



'Nano'ke'sila Contemplating TELEĆANEN Searching the Mind

Faculty of Education

Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization:
Honouring, Respecting, and Celebrating Indigenous Language Learning

AN EVALUATION STUDY: SUMMARY AND RESPONSE

Elder's Words

Higaman's k'odłat gan's Kwagu'teg le gan's Kwak'wala.

SEL,WÁN

TUE STI EZS ÍY ÁI, ET TFE SŠENIEN ET DÁDESET TFE SENĆOFEN SKÁL TFE ŪSI,ÁLTEN, TÁ LE U TUO TFE ČELÁÑEN TFE SKÁL ŁTE. LÁE LE SEN ET TFE SKAPEŁ LÁE TFE MUSEUM EZSIÁ ČELAKEŁ, NII ŪO EZS SKI,ELAS TFE ŠKÁLEŪENS TŪU NE,NIIŁIYE. NEN ŪO ŪS KÁLNOŪET SU YEŪOST ET TFE ČSLÁ,E ET TFE NENI,ŁIYE, EN EZS TELFIN TFE SKÁL ŁTE I,U SQÁ EZS KÓKEL TFE SKÁL ŁTE. NII,ČE TFE SČLÁES TFE ÍY Á,I ET TFE DÁDES ET TFE SENĆOFEN SKÁL. EWES JÁŁ TFE SKÁL ŁTE I,U TÁU TFE SWENÁNS I TFE WELJISTENS, MEQ ET TFE ŪENTOL ET TFE WŠÁNEČEŁ. NII ET TFE ÍY SČLÁES ŪENIN ŪS ÍY Á,I TFE ČEOUS ET TFE SKÁL ŁTE, TUE SŪÁS ŁTE.

Awilaxsila laxan's yakandasi, kan's ugwake thlamka xan's gayulas.

SEL,WÁN

HO ŪS JÁN SU XEĆT I TES TFE NE ŠKÁLEŪENS I EWES TW SŪŪELTEN TFE SKÁL ŁTE, FEIT U, STIS ŁTE ET ČELÁUIŁ E TŪÁE. HOŠ NII, ET TITEN TFE SKÁLEŪENS ET TFE WŠÁNEČ, STIS ET NENIŁIYE ET TWŁIŁEQ TFE ŠWEŁOKE, I TFE ÁLENENEŪ ŁTE, I TÁU TFE SWENÁNS I TFE SKÁLS I TFE SOXHELI, TIXÁ,EL,S MEQ ET TFE IŁEZSILEŪ. NII,SE MEQ ET TFE SWENÁNS ET TFE WŠÁNEČ, IŁEZSILEŪ TFE SWENÁNS ET XÁ,EL,S. FEIT U EŪOT TFE SFELITKEŁ TFE WUJISTENS TFE WŠÁNEČ. SŪÁS ŁTE TFE TŪÁWEŁ, I TFE TFEĆUTWEN MEQ ET TFE SČUÁT ŁTE. EWES HEHOI OL Č,ŁÁE TFE SŪŪEL TFE SKÁL ŁTE, FEIT U TU,O TFE ČELÁÑEN TFE SKÁL ŁTE. NII U OŪS TFE STELITKEŁ MEQ EXIN LÁE



