 'Respect,' as choosing to learn a language amounts to finding value in the language, the people, or the culture. In this section, practitioners describe why they chose to start learning and reclaiming their languages and why they continue to make this choice despite the many challenges and setbacks they face. In this and the following three thematic sections, we alternate between Jaeci's autoethnographic report, given as a first-person account, and other practitioners' reports, given as third-person interview or survey responses. We take this approach to highlight how the topics resonate across the different sources of data.

2.1 CHOICE – RESPONSE TO LOSS

Language awakening takes place in the context of catastrophic language loss. Acknowledging such a loss represents a challenge, as discussed in Section 4. However, it is also a motivating factor for practitioners. This is evident in Jaeci's autoethnographic account.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

I speak my language, Nuu-wee-ya', which is a Pacific Coast Dene language from southern Oregon and Northern California. This is a statement I can say now but as a young person I could not have said, nor could I have comprehended the possibility that I would someday utter that statement. This is

because I had no exposure to Nuu-wee-ya' due to the length of time in my lineage, six generations since the last fluent speaker. This section looks at why I choose to learn my language and how it is inextricably tied with my need to support social justice for the collective trauma that caused the loss of my language.

It took me some time to see how I could provide a valuable perspective on the motivation to learn an awakening language, a perspective reflected in the interviews and surveys presented by my co-author Allison. As I am just one of many people pursuing language knowledge from archival sources, I did not see how I might add anything new or different. It wasn't until I realized that the extremes embedded in my story could reveal insight as to why someone would want to undertake this work and be so motivated that the process of language awakening would take a central role in their life. For my own case, it has been almost 110 years since the last speaker of my lineage passed on. I have no obvious direct or interpersonal motivation. My story indicates that even after generations, the motivation to pursue social justice for past traumas through language and cultural revitalization is healing. My story indicates that even after generations, social trauma is impactful, and pursuing social justice through language and cultural revitalization is meaningful and motivational. I perceive that it is easy to understand why someone would want to learn a language heard by their parents or grandparents. I don't know if it is as clear why someone would learn, claim, or identify with a language that has been silent in their lineage for generations. Looking at why I would dedicate so much of my heart, passion, and life to this pursuit sheds light on how motivation is connected to the social pursuit of equality and justice and indicates that the importance of heritage can span many generations. My father and I are the fifth and sixth generations since the last fluent speaker of Indigenous languages in our lineage. Due to scattered and conflicting historical records we cannot even be sure which languages our ancestors spoke, although we do know that the last speaker spoke a language from the Klamath river, where she grew up, and a language from the Rogue River, where her mom grew up. Despite, and maybe because of, this lack of historical clarity, I have dedicated my life to support the revitalization of Nuu-wee-ya' through a research journey that has led to a doctoral degree and to begin my journey working as the Tribal language coordinator for the Coquille Indian Tribe, through which I am able to continue my language work for myself and my family and expand it to support language use in a broader intergenerational community setting. This journey is fueled by the desire to use my language and fanned by the rage at the near genocide that caused my lineage, indeed all tribal lineages of Turtle Island, to lose knowledge and culture.[4]

---

[4] Turtle Island is a term commonly used by many indigenous people of North America to refer to the continent. It is term taken up by Indigenous Rights Activists and is commonly understood in most Native communities; examples of key published works that use this term are Kimmerer (2013) and King (2008).

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

Like Jaeci, other practitioners described becoming aware of the loss of their language as one of the initial motivators to begin language work. Recognizing this loss is how Masa chose to get involved in language revitalization rather than other possible cultural activities that piqued his interest:

> So, when I came to participate in my community, I knew immediately that language was very important and that it was considered dead or something like that [...]I wondered immediately you know, like, is it possible to revitalize that? [Masa, mitsqanaqan, 6/18/20]

Cassy had many different initial motivators, including her mother taking her and her siblings to language class, an influential relationship with a teacher, and feeling empowered as a young learner to begin teaching language in her community. But the recognition of loss was "where it all started" for her:

> Until, when I was 11, I had no idea we had a language, so I didn't know it was gone. […] as I learned more about the language and the speakers, I all of a sudden was like "oh my gosh, our last speaker was my great grandfather on my dad's side. Oh, wow, our last speaker was our - um you know, my great grandparents." So I asked my grandma like, "how come you didn't learn the language? like your, your parents knew it?" and she got really sad about it, but basically said that it was a way to protect them. […] their parents were like, it would, was no use to them, and they didn't want them to get treated bad for being Indian, for sounding different [mmhmm] So. That's where it all started. And then I just got hooked from there. [Cassy, Lushootseed, 7/1/20]

Cassy used words like "passionate" to describe her commitment to the language, and reiterated that it was her awareness that motivated or "drove" her to start working on her language:

> I think I realized that people weren't really passionate about the language and it's probably because they didn't realize what was gone, just like me. I didn't know what was gone, until I saw what was there. [mm, mmhmm] So that was a big thing driving it. [Cassy, Lushootseed, 7/1/20]

Thus, confronting the extent of language loss and historic trauma gives a sense of purpose to language practice. Confronting language loss allowed practitioners to understand the value of their language and how that value is lost to the community without revitalization work. For example, Cassy responded to her grandmother's sorrow at the loss of language, Masa described reacting "immediately"

to the loss once he became aware of it, and Jaeci articulates her motivation as seeking to heal and repair the loss as a means to address the harm committed against previous generations.

2.2 INSPIRATION FROM OTHERS

While awareness of language loss gives practitioners motivation to begin practice, connections and relationships also provide the initial spark and motivation for individuals to begin awakening their language. This underscores the centrality of relationships in language awakening motivation (discussed in more detail in section 3 and in 5.2).

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

Before I knew what blood quantum[5] was, or that someone could be labeled more or less Indian than someone else, I simply knew that I was Indigenous. This knowledge existed because my father, who knew some but not much about his Indigenous culture, sought indigeneity for himself and his children, even though we are not federally recognized as Native. Through attendance at Title 9 Indian Education culture classes and camps, I was taught that I am Indigenous and to respect and have responsibility for Indigenous communities and culture. I experienced indigeneity through powwows, drumming, singing, and crafting in a way that locked and centered my identity on being Indigenous, even though my blood quantum is low. This identity deepened as my father began to attend and then take me to Indigenous ceremonies, where ideas of blood quantum and federal recognition fell away and experience remained. Through the ceremonies and engaging with the elements, through learning how to help carry a song and cook in a way to support someone else's prayer, I experienced an indigeneity not connected to books and federally funded classes, in a way that felt real and authentic, a type of authenticity I could not imagine in the federally funded Title 9 classes. I connected deeply with the reality that I am Indigenous and that my family, at least for part of each generation, has lived between the watersheds of the Klamath and Rogue rivers for as long as we can know.

This deep connection was coupled with horror at what occurred to my own family and other Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island and, indeed, around the world. That the ceremonies I was so lucky to participate in were illegal until mere years before my birth astounded me. That near-genocidal practices had decimated communities, destroyed intergenerational ways of transferring knowledge, and led to the derogatory ways Natives and their culture were treated and viewed by the dominant

---

[5] Blood quantum is used by the US government and tribes to determine the amount of Native blood an individual has; the amount of blood is measured in fractions and can determine membership within a recognized tribe. See Ellinghaus (2022) for discussion of how blood quantum impacts the lives of contemporary Native American people.

society sickened and infuriated me. So, when opportunities to stand up for some small piece of indigeneity by learning and using one of my cultural languages, everything in me clamored to learn, to teach, and to speak up for indigeneity.

For me, opportunities to stand up for indigeneity began with the Agness-Tutudin Language Process camp, developed by my father and funded through grants. This camp brought one of the last speakers of Tututni (a dialect of Nuu-wee-ya') to lead a target group of learners through two weeks of immersive language learning. On the first morning, our elder speaker, day-sri[6] Gilbert Towner, announced that he didn't remember his language enough to teach us, as he had stopped speaking at the age of 6 when he was sent to the boarding school. Those of us present requested he teach us what he knew since he knew more than us. He responded with a prayer that those of us present would feel a fire in our heart to learn all we could about his language and then began to say each word he knew, over and over until we could say them too.

