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Learning and Assessment of First Nations Languages: Overview and Annotated Bibliography

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an overview and annotated bibliography of work regarding the assessment of Indigenous languages in different global contexts, the benefits of learning First Nations languages, language programs related to these languages, and early childhood education. The paper was prepared by Lorena Alarcon as part of her 2023 WIDA Assessment Research Internship, which included supporting the Wisconsin First Nations Early Childhood Circles of Reflection Planning Group, a collaborative activity with the Region 10 Comprehensive Center for Wisconsin and Minnesota. Each of the sources in the bibliography is annotated with a reflection on its usefulness and a description of how the source is similar to or differs from the other sources in the bibliography.

Learning and Assessment of First Nations Languages: Overview and Annotated Bibliography

Lorena Alarcon

Introduction

This overview and annotated bibliography were prepared by Lorena Alarcon as part of her 2023 WIDA Assessment Research Internship, which included supporting the Planning Group of the Wisconsin Circles of Reflection for Native Early Learners, a collaborative activity with the Region 10 Comprehensive Center Wisconsin Minnesota.

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of select works regarding the assessment of Indigenous languages in different contexts in the world, the benefits of learning First Nations languages, language programs related to these languages, and early childhood education. The annotated bibliography includes articles, reports, book chapters, webinars, and websites. The author included sources beyond research articles because there was specific information about assessments in sources other than articles. These sources focus on early childhood and other ages, which can be relevant for Indigenous languages. Although some of these sources relate to specific contexts, they may be useful for teaching and assessing Indigenous languages. Each of the sources in the bibliography is annotated with a reflection on its usefulness and a description of how the source is similar to or differs from the other sources in the bibliography.

Search words used to compile the bibliography include: Indigenous language assessment, benefits of learning Indigenous languages, benefits of learning languages, benefits of learning Indigenous languages, ACFTL and Indigenous languages, assessment of Indigenous languages in New Zealand, language programs for Indigenous languages, First Nations languages, First Nations languages assessment, factors that contribute to second language learning, how Indigenous languages are learned, acquisition of Indigenous languages.

The following sections discuss the benefits, factors, learning, and assessment of First Nations languages.

1. Benefits of Learning Native Languages to Young Native Children, Aged 3 to Grade 3 (Figure 1)

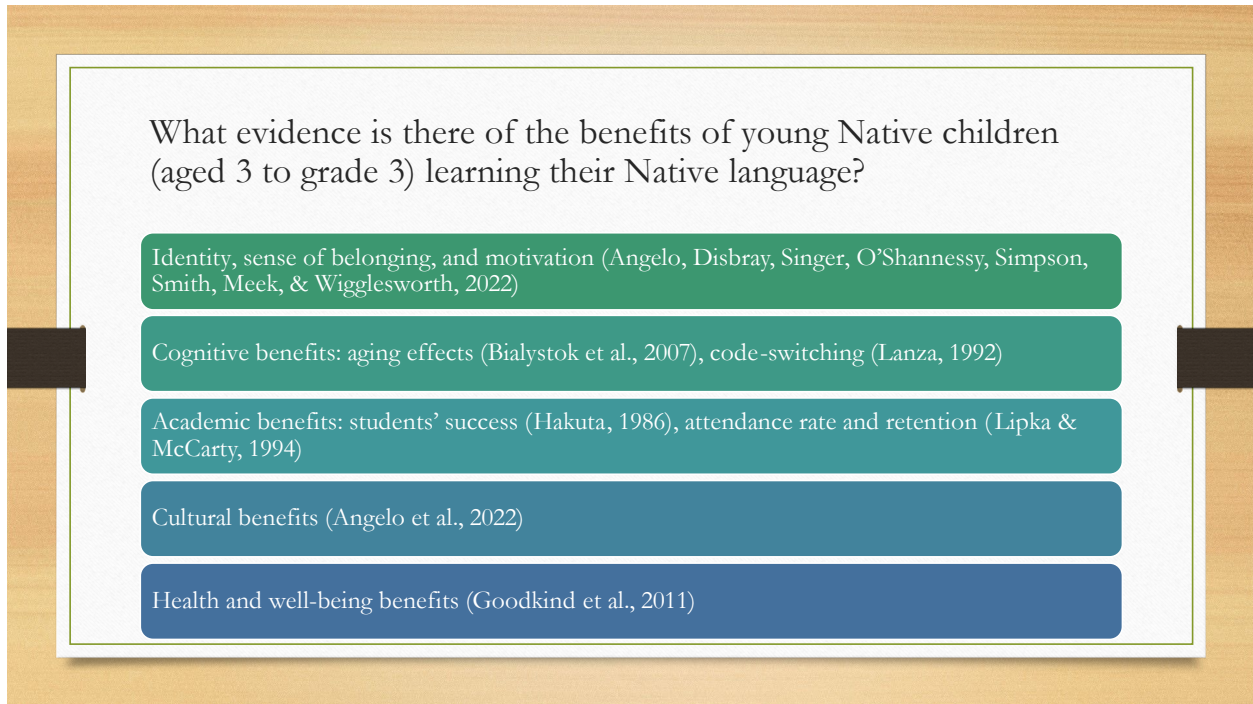
The benefits of learning native languages are related to identity, sense of belonging, motivation, and self-esteem (Angelo, Disbray, Singer, O'Shannessy, Simpson, Smith, Meek, & Wigglesworth, 2022). For example, an evaluation showed that Māori-speaking students had positive attitudes toward learning their home language because of the connection between culture and identity (Haemata Limited, 2019). Therefore, a connection between language and culture can strengthen students' identity and motivate them to learn their native language (Angelo et al.,

2029). Similarly, a language immersion program that incorporated Anishinaabemowin, an Indigenous language in Canada, showed self-esteem benefits for 4- to 6-year-old children (Morcom, 2017).

Other benefits of learning Indigenous languages are cognitive and academic developments (Jansens, Marean, and Underriner, n.d.). For example, learning languages helps with executive functioning which then favors individuals' maturing brains (Bialystok et al., 2007) and code-switching abilities (Lanza, 1992). There is also a connection between cognitive benefits and students' success. For example, students demonstrated reading skill enhancement (Hakuta, 1986) and learning improvement in areas other than the language they were learning, such as mathematics, science, and English (Jones, Chandler, & Lowe, 2010; Woll & Wei, 2019). Similarly, Māori students who were enrolled in English schools also showed academic achievement (Angelo et al., 2022). Student retention is also relevant for academic development. For instance, Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey language revitalization programs in Canada led to better student retention (Angelo et al., 2022).