ONE STUDENT'S DREAM STORY

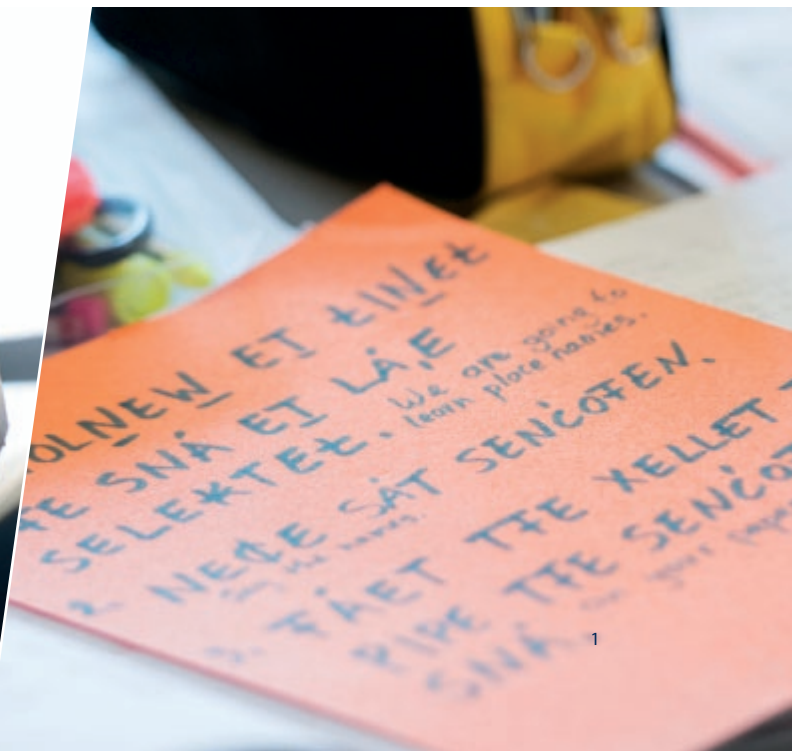
I was hiking up in the mountains—it was a time not long past—and I was praying for the WŠÁNEČ people, for the Creator to give us strength as a nation. During this hike I had a dream about an old man. He had long grey hair. He was holding a white box, and he asked me to come and take a look. He didn't make me feel afraid. In fact, I felt welcomed to look.

Inside the box was a turtle. It didn't look well at all. It was sick and weak. The old man lifted the turtle from the box, and as he did so, the turtle changed into a rattle. The old man shook it. There were lines on the rattle, and one of the lines was our language. Our language holds our people together and tells us what we belong to and what we are a part of. Language is learning—learning that is relevant to our children and our communities.

This dream tells me that the rattle will help us. It will help us to deal with the damage caused to our people by residential schools. It will help us heal our past. It will help us raise our children.

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Executive Summary

The Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization (BEDILR) at the University of Victoria was launched in 2011 with two main goals: (1) to address the need to revitalize highly endangered Indigenous languages, and (2) to train a new generation of language speakers to teach the languages to other members of their communities. The four-year ladder program provides a foundation in Indigenous language, and skills in language revitalization strategies, and elementary school teaching. Graduates from the BEDILR program are eligible to be certified teachers in the Province of BC. The program philosophy, structure, content, and community-based delivery work together to foreground the centrality of language in the revitalization of Indigenous cultures and the healing of communities from a historical and continuing experience of colonization.

This formative evaluation, conducted in 2014, provides a snapshot of a particular 'moment' in the life of an ongoing program that is fluid and responsive. At the time of the evaluation, the BEDILR had been delivered in two Vancouver Island communities—WSÁNEĆ in the South Island, and the Kwakwaka'wakw communities of the North Island—as a key support to revitalizing the SENĆOŦEN and Kwak'waka/Bakwamk'ala languages respectively.

The evaluation was undertaken by Dr. Catherine McGregor. Taking an indigenist stance, it engaged students, Elders, instructors, practicum mentors and supervisors, and UVic and community planners and administrators in exploring the following key questions: How has the BEDILR program achieved its goals to prepare proficient language speakers and educators? What factors, processes, or contexts influenced the program's success? What program elements merit greater attention or change? And which language learning and teaching strategies did students find most effective?

The evaluation affirms the program's success in supporting many students to graduate with university credentials. Most graduates of the first two deliveries are now teaching in immersion contexts in First Nations schools or language in public schools. They are well placed to lead their communities in Indigenous language revitalization and to teach a new generation of Indigenous students and their families to become proficient speakers of their language.