That moment did light a fire in my heart. The next fall, in my second year of my undergraduate degree, I switched my major to linguistic anthropology and did all I could to understand how to use my language. At that time, my main resources were short linguistic articles and an unpublished lexicon. I slowly began to understand the structure and words of our language but was always limited in what and how much I could learn because my access to archival materials was limited. I continued my journey to a master's program in Native American linguistics, but with such limited resources, I could not understand many aspects of the grammar and did not know how to interpret differences between dialects.

After finishing my master's degree, I gave up on language for a while to focus on raising my child. At this time in my life, I didn't see others learning my dialect. Only after being asked to teach what I knew by a tribal community did I wrestle with my feelings of unworthiness and lack of success. Only after a series of Native ceremonies coincided with being offered a place in the PhD linguistics program did I revisit the banked embers, glowing in my heart with the desire to learn, teach, and use my language. Once I had a team beside me to tackle archival sources together, only then did I succumb to the responsibility and joy of exploring and uncovering the use of our language. Thus, my choice to continue is inextricably tied into my connection to my community.

Throughout my journey, my choice to do this work has been fundamentally inspired by people, both those that are closely connected and those that I didn't know as well. I am inspired by the tenets of social justice so that my people can rehabilitate from the atrocities that impacted my family and so

---

[6] The term *day-sri* is used to indicate that a person has already crossed on. The word can be roughly translated as 'bereaved'. *day-sri* Gilbert crossed in 2009.

many others and to encourage healing for both our ancestors and our descendants.

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

Just as Jaeci's father brought her into her culture and language, other practitioners described how important relations motivated them to begin working on language. For many, the birth of children was a particularly significant event. For example, Randi started taking Lushootseed language lessons to spend more time with her sister and new baby nephew. When asked if there were other motivations, she replied, "Nuh-uh. Only to babysit [my nephew]" [Randi, Lushootseed, 6/16/20]. Other interviewees mentioned parents who had taken them to language classes or exposed them to the importance of language at an early age, or siblings who were involved in their tribal language program and encouraged them to join.

Some responses to the Global Survey also provide insight into an individual's choice to begin language work. For example, one respondent reflected on how their family relationships "inspired" them to start:

> *Many people had various levels of exposure and passed down the information. My Chumash grandfather died in 1991 at the age of 97. My mom and her siblings found a few Šmuwič words printed on small pieces of cardboard. My family knew that language must have been important to my grandfather, so they began to teach and inspire my generation. [ID 14, Šmuwič]*[7]

Erin's experience, shared in interviews, resonates with Jaeci's, insofar as she had struggled with her Native identity and blood quantum her whole life. But the birth of her son was a turning point in her reclamation of language and culture:

> *when my son was born, I kind of finally realized that I had to grow up. And I just, I couldn't just keep pretending like I'm not, you know, like it doesn't affect me or whatever. Like it's not just my heritage that was at stake at that point, it was his heritage. [mm, mmm] And I can be as mad about blood quantum as I want, but at the end of the day, he's Native too, and he deserves to have these things. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]*

Given her natural affinity and enjoyment of language learning, Erin decided that learning language would be the way to "get basically my claws into it most easily," and so she began learning Nuu-wee-ya' to strengthen heritage connections for herself and her son.

---

[7] Note that throughout this paper, we reproduce survey responses exactly as they appear, preserving the capitalization, spelling choices, language name, and other details as the respondent entered them.

Interviewees also mentioned their language mentors as important initial motivators. As Chris D put it:

> *What motivated me to actually start speaking and everything was really spending time with someone like [my teacher] […] then eventually got on board and just listened to what he had to say, and it clicked. And once I really started doing the things that actually made me start speaking language, it was almost like, you couldn't really take that away. [Chris D, Lushootseed, 6/19/20]*

As illustrated in this example, language teachers and mentors have important roles to play in inspiring learners to begin. Thus, many kinds of people, from relatives to teachers to community members, can motivate an individual to choose to awaken their language.

2.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR RESPECT AND CHOICE

In this section, we have shown two types of reasons that practitioners describe as motivating their choice to learn their language. These two types – responding to language loss and being inspired by others – are clearly connected; language loss happened to others in prior generations. Some, like Cassy, witnessed the sorrow of losing language on their faces of living relatives. Others, like Jaeci, witnessed this through stories of their ancestors and the trauma of losing language they see impacting current generations. Thus, *Choice* motivations highlight the respect that practitioners feel for their language community, for relations that have come before, and for the language itself.

For language awakening practitioners, these findings acknowledge and affirm the pain of language loss and the urgency of awakening work, as well as honor the relationships that inspire people to begin the work in the first place. For applied linguists, these findings highlight the need to account for relationships, historical context, and social justice as sources of initial motivation (Ushioda, 2020).

3. CONNECTION AND RELATIONALITY

Connection is an underpinning concept of relationality, whereby no person or thing can exist in isolation. Thus, existence is 'in relationship'. Connection and relationships are central in the experiences of language awakeners, not only inspiring them to start learning, as discussed above, but also helping them sustain long term motivation.

In this section, we explore how practitioners describe the impact of connections with community members and other personal relationships on their engagement with awakening languages. We also share how practitioners described their connections to the overall social, cultural, and historical context for language practice. Jaeci describes the many different types of relationships that have contributed to her motivation to undertake actions of language revitalization. These autoethnographic reflections

resonate with the reported experiences of other practitioners from interview and survey data. Our discussion of this theme is organized around different types of relationships: family (section 3.1), others in the language community and in the broader community of language revitalization practice (section 3.2), the relationship with specific individuals within the community – including, in Jaeci's words, relationship with oneself (section 3.3) – and the relationship with the land (section 3.4).

3.1 FAMILY

The relationship with family members, including those who came long before and those who will come long after, is central to many language awakeners' experiences. Practitioners are motivated both by the support of family members and by the joy of sharing language within the family.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

My family, my ancestors, and my descendants are a primary source of inspiration for me. I became involved with language because my dad was interested, and I continued because of the joy and fun he, my brother, and I had learning, speaking, and singing together. When I started my own family, it was of utmost importance to me that my children have the choice to use their language. I wanted them to know that their language could be a source of cultural inspiration for them if they wanted. I had to be sure they could access language information. To this end, I have used our language to create games, tell stories, sing songs, and be silly and playful. I have also developed descriptions of the grammatical structure of our language so the resource exists for them at any point in their lives. I continue to work on our language so that they and their children and their children's children may have access to our language.

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORT

Like Jaeci, other practitioners described how family members can also have a direct impact on their motivation; some examples of this can be seen in section 2.2, where family members give the initial spark of inspiration to start. Practitioners also described how family members helped them to keep going in their work. For example, Cassy, who had moved far away from home to live with her language mentor, described how her uncle's reassurance and encouragement helped her:

> *I was going to come home and then my [uncle], another big motivator, he said, "Just stay down there and get your teaching degree." […] he was really supportive, and said that, he said "you respect the hell out of what [your teacher] does, so you should stay there." He said, "all this that you're worried about will be here […] we'll still be here." So, it kept reassuring, you know, just, just go do that {ha} [mm, mm] That was helpful. [Cassy, Lushootseed, 7/1/20]*

In addition to explicit advice and encouragement, important relations can also serve as examples of persisting through challenges. For example, when asked if anyone had ever inspired or encouraged her, Karelle described an uncle who is also working on language:

> *I was talking with one of my uncles who, he said he was watching the videos and he, for himself like his goals, his expectations are not to become like a fluent speaker. Because he recognizes he's like, "I'm an elder, I'm not, I'm probably not going to become fluent in my language […] but I still have the opportunity to learn these phrases, like I can say these things. And, you know, for me that's important. And that's, and that counts." […] I was like, okay, if my 60-something uncle […] can put his motivation forward to learn some of this, it really encourages me to also do it. [Karelle, Nanticoke, 7/1/20]*

Language awakening practitioners thus draw strength and motivation from their relations and continue their work towards a future for their language.

3.2 COMMUNITY

Besides family members, practitioners also discuss the importance of their relationships with others in the community – whether that be the language community or the larger community of language revitalization practice.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

The relationship I have with my fellow speakers is inspiring. Being able to talk in my language with someone who understands me is precious, and it gets even better when we are able to joke and share in the beauty of our language. Through collaborations with my fellow speakers, we have produced many resources including an online digital database, an ABC tongue twister book, and a non-profit organization, Nuu-da' Mv-ne. Perhaps most importantly, as we speak together, we realize our language is alive.