Regarding health and well-being benefits (Goodkind et al., 2011), learning Indigenous languages reinforced students' self-esteem, reduced anxiety, and created greater self-efficacy (Angelo et al., 2022). Learners could find a connection between language and culture, which contributed to favorable health and well-being (Goodkind et al., 2011). The literature also indicated that Indigenous language speakers have suffered from racism (Moodie, Maxwell, & Rudolph, 2019) and that language programs contributed to an environment that supported inclusion at school, leading to well-being outcomes, such as the acceptance of Indigenous languages (Angelo et al., 2022).

Figure 1. Benefits to Young Native Children From Learning Their Native Language



2. Critical Factors Leading to Children Successfully Learning Their Native Language (Figure 2)

Motivation is a factor when learning another language. According to Ellis (2015), motivation has to do with learners' needs to learn a second language. These needs can be related to integrative or instrumental motivation (Ellis, 2015). We can observe integrative motivation when learners want to learn a language to connect with their family. Examples of instrumental motivation include passing exams or finding a job (Ellis, 2015). It is also important to know that motivation can change over time (Khasinah, 2015).

Other factors are attitudes and age. Regarding attitudes, students can have positive or negative feelings about learning another language. In this respect, Ellis (2015) noted that attitudes can be towards the community or language and that society generally influences attitudes. In terms of age, Ellis (2015) refers to the critical period to acquire languages (known as the critical period hypothesis), stating that others called this a sensitive period. Although there is a debate about the critical period, the literature indicates that learning languages at a young age corresponds with achievement in that language (Ellis, 2015).

Scholars also referred to aptitude as a factor in language acquisition (Ellis, 2015). Aptitude means the abilities learners have to acquire languages. These abilities can also change because of experience. Aptitude and age are also interrelated. While adults may need analytical abilities to attain proficiency (DeKeyser, 2000), it may not be necessary for children (Ellis, 2015). Similarly,

learner ability may be different for implicit (e.g., phonological ability) and explicit learning (e.g., analytical abilities).

Most studies focused on the acquisition of the English language. However, they demonstrated the importance of learning more than one language at the same time. For instance, scholars found a correlation between higher scores on oral skills in a standardized English test and the acquisition of their first language at early stages of life when students were not native English speakers (Alsayed, 2003). Similarly, scholars who focused on participants whose first language was not English found an association between higher scores in oral skills in a standardized English test and receiving early exposure to English (Alsayed, 2003).

Another relevant aspect is dialect acquisition for speakers of Indigenous languages who are learning an additional language (Malcom & Konigsberg, 2001). Dialect acquisition has not been widely discussed in the literature. Studies about dialect acquisition mainly focused on other languages. However, dialect acquisition suggests that it is necessary to account for the respect and acceptance of dialects (Shin & Hudgens Henderson, 2017). The factor of dialect acquisition suggests that respect for children's dialect and awareness of dialectal differences may have a positive impact when acquiring a native language. For example, the Ministry of Education of New Zealand (2023) incorporates the acceptance of dialects when learning Indigenous languages in the curriculum guidelines and promotes awareness of the dialectal differences in Indigenous languages.

Although these factors may play a role in language acquisition, not all need to be present at the same time. The factors mentioned in this paper come from the work of scholars studying language acquisition from a general perspective or after conducting studies about the English language. However, the literature suggests that further research needs to be done around the acquisition of First Nations languages by native speakers and second language learners. Still, these factors may help us understand second language acquisition in general.

Figure 2. Critical Factors Leading to Children Successfully Learning Their Native Language



3. How Children Learn Their Native Language (Figure 3)

Language acquisition is crucial to understanding how First Nations languages are learned. Studying the acquisition of first languages shows what learners can do in different stages of early childhood (Whelshula, 2020). Likewise, factors related to instructed second language acquisition, which relate to instructional methodological approaches that contribute to language acquisition, are crucial to understand how Native American languages are acquired. For instance, research showed that communicative output (Swain, 1985) is beneficial and that teachers of Indigenous languages need to go beyond drills to teach these languages.

Some studies and other resources have focused on programs for Indigenous languages. For example, Peter, Sly, and Hirata-Edds (2011) discussed immersion schools for the Cherokee language. In this respect, language programs may differ in their models across contexts. To illustrate, there might be immersion, dual-language, partial credit language programs, and different school models (Morgan & Lily, 2023). Additional information about how children learn their native language can be found in the Native American Language Research Center, which offers webinars about educators' efforts to promote the learning of Indigenous languages.

In terms of instruction, the teaching of Indigenous languages has been documented in governmental, institutional, and other resources from all over the world, where community members share how they teach native languages. Most scholars and educators agree that instruction needs to account for the culture, identity, and perspectives of Indigenous communities

(e.g., Fleer, 2004; Pino et al., 2019; Redgrave, 2023). In this respect, resources convey information about how to teach and assess students. For example, the Ministry of Education of New Zealand offers curriculum guidelines related to Te Reo Māori by considering the language, culture, and identity.

Other resources also focused on teaching First Nations languages. For instance, the Native American Language Research Center webinars, such as the one by Dr. Redgrave (2023), suggest it is necessary to consider the Western world and Indigenous language perspectives to teach students since there might be some differences in the culture. For this reason, teachers need to be aware of these differences to support their students. Another relevant aspect of teaching these languages is the use of technology. To illustrate, a webinar from the Native American Language Research Center showed that technology can be implemented in the classroom to promote language learning by using the technology that learners have. Similarly, the Ministry of Education of New Zealand suggests technology can be used to teach First Nations languages.

Studies about the acquisition of linguistic features also demonstrated it is necessary to study these features more to inform instruction. For instance, Peter et al. (2011) conducted a study on verb morphology. The findings helped them to inform instruction, which led to positive outcomes. Knauer et al. (2019) also conducted a study to assess vocabulary development in learners' native languages and official languages. Although this study did not directly relate to instruction, it showed that research about linguistic features is relevant when understanding children's language development and making instruction implementations.

Figure 3. Learning of Native Languages



4. How Success Is Measured (Figures 4, 5, and 6)

Several elements should be considered regarding how to measure learners' success. First, it is necessary to account for the Western world and Indigenous language views, such as culture (Redgrave, 2023), to understand how to assess students. These perspectives can be explained through the literature that showed that language, identity, and culture need to be accounted for to teach and assess students (Pino et al., 2019). In this respect, many public resources from educational or governmental organizations showed tasks and examples of assessments that considered these three factors (e.g., Ministry of Education of New Zealand, 2023). Some tasks that account for these factors include matching, completing, etc., which are tasks for college students (Redgrave, 2023). However, they can be adapted to other ages. Other tasks for children include pointing at pictures, describing, or communicating with others (Whelshula, 2020).