The evaluation also suggests ways to strengthen the BEDILR's effectiveness in future deliveries. It highlights the importance of further Indigenizing efforts at UVic, the Faculty of Education, and throughout the program's coursework. It recommends more strict prerequisite requirements and continued development of effective ways to support language proficiency building within the program. It suggests refining procedures for partnership communication, student policies, and student support, and developing guides for supervising and training program supports within participating communities.

The program has already begun to address key areas highlighted during the evaluation. For example, the program now offers enhanced opportunities for a more intensive focus on building Indigenous language proficiency. The recommendation to develop core competencies remains an important outcome for the program to work toward.

The BEDILR program, unique in Canada, serves as a potent model of community-university partnership based on principles of mutual respect and collaboration. It will continue to work with communities throughout BC and across the country to revitalize and strengthen Indigenous languages and communities. As the program evolves, it will play a vital role in promoting reconciliation with, and resurgence of, Indigenous communities.



I spent about ten minutes talking to [the students] in our language, and [they] said “that is something to see.” The hope—the younger ones are looking up to the new generation of teachers, they are looking to them to see that they are making it. We can believe in ourselves a bit more ... everyone working together to make it happen. (Student)

The Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization

A LADDERED CURRICULUM

The University of Victoria's Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization (BEDILR) is a four-year program that allows students to gain a credential each year and ladder into the next step the following year. At the time this evaluation was completed, students began the program in the Certificate in Aboriginal Language Revitalization (offered by Continuing Studies, UVic), which ladders into the Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization (Faculty of Education, UVIC) in second year. Students who graduate with these credentials are in a position to undertake various Indigenous language revitalization projects in their communities.

Significant program changes have been made since the evaluation was completed, and these changes are described in the "Moving Ahead" section of this document. At the time, students who continued into the program's third and fourth years could gain credentials to teach in the K–12 school system in their own communities and across BC. Students who completed Year 3 could earn a Developmental Standard Teaching Certificate (DSTC), which qualifies them to teach their Indigenous language in BC schools (for a period of up

to four years, at which time they need to complete a full BEd). In the fourth and final year of the BEDILR program, graduating students receive a Bachelor of Education and are eligible to teach across the K–12 curriculum in English and in their Indigenous language.

MORE THAN A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The BEDILR promotes the important goal of providing a teaching credential to Indigenous students in BC, but it goes much further than mainstream teacher education programs in its goals and outcomes.

First, the program provides postsecondary education for a group of students who were often excluded from Western schools and educational institutions. Some students in the BEDILR felt they did not belong in mainstream schools and were either 'pushed out' or dropped out. Others are survivors of residential schools and are healing from that experience, including its intergenerational legacy in their families and communities. The BEDILR program creates an educational space for that healing and an opportunity to respect and promote Indigenous ways of learning and teaching.

Being native and young is hard, our people are going through such pain and heartache, but then you learn your language, and you have something to be proud of. It belongs to you, you have names for these islands, they still belong to you. It makes them light up and be proud again. There is so much beauty in the language. You can know the territory, unleash secrets, tell your old stories... If we can all be fluent in the language, with a new outlook on life, we can have a different world. (Student)

Second, the program is delivered in the students' communities. Given the complex legacy of Indigenous education policies and practices, many Indigenous communities are challenged to find sufficient resources & implement effective programming. The UVIC administration of the BEDILR collaborates with communities around financial and administrative support to ensure the delivery of quality programming at the local level. Community delivery also means partnering with communities to use protocols and decision-making processes that differ from more typical university-based teacher education programs.

Finally, the BEDILR aims to support Indigenous communities in their goals to transform, regenerate, and decolonize. The program uses educational tools and processes to provide new learning opportunities for Indigenous peoples—ones that renew and revitalize their languages, generate educational systems that end the colonization and marginalization of Indigenous peoples, and support communities to move forward in the 21st century with pride and purpose.