As the language coordinator for the Coquille Indian Tribe, I now have the privilege of working with all ages on language. The energy and excitement I get hearing preschoolers use language, witnessing middle schoolers teach words to others, seeing families work together to learn, and seeing the sparkle of excitement in elders' eyes as the recognize the healing they are actualizing in their lineage inspires me tremendously. I feel motivated to keep learning, keep researching, keep teaching so I can see the language continue to grow. This relationship to this community sustains and nourishes my language work.

My relationship with other language revitalizationists and linguist allies nurtures me. Knowing that I am not alone and that other language warriors are fighting the same fight is overwhelmingly motivating. Sharing in the joys and the struggles makes the joy more profound and the struggle easier. These relationships provide opportunities for many discussions. Through these burgeoning conversations people discuss the 'how' of language revitalization, supporting one another to learn about methodologies. The communication about how we do what we do, through casual conversation, conferences and academic literature provides direction and inspiration to do what we want so desperately to do - that is, to use our language.

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

Communities are made up of interconnected webs of relationships, the nature of which is an important theme in both the Global Survey and the interviews. For example, one Survey respondent described how one family's commitment to language awakening spread across the larger community:

> *A tribal family began work in the home (1991) and these efforts eventually became a catalyst for a community effort beginning in 1996. [ID 241, Miami-Illinois]*

This 'community' might refer to individuals who live in close proximity, such as a village or closely related family groups, but survey respondents also described larger intra- and inter-community collaborations:

> *Families from various villages worked collaboratively to revitalize our tiłhini language [ID 5, Tiłhini]*

> *Ability to provide remote learning for people not residing in the community [ID 105, Wopanaak]*

> *Build a network of internal and external relationships to assist in the effort [ID 241, Miami-Illinois]*

These survey examples illustrate the multifaceted nature of community relationships in language awakening contexts. Like Jaeci, practitioners found that these relationships sustained and motivated them. Erin described in detail the effects of finding a network of support in a language learning community:

> *I hadn't really counted on how important it was going to be to have even just a tiny little baby language community. [mmm] Because when there's nothing to hang on to, you're like, you know, you're like those rock climbers, who look like they're just sticking to the wall […] and you're like, "how? how are you doing that?" but that's how you feel. [{ha} mm, mmm] When you're alone, trying to learn something as massive as any language,*

like every language is totally massive. But especially something where there's no, there's no like broader culture to absorb. There's no resources out there. […] just having somebody else to tell you, "no there's a hand hold up here," or like, "if you throw your body weight, you can grab this other thing." Or like, "if you go sideways for a little bit, it flattens out"...it's way more helpful than I gave it credit for. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]

Especially in the challenging context of awakening a language, finding relationships with others – making connections to a community so that one does not feel so alone in the work – is crucial for sustaining courage and motivation.

3.3 KEY INDIVIDUALS

Another important relationship to highlight with respect to language awakeners' experiences is the role that individual practitioners play in their networks of relationship and in their communities' efforts to awaken their languages. These observations situate the individual's personal motivation within the context of relationality and responsibility to the community.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

My relationship with myself is key. Speaking my language helps me see how I am woven into the fabric of my ancestors and descendants. When I speak my language, I feel my throat and mouth make sounds that they don't make in English, and I know this is how my ancestors felt when they talked. I have come to understand that through the sensations of talking in my language, I feel an embodied connection to my ancestors; I am experiencing my body in a way they experienced theirs. In using my language, I think about my grandchildren and pray that the connection to their environment and culture is still here for them and that our ancient ways can continue, realizing that my connections to my ancestors and my descendants are indeed a connection to myself. Through my research, I have gotten to know myself and the story of my lineage, which motivates me to dive deeper into learning and practicing indigeneity. Through carrying my language into my songs and into ceremony, I create a deep resonance in myself that is uplifted by the words themselves. I cannot imagine where I would be or what I would be today without my language.

It must be acknowledged that I wouldn't be weaving my language with the profound impact of both my father and my teacher day-sri Gilbert Towner. The work that they each did, in their own ways, provided me with the inspiration to start learning. Their memory after they had passed motivated me to continue. Shortly after they had both crossed, I was asked to teach language. This was many years before I had accomplished the extensive research and work I have undertaken to speak. In their absence, I longed

for elders to do the guiding and teaching but the awareness that I did not have them, and in honor of the elders I had lost, I pushed myself to teach and provide others with language information. Without the guidance of my father, I would not be doing the work I now do. Without these two individuals I would not be able to speak my language.

My relationships with all the key individuals in my life, my father, day-sri Gilbert, my children, myself, are what make the social justice aspect of this work so important. When I talk about social justice, I am talking about envisioning and creating a better life for people I know and care about, and through compassion and empathy wanting and building a better life for so many people who have suffered.

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

In responses to the Global Survey, key individuals are discussed as significant in the community's language efforts. Sometimes the individual is the survey respondent themself, who serves a leadership role and took the initiative to start the effort (and to answer the Survey). Other examples describe the central role that key individuals took in initiating language work and inspiring others:

> *Three sisters represent the last of their tribe and had not spoken the language themselves nor passed on what little they knew to their children. They approached me to help them form a group to begin revitalisation. [ID 47, Mpakwithl]*

> *Muurrbay Language Centre formed by a very small group of elderly speakers working with a linguist to keep language from dying out. [ID 152, Gumbaynggirr]*

In fact, Survey responses from awakening languages are much more likely to mention specific individuals than responses from efforts to revitalize languages that are not dormant, as shown in Table 1.

Respondent mentions:	Awakening languages responses	Response totals for survey
Key individuals	12 (67% of respondents)	55 (39% of respondents)

Table 1. Survey Mentions of Specific Individuals

This highlights that, at least for these Survey respondents, key individuals are vital to awakening language efforts, and thus how crucial it is for individuals to be able to stay motivated.

3.4 THE LAND

We conclude our section on Connection by observing the important role of the relationship with the land itself. That is, the language community is not just made up of human actors, but also includes the land to which the language belongs (see also Engman & Hermes, 2021; Jansen et al., 2013).

Practitioners' relationship with their land is thus another important part of the context of their motivation to use their languages.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

My relationship with my natural environment is key in my use of language. When I first started learning, our camp was situated on the banks of the Rogue River less than a mile from an original village site. I was conscious that the rocks and old trees around me had heard my language before and this inspired me. Seeing the plants and animals and then naming them in my language connects me to my environment, inspiring me to learn more. Through the engagement of naming what I see, I weave language into my life on a daily basis. Thus, my environment and the activities done in my environment as an opportunity to create space for language. Thus, activities such as canoeing, harvesting, and weaving become domains in which I can use and teach language. These topics are something that many people want to do as they seek and express indigeneity. Another inspiring factor from my environment is that I have been able to learn valuable ecological information from the archival materials that has served my soul and helped create rich teaching materials to share with others. My relationship with the land feeds into my relationship with my family and community. For example, my son's favorite words are plant words and together we can describe our landscape in language.

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

In interviews, some practitioners described the deep connection between their language and their land. As Randi expressed, that relationship is something "you spend years thinking about":

> *in our language they say that the language does not belong to the people, it belongs to the land. And the land holds the language for us, and the land wants to hear our language. And, you know, if you just think about those three statements and what they mean to you and your personal use of that language, you know, and and uh, and you spend years thinking about that statement. […] I have it in my mind all the time. I have it when I'm teaching, it's one of the main points I teach about the language. This language belongs not to the Suquamish people, it belongs to the land that we live on. [Randi, Lushootseed, 6/16/20]*

Acknowledging that "the land wants to hear our language", and wanting to honor their relationship with the land, may provide motivation to use language. For Charlotte, another motivation to learn language is to better understand the nature of this relationship that is expressed in the language:

when someone talks about 'the land', they're not just talking about like the yard out

front there, you know. There's a deeper meaning and philosophy and spirituality about

one's connection to that land and all of this. [Charlotte, Lushootseed, 6/25/20]

Thus, the ability to understand and to reciprocate in this relationship is a key component of these language awakeners' experiences.