Another relevant element is second language acquisition theories. The literature shows it is important to create tasks that lead to communicative output since children need to interact with others to be able to communicate (Peter et al., 2011). If communicative activities are implemented in the classroom, there needs to be a match between what students do in the classroom and assessment (Griffie & Gorsuch, 2016). Peter et al. (2011) recommended continuing to examine the acquisition of linguistic features to understand how First Nations languages are acquired. Most of the studies about the acquisition of linguistic features for this paper were about English, but more needs to be done in terms of the acquisition of linguistic features of Indigenous languages.

Some webinars and resources suggested that the guidelines established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) need to be adapted to assess Indigenous languages. This adaptation would depend on cultural elements (Andía, 2021) or the complexity of morphology, syntax, and culture (University of Oregon, 2023, Northwest Language Institute, 2010). For instance, some Indigenous languages may have complex syntax. Therefore, institutions created benchmarks with more levels than those provided by ACTFL (University of Oregon, 2023; Northwest Language Institute, 2010). Additionally, these benchmarks contain additional skills than those suggested by ACTFL. For instance, they have listening, oral, culture, and literacy skills (reading and writing), unlike the ACTFL guidelines, which only have listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. These benchmarks also established concrete topics, goals, and expectations that relate to the assessment of the language.

Formative assessment is also an important element, as indicated by a webinar hosted by the Native American Language Research Center. In this webinar, Bellin (2023) explained the importance of conducting studies to understand students' needs and proficiency levels, which is in line with Peter et al.'s call to conduct assessment studies for Indigenous languages. For instance, Bellin (2023) reported the data of a pretest, midyear test, and posttest to observe students' proficiency development. Additionally, this presenter shared considerations about the language to use for instruction and assessment. For example, the presenter stated that in level 3, students can have the instructions in English; however, at more advanced levels, such as level 4, learners can have instructions in the language they are learning. Furthermore, the presenter

mentioned the variables that teachers need to account for, such as linguistic markers, identity, relationships, etc.