3.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR RELATIONALITY AND CONNECTION

Throughout this section, using findings from autoethnographic reflections as well as practitioner interviews and survey responses, we have shown that *Connections* to important relations are vital to the motivation to awaken languages. This aligns with the concept of *Relationality*, which emphasizes that everything is connected (Wilson, 2008). For these language awakening practitioners, family relations inspire and serve as a model for how to do the work. Community relations help to sustain and nourish language practitioners. Key individuals initiate and support language work through their connections to relations. And, recognizing that land is an important relation, we can see that the connection to land provides a strong cultural background and a fruitful arena for language work.

For applied linguists, these findings emphasize that motivation – discussed in the literature as an 'individual difference' component of language learning (Dörnyei, 2009b) – is in fact inextricable from relationships and connections. The motivation to awaken language is so deeply connected to community roots that it provides deep wells of motivation from outside of the individual. For language awakening practitioners, these findings suggest that making and strengthening connections to relations may help spark and sustain motivation for language learning.

4. CHALLENGE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Language loss came about due to decades and centuries of social inequities and trauma. Acknowledging this history and being respectful of the process is a necessary way to keep our research focused on supporting community needs. This history impacts and challenges language awakening in complex ways (including, as discussed in section 2.1, providing an initial motivation to start learning the language). Co-author Jaeci often uses the metaphor that language revitalization is akin to pushing a boulder uphill: not only is the endeavor challenging, the one pushing cannot see what is on the other side on the boulder. This metaphor helps us understand that the challenges are complex, and some of the challenges - those on the other side of the boulder - cannot be seen, at least not yet. However, there are clear challenges affecting language learning motivation that we can see. While all these challenges can potentially impact motivation, in this section we examine two types of challenges: the emotional challenges of dealing with loss (section 4.1) and the practical challenges

of lacking resources (section 4.2). Facing challenges is an act of responsibility, in that confronting the challenges is done through taking responsibility for these emotional and practical impacts.

4.1 EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

In this section, we illustrate the complex emotional challenges that arise from the unique nature of adult language learning in the context of language loss and dormancy.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

From the start I was head over heels with my language, however there were many challenges to learning, working on, and speaking my language. One type of challenge was emotional. Learning my language gave me the awareness of what happened to my lineage and broader communities to cause language to not be spoken. I became aware of the trauma that occurred to my family and to all native people. I firmly believe the knowledge of loss can be a vital component in healing this trauma. However, this knowledge and the feelings it inspired is a challenge to maneuver, one that I did not have to navigate when learning Spanish. To be true to my language as I wrote my dissertation, I deeply investigated, imagined, and processed the trauma in my lineage that led to language loss as well as other sorrow and hardship. These led to weeks where I wept as I typed, feeling pain so deep that even though I was so close to finishing a degree, I considered giving up. It was only through the realization that through this processing I could acknowledge and speak to this trauma.

Additionally, I have struggled with feelings of unworthiness. I have felt so young and so sad from the lack of elders to show me the way that I felt I wasn't capable. I have struggled with internalizing others' judgment of my light-colored skin and felt that I lacked enough cultural experiences to have any leadership role, even though through my curiosity and diligent research thrust me into language leadership. Ultimately, I have doubted my ability to withstand the responsibility of awakening my language. Many times, I have considered doing something different with my life, even once coming to a breaking point where I decided to pursue a music degree instead. Through listening to my intuition and feeling the pull to speak my language and advocate for my ancestors, my descendants, and all my community, I have always returned to the path of language awakening.

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

In both the interviews and surveys there are reports of the impact of the emotional challenges that come with language awakening. One of the circumstances that sets awakening languages apart from other heritage language learning contexts is the totality of language loss in the community. As Kayla shares, this fact is crucial to acknowledge:

There's trauma built into the language. There's trauma built into bringing back the language. You know, we have to acknowledge that it was taken, we have to acknowledge that that we have gone so long without talking it. [Kayla, Lushootseed, 6/30/20]

Acknowledging this trauma can bring up difficult emotions that are challenging to navigate, as Masa shares:

And then on top of that, when you start to learn, you come into contact with how much you've lost. [mmm] And when you start to learn, you come into contact with how much you don't know, and how much you need to know. And it's all very daunting and kind of depressing and it brings up other emotions and…So those are challenges [Masa, mitsqanaqan, 6/18/20]

Note that Masa had also shared that becoming aware of language loss in his community was in fact the initial spark that made him choose to start learning (see 2.1.2); that is, the unique context of language loss can be both a boost to and a burden to language learning motivation, even for the same individual practitioner.

Erin shared a specific example of how confronting "how much you've lost," in Masa's words, brought up an intense emotional response:

That's another thing that makes me sad about the language, is I wish I could do astronomy in the language. You know, I wish I could talk to people about black holes and stuff like that. […] I have learned this about myself - when I experience grief, I, it's normally angry grief. [mm, mmhmm] And I have this like intense angry grief about just the fact that I don't know what the word for the Pleiades is and I can't find it. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]

This underscores just how emotionally and motivationally impactful the practical difficulties of awakening a language can be for practitioners.

Emotional challenges can interact with the practical challenge of time management shared in other second language learning scenarios. As one survey respondent highlighted, this struggle can cause feelings of sadness and regret:

I see how hard it is for our tribe, and I know it is hard for others too. The fact is that we all are so busy just living our lives, taking care of families, working, going to school, that there is no way we can devote 100% of our time to the language and that makes me sad [ID 236, shmuwich, chumash]

The need to carve out time for language learning is thus a practical challenge as well as an emotional one. This point is highlighted even more strongly in Erin's description of her feelings following an intense two-week online language workshop:

> *Basically, I started work at six in the morning, I'd work until nine, I'd do the institute from nine till one, and then I would work from one until six, and so I'd be sitting, at this desk, looking at this camera, talking to people for 12 hours a day. And by the end of the Institute, I was just wiped out. And so, when we finally stopped, I did feel very much like I was forcing it, and I was just so tired. And again, I felt really discouraged because I'm thinking like, you know, if you, if you really loved it, you would work harder or whatever, you know all that dumb, bad self-talk that people do. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]*

Thus, in Erin's experience, the practical realities of time management overlap significantly with emotional strain and feelings of negative self-worth, underscoring the fact that language learning challenges in these contexts are both procedural and highly emotional.

Finally, practitioners also described the unique pressure that they feel when they are motivated to reclaim their languages. Carson describes this pressure as potentially "crippling" for learners in these contexts:

> *Because a lot of people feel a lot of pressure that they have to like, take care of the language because it's an endangered language and uh… That's like telling yourself, it's like the finals in a sports game every practice, or whatever. You know? [{hahaha} uh huh] It's like a huge amount of pressure. [uh huh] And is like a pretty crippling thing, I think. [Carson, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/9/20]*

Reflecting on his own experience, Carson describes the particular pressure of being perceived as an "expert" in a language community that has few current users:

> *it's almost like the default when you're learning an endangered language, is that you need to find like an expert, or an L1 speaker, [mmhmm] and I benefited very immensely from being able to work with some experts […] But, I am also aware that that model for our community is not uh feasible to continue, because [my mentor] was able to spend time around a bunch of L1 speakers, [mmhmm] and I'm able to spend time around him. So, I don't want to try to insert myself into the community in a position like he's in. It doesn't feel appropriate, and it also is uh, not attractive to me. Makes me nervous to think about being in that position. [Carson, Nuu-wee-ya', 6/8/21]*

Even for those who do not yet have official roles within the community, practitioners can feel that the "weight of the language" is on their shoulders, as Erin describes:

One of the big discouraging factors for me before the Institute was feeling like the entire weight of the language was on my shoulders. [...] the idea that, you know, I was one of maybe five people in the world who were interested enough to try and preserve it. Like I didn't know anyone else. [mmm] And it was just so overwhelming to think like, I'm alone. If I don't do this, it's not going to get done. The language will die, and that will just be such a shame for the world. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]

Just as Jaeci described feeling "unworthy" and doubting her own ability to confront the task at hand, other practitioners at times struggled with the pain of intergenerational trauma and the burden of responsibility to the language.

4.2 LACK OF RESOURCES

The totality of loss which provides such deep emotional challenges plays out in a practical way as well. Loss of speakers means that there are little resources for language learners and what resources there are can often be hard to access due to their location, or physical state, or the amount of linguistic knowledge needed to interpret the materials.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

Day-sri Gilbert Towner, who had been put in a boarding school when he was six, started teaching me and others after he had not spoken his language for decades. He was hesitant to explain the complex verbs of our Dene language. I loved speaking my language and wanted to explore these verbs because I wanted to speak in sentences and teach my family how to speak in sentences. I knew I could not do this with only nouns and the inability to understand how to change verbs so they could be used in different contexts. Mere months after meeting my language and beginning to learn I was diving into linguistic articles, trying to understand how the language worked. I was immensely curious about the verbs (little did I know that Dene verbs are well known for their complexity). What I found was hard to understand grammatical descriptions; at that time, I had no linguistic training. I was not able to understand the articles nor learn to use our verbs. I was limited to a short wordlist from which to learn my language.

Impacted by the paucity of resources I dedicated my undergrad schooling to try to understand. While I began to understand a little, I realized I was blocked still by how much I did not know, causing me to pursue a master's and finally a doctorate in linguistics; my journey of education to help me speak my

language has taken me nearly twenty years. This dedication of time and education was required to responsibility maneuver the lack of resources so that I could come to use my language.

Through this time, I have been impeded every step of the way by limitations to resources, or rather limitations of resources. When I finally found archival resources, they were inaccessible for the most part without hours of time digitizing. After they were digitized, they needed to be studied and analyzed. When my teacher died I had no one to go to ask questions. This situation is a far cry from learning a major world language where there are textbooks, dictionaries, media, literature and whole countries to go to where the language is spoken.

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

Other practitioners also described practical challenges they have confronted in being unable to find, access, or understand resources in their language. Erin explains how the challenge of interpreting inconsistencies in the archival resources deeply impacted her progress.

> *so it just became this slog. And it was just really hard because every time - again every time I would hit a little wall like I can't figure out what that word is, I can't figure out why the linguists who were originally recording the language decided to use this letter instead of that letter, when to me and the recording it sounds like this. I'm like, was it a typo? Nobody knows! [mm {haha}] It just got so overwhelming and tiring, that I couldn't make a lot of progress. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]*

Erin goes on to describe how the lack of resources is unlike any other learning environment she has experienced.

> *Learning Nuu-wee-ya' has been a completely different experience in that, there has been no - Oh actually, that's a great parallel! It's completely different from my university learning experience. But I tried to teach myself Japanese before I went to U of O. [mm!] Um, I spent two or three years in high school, just trying to like crib any notes from any person that I possibly could, and trying to learn Nuu-wee-ya' is very similar to that, where it was just me [mmm] just desperately searching out any resource. Any, anything. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]*

She also described "lamenting" the lack of additional, user-friendly media in her language:

> *One of the things I lament a lot with Nuu-wee-ya' is that we don't have any...We don't have any casual absorption resources. [Oh, yeah.] Like with, in Japanese, if I want to get the sense of the music of the language, or the tone and the sound and the way people string together a sentence, yeah, I can turn on any number of [mmhmm] you*

know anime, or Japanese TV shows, I can put on Japanese music, I can put on the news. But with Nuu-wee-ya', we don't have any of that. [mmm] And that has been another really big difference, even from my casual Japanese learning experience, is that I just can't...there's so little to latch onto. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]

Language awakeners also lamented the lack of first-language speakers and the irreplaceable resource of their knowledge. Carson explained how a lack of speakers and a lack of the natural feedback process makes language learning challenging when trying to understand complex pieces of language:

Umm, verb conjugation is difficult. And then like not being standardized…like how people choose to express, um, 'to be' statements, and changing states and stuff is pretty complicated. There's a bunch of different verbs you can use, but then I feel like the way as learners that we put it together is kind of clunky, and ugly, and like overly explicit, and then when you listen to how somebody else does, like an L1 speaker does it, it seems vague or like the meaning is not as clear but [mmm] I know that that's because like we're still figuring out the scope of the meaning of those words. So that's what I would say is the most challenging and frustrating part is not having the natural feedback of the speech community to like dial that in. [Carson, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/9/20]

Carson continued by explaining the challenging process and impact of life choices that is required to access materials from archives and prepare them to be used.

So, from there, it's kind of like, you have to look to archives. […] there's a lot of language in the community and a lot that can be, that we can learn from. But it, you know I can't like, go to people in that position and be like, "Hey, why in this story is this particular... like, why are they using a hypothetical this way when I thought it was only for this type of situation?" [mm, mmhmm] There's not really anybody to ask about that type of stuff. So it's basically forced me to become the archival researcher. Which is fun in its own way, but it is not like my life passion at all. {hahaha}

When Allison pointed out to him that he had done quite a lot of archival research in his life, despite it not being his "life passion," he responded:

Yeah. Well, mostly, honestly, because I don't, I don't want to have to keep accessing the language on those terms. [yeah, mm, mmhmm] And I, I've like, really felt frustrated by that, and I don't want everybody to have to access things that way. […] I was pretty privileged to be in a position to already have gotten most of those [archival research] skills just through my education, so it wasn't as intimidating to do [mmhmm] And then

> *I started thinking about, like, "Well, how many people have the language skills, plus*
> *the kind of educational background to like easily do this?" and it's not that big of a list,*
> *and I really wanted access to what's in those archival collections for my own learning.*
> *So, then I was kind of like, "okay, I'm just gonna do this." [Carson, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/9/20]*

Carson's story echoes Jaeci's and other practitioners, in that he identified a significant challenge for his language community and was motivated to mitigate that challenge through a sense of responsibility to his relations.

4.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR RESPONSIBILITY AND CHALLENGE

These practitioner's quotes underscore how emotionally and spiritually challenging awakening a language can be and how deeply individuals feel these challenges, which can impact motivation and a practitioner's ability to sustain their efforts. While the practitioners here have faced the emotional challenges that come from the realization of language loss and challenges due to the lack of resources, they have taken responsibility for the challenges and continued. For applied linguists, these findings underscore just how unique – and uniquely difficult – learning a language in these contexts is. In the spirit of responsibility, those of us with expertise and experience in language learning may wish to consider these and other unique challenges and find ways through comparison and adaptation to better support these learners. For language awakening practitioners facing similar challenges, these experiences illustrate possible avenues to be responsible for these challenges, such as finding ways to create accessible resources for themselves and for others, while not putting too much pressure on themselves as individuals.

5. CONTINUATION AND RECIPROCITY

Continuation is the fourth theme we examine in this paper. Continuation refers to practitioners' persistence in their efforts to awaken their languages, to continue in their work despite the many challenges they face. Continuation aligns with Reciprocity, because the relationship between the practitioner, the community, and the language continues to interconnect and impact one another through continued action. Continuation of awakening language serves the individual, serves the community, serves the ancestors, serves the descendants. Language awakening practitioners recognize that their individual language efforts must continue over long periods of time; Jackie for example says, "I definitely foresee myself continuing in my language journey really forever" (Jackie, Lushootseed, 5/26/21). In this section, we discuss this long-term motivation as an aspect of awakening a language, including what persistence looks like (section 5.1) and how future visions for the community drive practitioners forward (section 5.2). We conclude with a summary of awakening language continuation (section 5.3).

5.1 WHAT PERSISTENCE LOOKS LIKE

As discussed in section 4, language awakening practitioners must find ways to stay motivated despite the many practical and emotional challenges of the task. In this section, we describe what it means for practitioners to persist over the long term, and how emotions and motivations change over time.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

I have been learning my language for twenty years now, and I am still so young in it and have so much to learn. In these years, I have experienced both setbacks and progress with my language. I quit multiple times, nearly drowning in feelings of self-doubt, only to keep on learning and speaking. I continued through times when I felt I was a failure because I was not as successful in speaking or teaching my language to my kids as I wanted to be.

I have continued and will continue to awaken my language—that is, I continue putting energy and effort into the use of my language through speaking, learning, teaching and creating in my language. My ability to continue, to endure the challenge, centers around four aspects. I discuss two of these here: interpreting any success as a miracle; and loving my language. In 5.2.1, I discuss two other key aspects: celebrating the opportunity for responsibility by 'presencing', that is, planning and consciously choosing present actions to impact a future outcome, my work to honor the past seven generations and prepare for the next seven generations; and witnessing social justice.