Figure 4. Assessment of First Nations Languages

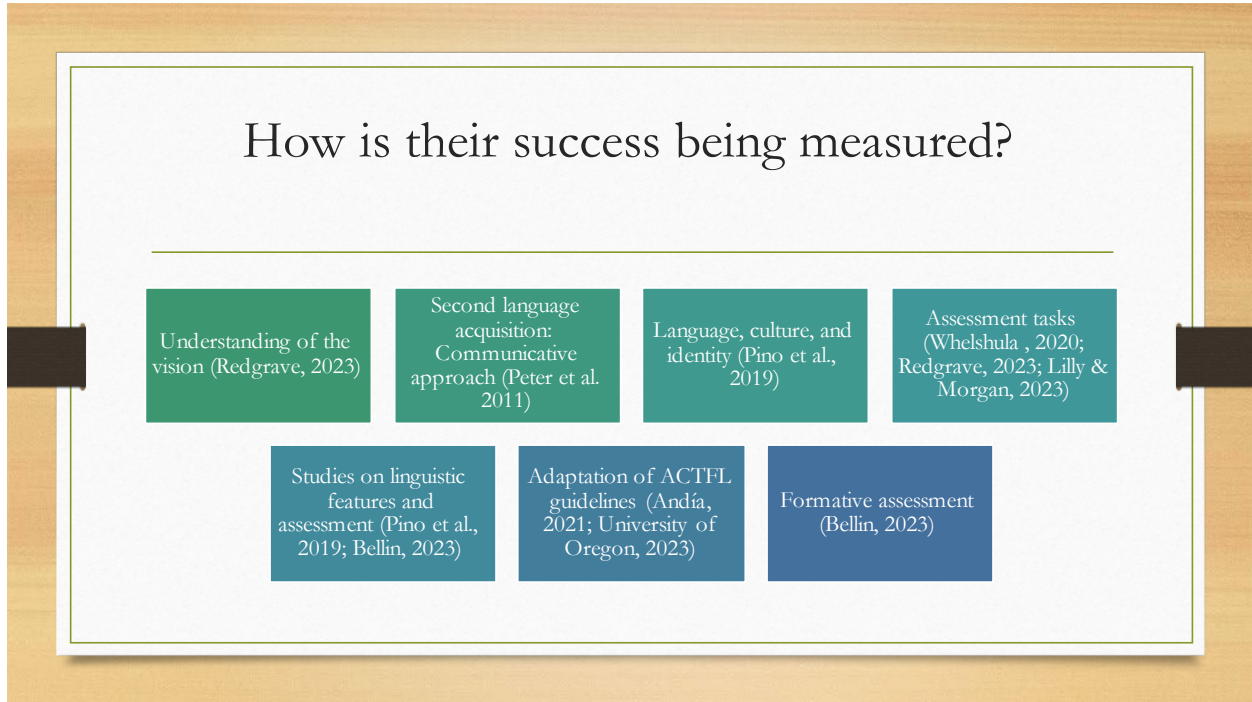


Figure 5. Formative Assessment

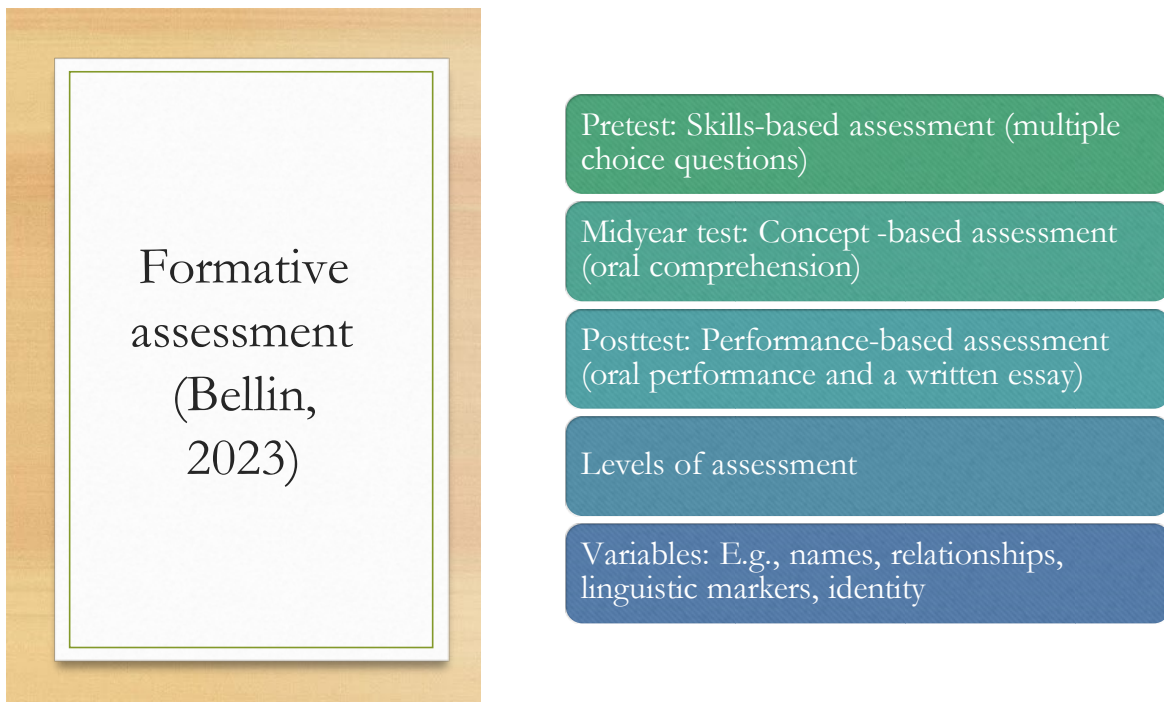
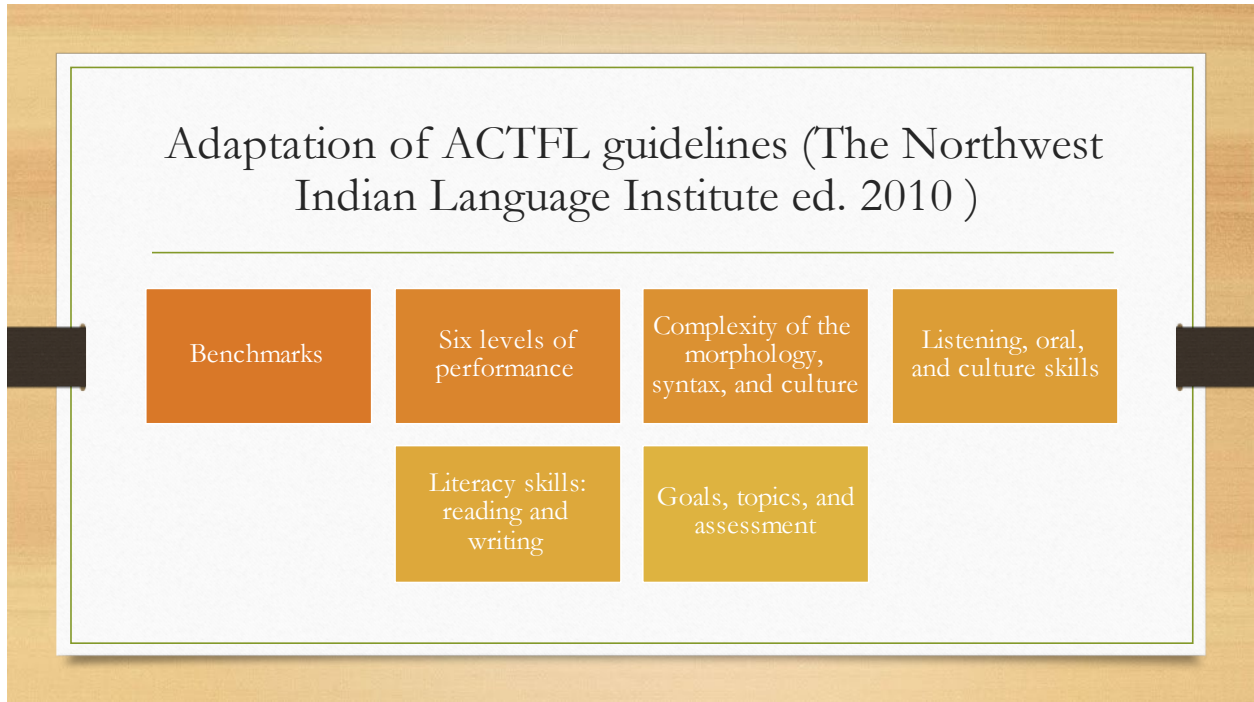
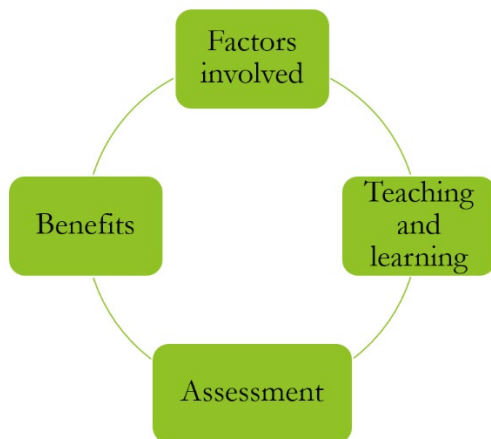


Figure 6. Adaptation of ACTFL Guidelines



As observed, the benefits associated with learning Indigenous languages, the factors involved in language acquisition, and the teaching and learning of these languages may be closely connected to the assessment of First Nations languages (Figure 7). Educators may need to take into consideration these elements where the connection of language, culture, and identity is prevalent to assess students. This connection constitutes an overview of the assessment of First Nations languages and intends to serve communities, educators, and other community members that, in turn, serve learners of First Nations languages.

Figure 7. Assessment of First Nations Languages



Annotated Bibliography

Alsayed, M. (2003). Factors that contribute to success in learning English as a foreign language. *Damascus University Journal*, 19(1), 21-44.

Overview. Alsayed mainly focused on the factors that promote the learning of English when students' first language is other than English. The author mentioned factors such as motivation, early exposure, first language acquisition, etc. that contribute to English acquisition. Although the author referred to English, these factors may also be applicable to the learning of Indigenous languages because learners can also show motivation and be exposed to another language since early childhood. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This article is useful because it offers an overview of the multiple factors that can contribute to the learning of another language. Although participants in this study were English as a foreign language learners, this article showed that being exposed to another language since childhood can be beneficial for their academic success. **Similarities.** This study is similar to other resources stated in this paper because some factors are similar to those mentioned by Ellis (2015). **Differences.** This study is different from other studies since it focused specifically on the English language; however, it shows that early childhood acquisition can be beneficial for learners.

Andía, G. (2021, September 15). *Designing Indigenous language classes rooted in ACTFL standards* [Webinar]. Cornell Language Resource Center.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMzGZOwwjMU>

Overview. Professor Andía discussed the characteristics of ACTFL and her experience obtaining the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Tester Certification for Quechua, an Indigenous language in South America. In her presentation, she focused on Quechua, but she mentioned that her work could also apply to other Indigenous languages. Andía questioned if ACTFL Standards could be used to assess Indigenous languages. She explained that some levels in these standards, such as the novice or intermediate, may adapt to Quechua. However, some other levels or language functions in the standards may not adapt to the culture of Quechua. Regarding language functions, for instance, she reported that a test that asks students to narrate their experiences at concerts may not apply to some communities. The presenter also explained that some levels in the standards (distinguished, superior, and advanced) suggest that learners need to be able to communicate like educated people. She questioned this view since some elderly people, who are native speakers of Quechua, may not have received formal instruction. However, they speak the Quechua language with fluency and are wise in the community. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This presentation is useful because it offers an overview of how educators need to adapt ACTFL to the Indigenous language and culture of the language they are trying to assess. **Similarities.** This presentation aligns with the guidelines from the Ministry of Education of New Zealand (2023) that suggest that standards may not adapt to the Māori language.