Throughout my language learning journey, I have struggled with feelings of inadequacy and felt I wasn't doing enough, wasn't good enough, and that I was failing my language, my community, my family, and myself. This type of pressure is not conducive to feeling motivated to continue working; however, these feelings accompanied me through two college degrees, two births, reading countless linguistics articles, creating a database, accomplishment of initial linguistic analysis, myriad presentations, many teaching opportunities, conversations, games and attempts to talk more in my language.

When my second child was born, I thought I had an opportunity to develop a speaker from birth. Alas, I was also working on my doctorate and did not have enough time, resources, or other speakers to help me speak only in my language with my child. I spoke less and less and felt more and more overwhelmed by my responsibility to the language. I felt increasingly bad about my lack of success, until I switched my definition of success. I realized that I had been defining success as the day when my children, my community, myself were all speaking fluently. The futility in that goal became clear to me, along with the realization that my children learning any language from me, a person six generations removed from a fluent speaker, was truly miraculous. This change in my definition of

success was incredibly impactful. When I began to see the tiny successes as momentous and miraculous, it made me excited, inspired, motivated to create more mini-successes.

I continue because I love my language. It is a part of me, a companion of these last two decades, a companion that will always be with me now. I find that now when I do analysis of texts it is like having a conversation with old friends because I learn more each time I look through archival materials. I love feeling connected to my ancestors and to ceremony and the sacred. I love seeing how my language loves and tends to me, teaching me how to be Indigenous through cultural information found in the language materials, leading me to ceremony, and helping me create relationships.

OTHER PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

Like Jaeci, many practitioners acknowledge that simply maintaining consistency is a difficult but important step. For example, Jackie shared that because her language class is online and comes at the end of a long day of (remote) work for her job, "sometimes I feel extra frustrated because I feel like I'm not showing up to class like in the, in the best way I can be showing up" (Jackie, Lushootseed, 5/26/21). For Charlotte, a positive aspect of the upheavals of the COVID-19 pandemic (including getting furloughed from her job) is that "language kept happening, which was awesome, that was like the consistent thing throughout the year" (Charlotte, Lushootseed, 6/9/21). Erin, for her part, shared that 2020 had been very challenging and exhausting and she hoped that in the future she would be able to look back on her persistence as a point of pride:

> *I tried so hard this past year. And, you know like so many people I think it, it didn't blow up in my face but obviously like nobody's plans went to fruition, nobody's dreams happened. [mmhmm] Um, and the fact that I managed to come out even in a, you know the relatively strong position that I'm in is like, {hahaha} it's just a miracle. [mm, mmhmm] So, like, yeah. That's kinda that's what I'm hoping I'll be able to look back and think about. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 6/2/21]*

Given the long time scales of language learning and the (sometimes very acute) stresses of life, practitioners worked to find a balance between the real need for rest and recuperation and the need to maintain language practice. For example, to stave off overwork and burnout, Carson shared that he planned to take the summer to "recharge," which includes "maintenance when I'm at home. Just like keeping the bathroom language nest and working on the domains I have going in the kitchen" (Carson, Nuu-wee-ya', 6/8/21) – meaning, keeping up with language he had already incorporated into his home, rather than pushing himself to expend extra effort.

All the interviewees discussed, in some way, the fact that motivation and effort fluctuate over time. We can describe this phenomenon as *recognizing ebbs and flows* in language practice. For example,

Karelle shared that when she has the time and is not "exhausted mentally and physically" she puts in a few hours a week in language practice, but on some days all she manages is to "incorporate at least a couple of words every day. But usually it's like the ones that I, like *wanishi*, which is 'thanks.' And so, like giving thanks like in the morning or something like that" (Karelle, Nanticoke, 7/1/20). Carson especially highlighted this point. When asked "how you stayed motived through all this time," he responded:

> *Maybe the only thing I would add is that I haven't stayed motivated. It's been a really up and down process. So I think it's important to kind of normalize that, or have that be part of the discussion. [mmm] That like, um, it's pretty difficult to maintain like a really steady stream of motivation in self-directed work. [Carson, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/9/20]*

An important note here is that Carson has continued to work in language for many years. That is, Carson has persisted in his practice even when, as he puts it, he has not managed to "stay motivated." This ebb and flow of motivation over the long term resonates with recent work in the second language acquisition literature that underscores the *dynamic* nature of motivation (Dörnyei et al., 2015a).

Acknowledging that these ebbs and flows are natural may help practitioners ease the pressures of language acquisition and community language awakening. At the same time, recognizing progress and celebrating successes can give learners a boost in motivation and effort. For Charlotte, praise from a teacher was a positive boost that may sustain her for a period of time:

> *Today actually in language, [our teacher] asked us, and this is his first week of doing this, "just on the spot as best as you can from memory, tell me how you floss your teeth," or whatever. And today I did flossing my teeth and I did it. And he was like, "well, if you can do that, then my job here is done." [{hahaha}] I was like, cool. I actually did it. It doesn't happen super often but those, those moments are like, I'm hoping just to float on that for the next couple of weeks. {hahaha} [Charlotte, Lushootseed, 6/25/20]*

Jackie also shared how meaningful it was to her to reach a benchmark in her language practice:

> *When I had my first domain reclaimed and saw my teacher check that off, it was like, "Oh! This is really cool!" Like, "I'm doing it." {haha} [mm mmhmm] um, I'm, I'm speaking my language, I'm reclaiming. And there's so much like empowerment just in even using that phrase within this context, like 'reclaiming' our language [mm mmhmm] and um, yeah the meaning behind that, it's really, really neat to be able to be a part of that. And know that I am investing my time and energy. [Jackie, Lushootseed, 5/26/21]*

And Randi described the moment when a particular teaching technique "turned a light bulb on" and helped her push past the slog of her previous language learning experience:

> *Allison: Can you remember what it was like when you first got started? Like when you were first learning your language?*
>
> *Randi: It was brutal. And uh, and slow, and then more brutal and more slow and years of brutal slowness, of feeling like I was getting nowhere […] And that changed with one of [my teacher]'s online classes, um... When he taught me to, I guess, reclaim my first domain of frying potatoes and full sentences, and just like turned a light bulb on. And I guess that's where it became more than the brutal slowness of vocabulary repetition. [Randi, Lushootseed, 6/16/20]*

These excerpts illustrate that in addition to constant challenges and periods of demotivation, the language learning journey also has moments of positivity and energy - moments when a "light bulb" turns on, as Randi expressed is, or when a positive feeling is enough to "float on" as Charlotte said. These sparks of positive feeling echo with Jaeci's recognition that even small successes can be "miraculous and momentous." These periods of increased motivational momentum are described by some researchers as 'directed motivational currents', occasional periods where learners experience a surge of energy and focus such that "both self and observers [can] clearly sense the presence of a powerful drive pushing action forward" (Dörnyei et al., 2015b, p. 98). Understanding the nature and causes of these periods of peak positivity and momentum may be very helpful for encouraging persistence and effort in language awakening contexts. Recognizing that motivation ebbs and flows, recognizing that there will be times of struggle and low effort as well as times of high energy and positivity, is an important part of motivation and persistence for language awakeners over the long-term.

5.2 CONTINUING FOR THE COMMUNITY

Language revitalization practitioners recognize that learning a language as an adult requires effort expended over a very long period of time; as Erin put it, part of her language learning experience included adapting to this prospect:

> *I feel like I have developed a level of scrappiness in terms of just the willingness to understand like, this is going to be slow. This is going to take forever. This literally might be the project of your lifetime. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/2020]*

That is, persisting in language awakening requires an individual to continue in the work throughout their lives. These lifelong and generations-long timescales set awakening languages apart from the

better-studied situations of global languages taught in a classroom, where individuals may hope to achieve "results" at the end of an academic term or degree program. In these contexts, practitioners describe being motivated and sustained by visions for the present community and for the future generations to come.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT

One of the main teachings I learned from my elders in Indian Ed. and ceremony was respect for oneself, one's community, and one's culture. Hand in hand with respect is the idea of responsibility. I was taught that 'to be Indigenous was to find my role and weave it in with the community' (Hall, 2021: 557). This is a belief echoed in Simpson, who writes, "People were expected to figure out their gifts and their responsibilities through ceremony and reflection and self-actualization, and that process was really the most important governing process on an individual level" (2017: 4). Brayboy et al. (2012) describe how Indigenous research centers around relationality, which can be broken down into respect, responsibility, and reciprocity.

To do my work in a good way, I grounded my research in the knowledge that I have responsibilities to my community. I am nourished and sustained with the knowledge that focused effort for the betterment of my community reciprocally makes things better for my family. Doing valuable work that can support the education and healing of many others is inspiring and nurturing; it provides me with further energy to carry on the work. Thus, I want to support my community, I want to have the responsibility of helping to make the world a better place.

I fulfill my responsibilities by choosing, or presencing, my actions to reflect indigeneity, support language use, honor the past seven generations and prepare for the next seven generations. Choosing to speak an awakening language requires presencing so that a speaker has the knowledge of how to speak. The concept of presence is a central feature of Anishinaabe researcher Simpson's (2017) discussion of Indigenous radical resistance. As she puts it, "[o]ur presence is our weapon … every time we embody Indigenous life" (Simpson, 2017: 2). Simpson describes the concept of "presencing the present" as a "strategic, thoughtful process in the present as an agent of change" and "a recognition of the complexity and multidimensionality that generates a particular kind of emergence that is resurgence" (Simpson, 2017: 6). The conscious choosing of present actions, or 'presencing', that supports increased use of language, impacts the status of the language and the vitality of communities. Thus, presencing in language awakening entails the continued choice to speak and use an awakening language. And as Bommelyn and Tuttle have argued, "learning your language is a life choice" (2018: 210).

Through presencing in language use, we can see change over time. This change reflects social justice in action. I see it when the kids I teach at camp remember words from year to year and remember why it's important. Hearing my children stand up and advocate for Indigenous rights, seeing language on social media, witnessing the growth in interested learners indicates that social justice is occurring. Through reclaiming what is ours we regain our self-esteem, self-respect, and sovereignty. In the past two decades that I have been engaged in language revitalization, I have found the upsurge of work and acceptance overwhelming. This strengthens my resolve to continue, to carry and feed the torch I have so the next generation has more than was handed to me.

OTHERS' PRACTITIONERS' REPORTS

Like Jaeci, other practitioners discussed their motivation to continue in their language awakening efforts to benefit the current and future language community. Masa described his work as "leaving a trail behind" for other:

> *Because the way I've designed it is everything that I work on I leave a trail behind me, that can be used by other people when they're ready and when they want it. [Masa, mitsqanaqan, 6/18/20]*

Another learner envisions her role as being a "bridge", to repair the gap in intergenerational language transmission for the benefit of future community members:

> *I think it's very important to learn this language, not just because we have an excellent opportunity with [our teacher] and the language program, but because if we bridge that gap of two generations, and keep it going, our family can look back later down the road and say, "we have been Lushootseed speakers for, for years." I mean, you know, a long time. There was just a short break. [heritage learner, Lushootseed, 6/23/20]*

Respondents from the Global Survey also describe their language awakening efforts in terms of "provid[ing] hope for future generations" [ID 14, Šmuwič] and of maintaining the language "for generations to come" [ID 70, Quinault]. For these language awakening practitioners, learning language is motivated not only by wanting to attain language skills for themselves, but also by the vision of future language users being able to look back on the present moment in hope and pride.

Practitioners in interviews describe persisting in their work with visions of the future for their language awakening. For some language learners, like Randi, imagining the possibilities – that their language might be awakened, that there will be a future language community to provide for - is exciting and hopeful:

Allison: Um, what about your students or like other folks in your community? What can you like imagine 5, 10 years from now, what you hope is going on?

Randi: {hahaha} Yeah. Yeah. And...and just from 5-10 years from what it was 5-10 years ago, and how far we've come. And and it's almost like we've come so far, but I see us going 10 times as far in the next five years, as we've done in the last five years. I mean, it seems like we've come thousands of miles already. [mm] But I think we're going to go 10s of thousands of miles. [mmm. Does that... is that exciting?] It is. It is. [Randi, Lushootseed, 6/16/20]

Zalmai, cf. Zahir in this special issue, is so motivated to see his vision come to life that he prioritizes his health:

I'd like to get another, you know, I'd actually like to be working up into my nineties, I don't know if my health is going to hang in there but, that's kinda my goal. [mmhmm] I'm literally trying to exercise and rest and eat right so that I can do that. I'd like to get another thirty-three years of work done […] the exciting thing for me to see is the group you saw today, especially that group, I can't wait till they hit their seventies […] because I've watched [our elder] work with people. And just by talking to them, nurtur- she nurtures them with her words. They- it physically changes them, and they're never the same. {hahaha} [{hahaha}] And this group will have that ability in, what, another forty years or so? Thirty years? [mmhmm] So I can hardly wait. [Zalmai, Lushootseed, 5/14/20]

Others acknowledge that the long-term future is uncertain, especially given all the challenges of learning and awakening a language. For example, Erin reflected:

And so, looking into the future? Gosh, I really hope that all of us who are working, can keep working and keep fighting all of that. So that we've got some first-generation speakers again. But, man, it's, it's hard. It's hard to even envision [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]

She continued:

Every person who I've asked […] will tell me directly, that they're interested, but only if I do the work. […] But if they have to do actual effort, like learning words, practicing grammar, coming and being uncomfortable, they're not into that. [mmhmm] Which is one of the reasons that I worry that like even 100 years from now, we might still not be there, just because [mm, mm] It...learning languages is hard. [mmhmm, mmhmm]

Being uncomfortable talking to people who you want to be comfortable with, is hard {haha} [mmhmm] um, [mm] And I just don't know how many people are willing to be uncomfortable. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]

Despite this doubt, Erin does have a vision of what her future might be like as language awakens in her family:

I would love it if my niece, my youngest niece, who is...almost a year old now [...] If she could have kids, or grandkids, who can just fluently speak the language and they come and they talk to me, I'm, you know, great auntie. And they're like, "oh, Great Auntie, you talk so weird." [mmm {hahaha}] And I'll be like "yep, Great Auntie talks so weird, you talk so good." [{haha}] That would, that would be my dream. [Erin, Nuu-wee-ya', 7/7/20]

Erin concluded by saying, "I don't know if we're going to get there, but I want us to;" that is, she recognizes that the task ahead is daunting for the community, but she still cherishes this dream for young ones in her family.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR RECIPROCITY AND CONTINUATION

Having chosen to learn their languages, having felt connections to important relationships and having faced numerous challenges along the way, language awakening practitioners continue in their work. They do so by loving and finding value in their language. They seek the miracle of every use of language and keep at it. They normalize ups and downs and celebrate progress and accomplishments. By continuing in their efforts, practitioners give back to their community, just as the community supports them and encourages them to continue. Practitioners acknowledge language awakening as a lifelong project that is connected through presencing actions in responsibility to the community. This work helps to heal the current community and provides hope for future generations.

For applied linguists, the observations in this Continuation section again highlight just how impactful the community context is on language learning motivation. This theme also brings into focus the dynamic nature of motivation over time (Dörnyei et al., 2015; Larsen-Freeman, 2015), and the need to understand learners' motivations across different spans of time (de Bot, 2015) – how learners stay motivated to continue a journey that will continue even after their individual lifetimes. For language awakening practitioners, in this section we acknowledge that this is indeed a long journey that can often be hard to continue, or to continue with the same level of effort at all times. Motivation may ebb and flow, but you can continue despite this. The challenges you face are felt by others. Communities of support – both from your own language community and from other practitioners revitalizing other languages – can provide support and sustenance for the long term.

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have used motivation "as a lens for understanding larger issues within language revitalization" (Viles 2013, p. 28). Using the experiences and insights of language awakening practitioners, we explored the different personal and social reasons practitioners begin learning their languages; the social and cultural connections that sustain language awakening efforts; the wide range of challenges practitioners face and their strategies and reasons for persisting despite the challenges; and the way that motivation ebbs and flows across the timescale of a lifelong language awakening project. These themes reiterate the importance of theorizing language awakening motivation using a 'person-in-context relational view' of L2 motivation (Ushioda, 2009), and open up many other avenues for applied linguistic research and theory as we have highlighted in teach of the sections. They also illustrate the richness of taking an Indigenous-framed approach to describing motivation in contexts of Indigenous language loss and revival.