Differences. This presentation differs from others because the presenter questions if the ACTFL guidelines are applicable to Indigenous languages, such as Quechua. At the same time, this presentation offers perspectives to adapt ACTFL to Indigenous languages.

Angelo, D., Disbray, S., Singer, R., O’Shannessy, C., Simpson, J., Smith, H., Meek, B., & Wigglesworth, G. (2022, September 22). *Learning (in) Indigenous languages: Common ground, diverse pathways*. *OECD Education Working Paper No. 278* (Section 3.4. Benefits for Indigenous students).

Overview. Angelo et al. (2022) discussed the benefits of learning Indigenous languages. These benefits include students’ school identity, success, sense of belonging, and motivation. The authors provided citations about research that showed these benefits. For example, an evaluation demonstrated that Māori speaking students favored learning their home languages because of their connection to their culture and identity (Haemata Limited, 2019). Research also revealed language immersion in Anishinaabemowin, an Indigenous language in Canada, led to benefits in self-esteem for 4 to 6-year-old children (Morcom, 2017). Language programs also had other benefits. To illustrate, speakers of Indigenous languages have suffered from racism (Moodie, Maxwell, Rudolph, 2019), but these programs promoted more inclusion at school (Angelo et al., 2022). Other advantages include higher rates of retention and attainment rate. For example, language revitalization programs of Mi’kmaq Kina’matnewey in Canada led to an increase in student retention (Angelo et al., 2022). Similarly, the learning of Māori contributed to students’ attainment rate (Angelo et al., 2022). Studies also revealed an increased motivation to learn First Nations languages. For example, scholars found that learning Indigenous languages motivates students who have an Indigenous background to learn their native languages (Angelo et al., 2022). Another benefit is stronger cognitive development. For instance, a second language makes students improve their learning in areas other than language, such as mathematics, science, etc. (Woll & Wei, 2019). The authors also reported developments such as an increase in their abilities related to working memory and switching between languages. Studies also demonstrated that students in Australia who learned an Indigenous language simultaneously with English showed benefits for English (Jones, Chandler & Lowe, 2010).

Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections). This paper is useful because it contains specific information about the benefits of learning Indigenous languages. Furthermore, the authors provided detailed information about studies that showed the benefits of learning these languages in different countries. This paper also contained examples of the advantages of learning Indigenous languages in early childhood.

Similarities: This paper is similar to Jensen et al. (n.d), which is annotated in this paper because it cites specific studies about the benefits of learning Indigenous languages.

Differences: This paper is different from other studies because it provides information about specific researchers who investigated the benefits of learning Indigenous languages.

Bellin, K., Lilly, O., & Tabrum, D. (2023). *Language proficiency and assessment* [Webinar] Office of Indian Education Technical Assistance. Native American Language Resource Center. Summer Research Series. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6SJBa-BcJw&list=PLrgsRiBnPRQEOKSz_w_jucREN2mGUOKX3&index=12

Overview. In this webinar, Lilly explained the definition of proficiency and the process to develop “a language assessment that measures progress and proficiency.” She also discussed the language proficiency skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and levels such as novice, intermediate, advanced, and expert, which align with the ACTFL Standards. She also explained the differences between formative and summative assessments. Furthermore, Bellin discussed the assessment work that he and Tabrum conducted. Bellin referred to formative assessment in their context. He referred to a pretest, midyear test, and posttest as formative assessments. They used multiple-choice questions in a pretest for the skills-based assessment, and oral comprehension in a midyear test for concept-based assessment. Finally, they utilized the performance-based assessment through oral performance and a written essay in a posttest. For example, students needed to interview an elderly person to show their oral performance. Bellin also talked about security in assessment to guarantee students do the tasks by themselves. Furthermore, he shared the results of a survey of the pre-and post-assessment of seniors at the preparatory school, which revealed that guidance is helpful for students. Additionally, he showed levels of assessment. For example, for level 3, the directions and questions were in English, but the reading text was in Navajo. In level 4, the video and questions were in Navajo. Bellin also talked about assessment variables and biases that educators need to consider, such as “spaces, relationships, linguistic markers, relationships, socio-economic markers, gender, roles, activities, family structure, identity, and names.” For instance, he argued that if educators use names in test items, students need to recognize those names. Finally, Bellin stated that data suggested some students’ proficiency developed over the academic year. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This webinar is useful because it contains specific considerations to create test items. For example, teachers need to account for their linguistic markers, names, family structure, socio-economic markers, and other aspects related to the community. Considering these variables will allow teachers to have meaningful assessments for learners. Additionally, this webinar shows how formative assessments, including the pretest and posttest, help educators observe students’ development of proficiency and gains in language and culture. At the same time, this presentation shows surveys can help identify students’ needs. The information in this webinar can be applicable to children’s assessment of Indigenous languages.

Similarities. This webinar is consistent with other resources because it offers specific examples of how to assess learners by considering elements related to culture (Pino et al., 2019). Additionally, it resembles Peter et al. (2011) because it provides examples of studies to measure students’ language development. **Differences.** This webinar differs from other resources because it offers perspectives about formative assessment with

specific examples and the use of pretests and posttests to measure students' language development.

Ellis, R. (2015). *Understanding second language acquisition*. 2nd edition. Oxford University Press

Overview. This book contains information related to second language acquisition theories and offers a comprehensive explanation of the factors that affect second language acquisition, such as age, motivation, etc. For example, Ellis commented that younger learners can successfully learn a second language. Similarly, Ellis suggested motivation can contribute to language learning and distinguishes between intrinsic and instrumental motivation. While intrinsic motivation has to do with how learners identify with the culture of the language they are learning, extrinsic motivation relates to practical reasons, such as jobs. Besides these and other factors, Ellis thoroughly discussed other topics about second language acquisition, which may help understand how children and older learners acquire a language. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This study can be useful because it contains comprehensible information about how a second language is acquired. Although there might be examples related to the English language, this information may also apply to the acquisition of other languages. **Similarities.** This source is similar to Alsayed's (2003) study because of factors such as motivation and age. **Differences.** This book may be different from other sources since it may not be specific to Indigenous languages. However, it may help teachers and other community members to understand second language acquisition.

Fleer, M. (2004). The cultural construction of family involvement in early childhood education: Some Indigenous Australian perspectives. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 31(3), 51–68.