For language awakening practitioners there are a few practical suggestions which follow from our findings overall. The first is to consider not only the language community but also the larger, inter-community network of language revitalization practice as an important support, as discussed in section 3.2. Especially for independent learners, or practitioners who may be geographically removed from their heritage speech community, having a community of other revitalization practitioners can provide much-needed support to persist in this challenging project.

The second suggestion is to recognize that language awakening efforts, both at the community and individual levels, are long-term and to use this realization as a source of hope and patience. Relatedly, we reiterate that individual efforts may ebb and flow in the short-term based on various challenging factors but that it is possible to persist over the long course of learning. Cassy, a learner and teacher of Lushootseed, offers this related piece of advice:

> *I think for people trying to do the work that we're doing, if you're facilitating it like at the level of like a teacher or organizer, that if a student can't do it one time don't write them off forever, because that opportunity to come back, you know, it is motivating for them. It was motivating for me. [Cassy, Lushootseed, 7/1/20]*

That is, it is important to give students – and oneself – the grace to accept setbacks and the chance to start again.

A related suggestion is to recognize that there is not one universal measure of "success" in these efforts, and that narrow definitions of "success" (such as achieving full L2 fluency) can be discouraging and demotivational to individual practitioners. As Karelle put it:

I would say, don't be discouraged. Baby steps are steps forward. Right? I think that it can seem very daunting to learn a new language. […] start a little bit at a time. And set little goals for yourself. You know, like nobody goes from being, from zero to complete fluency in a week. That's, it takes us years to learn languages. […] every little bit of progress is progress. [Karelle, Nanticoke, 7/1/20]

In other words, using the term "success" to celebrate the little miracles along the way, rather than using it to mean full fluency, can help with motivation to continue.

We end our discussion by highlighting social justice as a critical motivational factor in awakening languages. We acknowledge that social trauma led to the need to awaken a language and that cultural healing can occur through awakening endeavors. Simply put, social trauma led to language loss. Language use helps to heal this trauma. In addition, language awakening practitioners can develop their cultural and spiritual understandings through the process of awakening their language, deepening their understanding of their indigeneity, and pushing back against the colonization that led to loss of cultural knowledge. In seeking to reclaim what was lost, in working to rebuild Indigenous identities and communities, in facing overwhelming challenges with determination for the benefit of those still to come, the pursuit of social justice is a powerful source of L2 motivation in language awakening contexts.

REFERENCES

Bishop, M. (2021). "Don't tell me what to do" encountering colonialism in the academy and pushing back with Indigenous autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *34*(5), 367–378.

Brayboy, B. M., Gough, H. R., Leonard, B., Roehl, R. F., & Solyom, J.A. (2012). Reclaiming scholarship: Critical Indigenous research methodologies. In Stephen D. Lapan, MaryLynn T. Quartaroli, Frances J. Riemer (Eds.), *Qualitative Research: An Introduction to Methods And Design* (pp. 423–450). Wiley & Sons.

Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2021). Investment and motivation in language learning: What's the difference? *Language Teaching*, 1–12.

de Bot, K. (2015). Rates of change: Timescales in second language development. In Z. Dörnyei, P. D. MacIntyre, & A. Henry (Eds.), *Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning* (pp. 29–37). Multilingual Matters.

de Meulder, M. (2019). "So, why do you sign?" Deaf and hearing new signers, their motivation, and revitalisation policies for sign languages. *Applied Linguistics Review*, *10*(4), 705–724.

DePalma, R. (2015). Learning a minoritized language in a majority language context: Student Agency and the creation of micro-immersion contexts. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *18*(4), 426–442.

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Teaching and researching motivation* (1st ed.). Pearson Longman.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009a). The L2 motivational self system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, Language Identity, and the L2 Self* (pp. 9–42). Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009b). Individual differences: Interplay of learner characteristics and learning environment. *Language Learning*, *59*(1), 230–248.

Dörnyei, Z., & Al-Hoorie, A. H. (2017). The motivational foundation of learning languages other than Global English: Theoretical issues and research directions. *The Modern Language Journal*, *101*(3), 455–468.

Dörnyei, Z., & Csizér, K. (1998). Ten commandments for motivating language learners: Results of an empirical study. *Language Teaching Research*, *2*(3), 203–229.

Dörnyei, Z., Ibrahim, Z., & Muir, C. (2015). Directed motivational currents: Regulating complex dynamic systems through motivational surges. In Z. Dörnyei, P. D. MacIntyre, & A. Henry (Eds.), *Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning* (pp. 95–105). Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., MacIntyre, P. D., & Henry, A. (2015a). Introduction: Applying complex dynamic systems principles to empirical research on L2 motivation. In Z. Dörnyei, P. D. MacIntyre, & A. Henry (Eds.), *Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning* (pp. 1–7). Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., MacIntyre, P. D., & Henry, A. (Eds.). (2015b). *Motivational dynamics in language learning*. Multilingual Matters.

Duff, P. A. (2017). Commentary: Motivation for learning languages other than English in an English-dominant world. *The Modern Language Journal*, *101*(3), 597–607.

Ellinghaus, K. (2022). *Blood will tell: Native Americans and assimilation policy*. University of Nebraska Press.

Engman, M. M., & Hermes, M. (2021). Land as interlocutor: A study of Ojibwe learner language in interaction on and with naturally occurring "materials." *The Modern Language Journal*, *105*(S1), 86–105.

Gannon, S. (2017). Autoethnography. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education* (pp. 1–18). Oxford University Press.

Gardner, R. C. (2001). Integrative motivation and second language acquisition. In Z. Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 1–20). University of Hawai'i Press.

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1959). Motivational variables in second language acquisition. *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, *13*, 266–272.

Hall, J. N. (2021). *Indigenous methodologies in linguistics: A case study of Nuu-wee-ya' language revitalization* [PhD Dissertation]. University of Oregon.

Harasta, J. (2017). Because they are cornish: Four uses of a useless language. *Heritage Language Journal*, *14*(3), 248–263.

Hinton, L. (2011). Language revitalization and language pedagogy: New teaching and learning strategies. *Language and Education*, *25*(4), 307–318.

Jansen, J., Underriner, J., & Jacob, R. (2013). Revitalizing languages through place-based language curriculum: Identity through learning. In *Responses to Language Endangerment: In Honor of Mickey Noonan*. John Benjamins North America.

Keleș, U. (2022). Autoethnography as a recent methodology in applied linguistics: A methodological review. *The Qualitative Report*, *27*(2), 448–474.

Kimmerer, R. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants*. Milkweed Editions.

King, T. (2008). *The truth about stories: A native narrative*. University of Minnesota Press.

MacIntyre, P. D., Baker, S. C., & Sparling, H. (2017). Heritage passions, heritage convictions, and the rooted L2 self: Music and Gaelic language learning in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. *The Modern Language Journal*, *101*(3), 501–516.

Masgoret, A.-M., & Gardner, R. C. (2003). Attitudes, motivation, and second language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and associates. *Language Learning*, *53*(1), 123–163.

McIvor, O. (2010). I am my subject: Blending indigenous research methodology and autoethnography through integrity-based, spirit-based research. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, *33*(1), 137–151.

McIvor, O. (2020). Indigenous language revitalization and applied linguistics: Parallel histories, shared futures? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *40*, 78–96.

Norton Pierce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, *29*(1), 9–31.

Singh, M., & Major, J. (2017). Conducting Indigenous research in Western knowledge spaces: Aligning theory and methodology. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, *44*(1), 5–19.

Taylor-Adams, A. (2019). Recording to revitalize: Language teachers and documentation design. *Language Documentation and Conservation*, *13*, 426–445.

Te Huia, A. (2015). Exploring goals and motivations of Maori heritage language learners. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *5*(4), 609–635.

Ushioda, E. (2009). A person-in-context relational view of emergent motivation, self and identity. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity, and the L2 self* (pp. 215–228). Multilingual Matters.

Ushioda, E. (2020). *Language learning motivation: An ethical agenda for research*. Oxford University Press.

Viles, C. (2013). *Daa-naa~-yash/Hədiw'* [Unpublished Honors Thesis].

Wilson, S. (2001). What is an indigenous research methodology? *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, *25*(2), 175–179.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Fernwood Publishing.