Overview. This study discusses experiences that Indigenous Australian children had at home, the community, and school. Results indicate what families of an Indigenous background perceived about early childhood education and culture. For example, parents stated their involvement, needs, and perceptions of schools as a place of service instead of power, etc. The author also suggested that non-Indigenous teachers need to understand Indigenous people's values and perspectives, which may be different from the Western world. Furthermore, results showed that the child needs to be viewed as being part of a family and community rather than an individual. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This study can be useful because family involvement in the early education of Indigenous languages plays a central role in early education. Furthermore, this study is useful because family involvement can assist teachers in understanding how to support learners. **Similarities.** This study is similar to Pino et al. (2019) because it highlights the idea that teachers need to understand the native language culture and perspectives. Furthermore, like Pino et al. (2019), Fleer (2004) suggests that non-Indigenous teachers need to understand native communities'

perspectives, which may differ from the Western World. **Differences.** This study is different from others because it focuses on the early education of Indigenous languages.

Government of Mexico. (n.d.) Anexo 6.B *Evaluación y calificación de la lengua indígena* [Document].

https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/165679/Anexo6B_Evaluacion_calificacion.pdf

Overview. This resource offers a rubric to assess and score Indigenous languages in Mexico. The rubric measures what students can do in various skills, such as language comprehension, oral expression, reading comprehension, and written expression. This assessment is for children and young people after they pass the Workshop on Indigenous Language and Culture. This rubric presents the criteria to score the Indigenous language skills and the corresponding score. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This resource can be helpful because it relates to the assessment of children and young people. Additionally, it contains specific information about the criteria to assess language skills. Although it relates to the Indigenous languages of Mexico, these criteria can be helpful for the assessment of Indigenous languages in other contexts. **Similarities.** This resource is similar to the guidelines of the Ministry of Education of New Zealand because it contains specific criteria about what learners are expected to do when learning Indigenous languages. **Differences.** This resource differs from other resources because it includes the specific scores students may obtain, where 10 is the maximum score and 7 is the minimum score. The scoring system may be different in other contexts.

Jansen, J., Marean, L., & Underriner, J. (n.d.). Benefits of Indigenous language learning

[Document]. University of Oregon. https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.uoregon.edu/dist/8/15685/files/2012/07/forwebpageBenefitsL2ECE10_17_14.pdf

Overview. This paper describes cognitive, academic, and health/wellbeing benefits. It also discusses if there is a relationship between second language acquisition in early childhood and its effects. This paper also explains the acquisition of second languages when children have learning disabilities. The authors cite several scholars that are included in this annotated bibliography. Regarding the cognitive benefits, some examples include metalinguistic knowledge about languages, which helps with the development of language skills (e.g., reading) and academic success (Hakuta, 1986). Other benefits are problem-solving skills (Jansen et al., n.d.), and favorable aging effects (Bialystok et al., 2007). The inclusion of language and culture in the curriculum for Native American children has more benefits, such as academic success and well-being. Research also revealed that learning Indigenous languages increased academic achievement (Lipka & McCarty, 1994), retention rates, and attendance (Angelo et al., 2022). Immersion schools for Indigenous languages have also shown students' success (McCarty, 1996) and contributed to their health and well-being (Goodkind et al., 2011) Research also indicates

that there are no negative effects to being bilingual (e.g., Paradis, Genesee, & Crago, 2011). Moreover, bilingual people can switch between languages (Lanza, 1992), which may relate to their high cognitive abilities. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This paper is useful because it states the benefits of learning Indigenous languages and provides citations from researchers to justify it. **Similarities.** This paper is similar to studies about the benefits of learning languages in general. The benefits stated in this paper also relate to the benefits that the Ministry of Education of New Zealand (2023) provided on its website. **Differences.** This paper differs from other studies because it specifically refers to the benefits of learning Indigenous languages by stating what researchers discussed about these languages.

Knauer, H., Kariger, P., Jakiela, P., Ozier, O. & Fernald, L. (2019). Multilingual assessment of early child development: Analyses from repeated observations of children in Kenya. *Developmental Science*, 22(5), e12875.

Overview. This study explains that children may learn the Indigenous language at home prior to starting school, where they may receive instruction in the societal language. Children may have assessments in the societal language that may not show their language development. Thus, researchers adapted and validated assessments to measure vocabulary development. This assessment included expressive and receptive vocabulary. A total of 505 children from Kenya (2 to 6 years old) participated in this study. The tests were in three languages: Luo (native language), Swahili, and English (official language). Results showed that younger children provided answers in Luo more than older children in the expressive vocabulary task. Scores of the receptive vocabulary in Luo and Swahili indicated a correlation with the receptive vocabulary in English. Parents' literacy in Luo correlated with children's English vocabulary; however, parents' literacy in English did not show this correlation. More tests are necessary to understand children's development of languages. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This study can be useful because it measures children's vocabulary knowledge of their native and societal language to understand their language development. Additionally, it accounts for an important factor, which is parents' literacy of languages to understand children's development of languages. Examining parents' knowledge and use of the native language can be helpful to understand children's knowledge and use of their native language at home. At the same time, it can enable educators to understand the support children may receive from parents to preserve their native languages. **Similarities.** This study is similar to Whelshula's (2020) presentation because it focuses on vocabulary development in early childhood. Similarly, this study resembles Corn's TED Talk since it highlights the importance of parents using their native language at home. **Differences.** This study differs from other studies or resources because researchers adapted and validated tests to measure children's language development. Other studies or resources provide information about how to provide instruction and assess students. However, this research measures vocabulary development

in their native and other languages, which may help educators understand children's vocabulary acquisition.

Morgan, K., & Lilly, O. (2023, July 13). *How to start an immersion school*. [Webinar]. Office of Indian Education Technical Assistance. Native American Language Resource Center. Summer Research Series.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hGappSEAIY&list=PLrgsRiBnPRQEOKSz_w_jucREN2mGUOKX3&index=16

Overview. The presenters discussed types of language programs for Indigenous languages and mentioned they may be similar to foreign language programs. Additionally, they said that these programs may be different across contexts. Morgan focused on partial, dual, and full immersion programs. Partial immersion programs may be suitable when students do not have an understanding or exposure to the immersion language at home. An example of a partial immersion program is when students receive instruction in the immersion language until second grade and they start receiving part of the instruction in English in third grade until fifth grade (the level of English across third to fifth grade is the same). This is an example of one model, but there are other models. Other options within partial programs can be 90/10. For instance, learners start with a higher percentage of the language they are learning than English. From kindergarten to fifth grade, the percentage of the language they are learning decreases from 90% to 50%. Similarly, the percentage of English increased from 10% in kindergarten to 50% in fifth grade. This model becomes similar to a dual language program in fifth grade. Dual language programs can have native and non-native speakers, and instruction is in the language they are learning and English. They may have a 50-50 percentage. Furthermore, the language proficiency of students may be similar to full immersion. An example is the College Gate Elementary Yup'ik Immersion Program in Alaska. They can split languages across time and content. For example, social studies and science are taught in Yup'ik, and math and language in English. Regarding full immersion programs, Morgan said that full immersion programs showed the most positive proficiency outcomes. For example, students in this program demonstrated the highest proficiency and fluency, followed by those in the dual immersion program. The content in immersion programs is taught in the immersion language and students' fluency in this language is high. An example of a full immersion school is the Cherokee Immersion School. Besides programs, Morgan and Lilly referred to school models, such as a school within a school, charter schools, lab schools, and private schools. The presenters stated each of them has pros and cons. Furthermore, Morgan offered information about the immersion community engagement and development strategy and the readiness assessment (Office of Indian Education, 2023), which helps determine issues or create new programs. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This webinar is useful because it offers details about partial, dual, and full immersion programs for Indigenous languages. The presenters provided specific examples of different programs in the U.S. Additionally, this resource can be useful because it contains pros and cons about school

models, such as school within a school, charter, lab, and private schools. The detailed information about the programs can be helpful for the Wisconsin First Nations to create or make implementations to programs. **Similarities.** This resource is similar to other studies because it shows the models may be similar to those of other foreign languages in the U.S., as presented in the webinar. **Differences.** This resource is different from other resources because it contains specific examples of programs for Indigenous languages in the U.S. It also provides definitions for the language programs and pros and cons.

Peter, L., Sly, G., & Hirata-Edds, T. (2011). Using language assessment to inform instruction in Indigenous language immersion. In D. Tedick, D. Christian, & T. Fortune (Eds.), *Immersion education: Practices, policies, possibilities* (pp. 187–210). Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters.

Overview. Peter et al. (2011) examined instruction and assessment for the Cherokee language in this book chapter. They discussed how the Cherokee language was lost, its revitalization process, Cherokee immersion programs, second language acquisition, and assessment. The authors also studied children’s acquisition of verb morphology in terms of the third-person singular and plural present tense in the Cherokee Kindergarten Immersion Language Assessment (C-KILA), which intends to measure students’ language development from kindergarten to fourth grade. Specialists analyzed the acceptability 13 children had towards the use of 24 verbs. Results revealed that most children could not identify the verb root but could use the pronominal prefix, aspect, and tense markers. Based on these results, some changes to instruction were implemented, which led to children’s development of the Cherokee language. The authors also provided suggestions connected to language acquisition theories. They suggested that Indigenous language teaching should not only focus on input but also comprehensible output (Swain, 1985). The authors also recommended tasks that promote the communicative use of the language in context. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This book chapter is useful because it offers perspectives about assessment for children (Kindergarten to 3rd grade) in the Cherokee language, which may be adapted to other languages. Furthermore, it offers insights that support the study of the acquisition of linguistic features of Indigenous languages to inform instruction, assessment, and second language acquisition. It also accounts for the importance of incorporating a communicative approach to teaching and notions of second language acquisition theories to assess young learners of First Nations languages. As the authors noted, some teachers may provide instruction based on drills or other methods that only rely on input. However, it is necessary for learners to interact with others and use language in communication. **Similarities.** This book chapter is similar to Dr. Whelshula’s (2020) presentation because it discusses the importance of second language acquisition and what young learners can do at each stage. Furthermore, it relates to Dr. Whelshula’s (2020) presentation because the authors suggest tasks that allow learners to communicate orally instead of only providing input. **Differences.** Unlike other studies or resources, this book chapter offers the results of a study they conducted to inform instruction, assessment, and

second language development. Furthermore, the authors studied specific linguistic features, which is relevant since scholars suggested it is necessary to understand the acquisition of Indigenous languages.

Pino, M., Cubillos, F., & Pinto, D. (2019). Evaluación en contexto MAPUCE BAFKEHCE: Las voces del profesorado en la Araucanía. *Estudios pedagógicos (Valdivia)*, 45(2), 101–119.

Overview. Pino et al. (2019) explored assessment by accounting for the language and culture of the Mapuce Bafkehce community in Chile, South America. They also defined assessment and explored assessment types in this community. The authors conducted a study and used the dialogue approach *kishu kinkelay ta che* (“enfoque dialógico-kishy kinkelay ta che”, p. 101) to converse with teachers of a Mapuce school. Furthermore, they analyzed documents and suggested guiding principles, such as identity, to assess students. These principles accounted for the territory, culture, and First Nations languages. Another relevant principle included learning to know by doing. This study showed the importance of using a methodological approach that relates to the culture of Indigenous communities.

Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections). This article is useful because, as the authors indicated, this study revitalizes the knowledge of the community and allows a conversation between this community and the Western system of Chilean education. Although this study did not specifically refer to children, the authors argue that non-Indigenous teachers need to know their Indigenous students and understand their culture. This research is in the context of Chile and refers to a specific native language. However, this study can be relevant for other Indigenous languages and contexts because the principles the authors refer to can relate to other Indigenous languages.

Similarities. The principles of identity that the authors point out resemble what Corn (2019) suggested in a TED Talk presentation. (In his presentation, Corn referred to the relevance of identity in the Menominee community.)

Differences. Unlike other studies or resources, this study used a specific framework of dialogue (*kishu kinkelay ta che*) to conduct this research, which closely relates to the native communities. Contrary to other studies, the authors referred to teachers working in Indigenous language schools.

Raban, B., Griffin, P., Coates, H., & Flear, M. (2002). Profiling preschool literacy: Evidence of Indigenous children’s capabilities. *Australian Research in Early Childhood Education*, 9(1), 74–85.

Overview. This study focuses on a pilot study about Indigenous children’s preschool profile related to English literacy awareness and understanding. A total of 385 children from four states in Australia participated in this study. These children had an Indigenous and non-Indigenous profile. There were three categories (modeled, shared, independent) and seven literacy profiles. An example of the literacy profiles include: “Understand that printed texts are ‘read’ from left to right and top to bottom of the lines” (p. 78). Results showed that most of the children had an independent profile, which means they performed “independently in all the descriptors” (p. 79). Young male children who had an

Indigenous background from remote and rural areas also demonstrated a good performance. Findings also showed that teachers found it beneficial to know the students' profiles. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** Although this article was about English literacy for Indigenous languages, this information can be helpful for partial or dual language programs. As presenters stated, programs had different percentages of instruction in English and First Nations languages. Therefore, understanding children's profiles can be helpful. Furthermore, examining students' profiles can be applicable to other languages. The literacy descriptors about English also relate to other presentations. For instance, Redgrave (2023) discussed the challenges to start reading a book in a linear manner because of the differences between the Western world and First Nations communities. **Similarities.** This article resembles resources that consider both Indigenous and non-Indigenous languages. This information may be relevant because resources and educators indicated that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students can take First Nations language courses (Morgan, 2023). **Differences.** This article is different from other studies because it focuses on the English literacy profile of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children.

Redgrave, C. (2023). *Curriculum and teacher training* [Webinar]. Office of Indian Education Technical Assistance. Native American Language Resource Center. Summer Research Series.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D1fSNW59H7s&list=PLrgsRiBnPRQEOKSz_w_jucREN2mGUOKX3&index=13

Overview. In her webinar presentation, Redgrave (2023) discussed curriculum and teaching for Indigenous languages and offered examples about assessment. She focused on the vision of the Indigenous communities and compared it to the Western world, which is fundamental to understanding the curriculum and culture of Indigenous languages. The circular vision instead of a linear one is prominent in these communities. The presenter also asked the audience two relevant questions, which were: "What does it mean to be Indigenous?" and "How do we remain Indigenous?" The presenter also offered examples of assessment, such as matching, filling, conjugating verbs, etc. These examples were for assessing students at the university level. However, they can be adapted to other ages. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This webinar presentation is useful because it offers educators an overview of differences between the Western world and Indigenous communities, which educators need to account for in the teaching and assessment of Indigenous languages. Additionally, this information is useful for educators who teach multilingual learners, including students with an Indigenous language background. Furthermore, this webinar offers specific examples of assessment. These assessment activities can be applicable to early childhood. **Similarities.** This presentation resembles other studies because it shows similar tasks to assess Indigenous languages at earlier stages of learning the language. **Differences.** This presentation differs from other studies or resources because it states the

differences between the Western world and Indigenous communities with specific examples.

TE TAHUHU O TE MATAURANGA. Ministry of Education (2023). *Te Reo Mori in English-medium schools. Curriculum guidelines* [Website].

<https://tereomaori.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-guidelines>

Overview. This resource offers curriculum guidelines for the Māori language for Year 1 to Year 13 students in New Zealand. These guidelines include valuable information such as teaching materials, regional dialects, and benefits of learning the Māori language (cultural, social, cognitive, linguistic, economic and career, and personal benefits). Other topics include competencies to develop Māori learners' profiles, inquiry cycle of teaching, a communicative approach, and intercultural communicative language teaching. The guidelines also refer to assessment and self-assessment, planning considerations, such as how teachers learn from students and vice versa, and how students learn from each other. Other topics these guidelines cover include the use of technology, program planning, and levels. These guidelines also propose content, text types, and what students can do at each level of language skills. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** These guidelines are useful because they are comprehensive, and the variety of information and examples they provide may apply to the teaching and assessment of other Indigenous languages. Additionally, the information on this website provides tools that consider second language acquisition. For example, it emphasizes a communicative approach to teaching Indigenous languages. **Similarities.** The guidelines consider many aspects of Indigenous languages and cultures that other scholars in this annotated bibliography advocated (e.g. Peter et al., 2011). An example includes a communicative approach to teaching Indigenous languages, which aligns with Peter et al.'s (2011) paper. To illustrate, Peter et al. (2011) suggest more activities beyond input. These activities need to help learners to communicate. Another relevant highlight of this resource is the acceptance of regional dialects, which aligns with the language varieties acceptance that scholars advocated for other languages (Shin & Hudgens-Henderson, 2017). Furthermore, the alignment between instruction, assessment, and vision is consistent with what other educators referred to (Redgrave, 2023). **Differences.** This website differs from other resources because it contains complete information to assess learners from Year 1 to Year 13.

University of Oregon (2023). The Northwest Indian languages benchmarks. *Language proficiency benchmarks* [Website]. <https://nili.uoregon.edu/language-proficiency-benchmarks/>

Overview. The University of Oregon (2023) describes the Northwest Indian Language Benchmarks prepared by the Northwest Indian Language Institute (2010). These benchmarks are adapted from the ACTFL Standards. This website provides benchmark and functions definitions and a functions definitions list. The authors developed six levels of performance instead of the three proficiency levels that ACTFL describes because they

explain it would take longer to achieve high proficiency in the student’s native languages. The complexity of the morphology, syntax, and culture of Northwest Indigenous languages is another factor they accounted for to have more levels. Additionally, the authors propose specific topics and functions instead of what is in ACTFL because they explain that ACTFL is more general. Through these topics and functions, the authors suggest what students need to do at different levels, which serves as a form of assessment. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This resource is useful because it offers insights into how to adapt the ACTFL guidelines to a particular Indigenous community or district. A limitation may be the explanation of Benchmark VI (Master speaker) because it is only one paragraph compared to the detailed description of the other benchmarks. **Similarities.** Like Andía’s (2021) presentation, this resource suggests that it is necessary to adapt the ACTFL guidelines to specific Indigenous languages. In line with other scholars (Whelshula, 2020), the benchmarks incorporate notions of culture, topics, and functions related to the culture of these communities. **Differences.** Unlike other resources (Andía, 2021, Whelshula, 2020), these benchmarks refer to what students can do at the different proficiency levels for listening, reading, writing, speaking, and culture. Contrary to how language skills are referred to in studies and other resources, reading and writing are literacy skills instead of language skills. Furthermore, the authors suggest teachers may choose whether they will teach writing and reading or not. These resources do not specifically refer to children’s age contrary to other sources (e.g., Whelshula, 2020). However, they offer a perspective about benchmarks for different proficiency levels considering the ACTFL guidelines.

Whelshula, C. (2020, February 6). *Indigenous language assessment for early childhood and beyond* [PowerPoint Slides]. Native Language Community Coordination. A Resource of the Administration for Native Americans.

Overview. Whelshula (2020) explored language development (including first language acquisition), second language acquisition for early childhood, and assessment for children who are learning Indigenous languages. The author focused on language development from ages six months to six years and offered examples of tasks and assessments that children of different ages can do. Whelshula organized these examples in terms of areas to assess language, such as comprehension/receptive and speech/expressive. In addition, the author provided insights about vocabulary proficiency at the different stages and recommendations for immersion programs and lessons. **Usefulness (Possible Relationship to Wisconsin First Nations – Reflections).** This presentation is useful because it shows notions of first and second language acquisition, and examples to assess children from 3 to 7 years old. Additionally, the tasks proposed by the author account for children’s receptive and expressive language abilities and culture. **Similarities.** This study resembles other studies, such as Peter et al. (2011), because the authors reflect on what early childhood students can do at the different stages by considering not only receptive tasks but also expressive tasks, which responds to Peter et al.’s call to advocate

for output tasks. **Differences.** This study differs from Peter et al.'s study in that Whelshula did not discuss the acquisition of verbs and their relationship to morphology.

Conclusion

This preliminary annotated bibliography shows studies and other resources related to Indigenous language assessment, teaching, benefits of learning Indigenous languages, and language programs. The information about the scholars' and educators' practices and efforts to improve the teaching and assessment of Indigenous languages in various contexts may be applicable to Wisconsin First Nations.

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