Given these goals, UVic's BEDILR program actively engages with Indigenous partners and key decision makers who co-construct and manage the program to ensure it benefits their learners and communities. The program strives to use a curriculum that is centred in Indigenous content, pedagogical strategies, and approaches. These features foster learning that goes far beyond classroom walls, extending into community and cultural settings and grounding Indigenous languages in the traditional and contemporary ways of Indigenous peoples.



The Evaluation Study

BEGINNING IN A GOOD WAY

In February 2014, the Indigenous Education Unit in the Faculty of Education at UVic issued a request for proposals to conduct this evaluation study. In June 2014, Indigenous Education selected Dr. Catherine McGregor to lead the research. Dr. McGregor's strong commitment to cultural inclusion shaped the evaluation design in many ways:

- An Indigenous advisory team guided the research.
- Indigenous values influenced the study design.
- The themes of language learning, language teaching, and engaging community members infused the study design and questions, reflecting the Indigenous communities' and the Indigenous advisory team's priorities.
- An Indigenous research assistant with ties to the communities in the study helped conduct the research.
- Community leaders hosted meetings using local protocols and introduced Dr. McGregor to community members before they engaged in the research.
- Local Indigenous protocols shaped ways of asking for consent and interviewing participants.
- Elders shared their expertise and perspectives on the program throughout the study.
- Indigenous languages were integrated into the final report.

A FORMATIVE APPROACH TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The BEDILR is a relatively new program that has been delivered in its entirety in two communities. Measuring impact in a program at this early stage calls for a formative strategy aimed at increasing understanding of factors that have influenced the program's outcomes at an early stage of the program's implementation. A formative strategy also helps generate advice to program planners and administrators on how the program might be changed or adapted in future offerings.

Thus, this evaluation study posed seven key open-ended questions to help identify a wide range of potential factors, drivers, or influences on the program and its outcomes and that tap into the unique experiences of students, Elders, instructors, program planners or administrators, and practicum mentors and supervisors.

The research questions were explored through a variety of methods, including interviews, focus groups, and written questionnaires. To add to these methods, the principal investigator also conducted a content analysis of BEDILR program documents.

[Language is] ... vital. Our people need it to be connected, connected to our families, our territories, our way of life, our spiritual beliefs... Our traditional ways of teaching ... [need to be] out on the land, and learning about our territory. They can start each day with a prayer, a prayer they can say themselves. To learn like that is how we think about our lives, this is how our ancestors conducted their lives, and it acknowledges the sacredness of all that we do. (SENĆŦEN language teacher)

SEVEN KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent has the BEDILR program met the needs and interests of the students and communities who were involved?
2. In what ways has it achieved its ultimate outcome—to prepare proficient language speakers and educators?
3. What factors, processes, or contexts influenced the program's success?
4. What program elements merit greater attention or change?
5. To what extent has the program tapped into the strengths and assets of the community, particularly Elders and other cultural knowers?
6. As language proficiency and language learning were key components of the program, what were the most effective learning and teaching strategies?
7. How might these outcomes inform future program offerings, models for delivery, student support, and implementation issues?

Who conducted the research?

Principal Researcher: Dr. Catherine McGregor
Research Assistant: WELCIEM Claxton

Indigenous Advisory Team

Kendra Underwood (WSÁNEĆ School Board)
Dave Underwood (WSÁNEĆ School Board)
Sara Child (Kwakiutl Nation)
Tye Swallow (WSÁNEĆ School Board)
Marion Hunt (Kwakiutl Nation)
Dr. Onowa McIvor (University of Victoria)
Dr. Trish Rosborough (University of Victoria)
Aliki Marinakis (University of Victoria)

Who participated in this study?

Students: (Kwakwaka'wakw – 10; WSÁNEĆ – 7)

Program designers, advisors or administrators:
(Kwakwaka'wakw – 9; WSÁNEĆ – 3; UVic – 6)
Instructors (5) and language instructors (6)
Mentors or supervising teachers
(Kwakwaka'wakw – 2; WSÁNEĆ – 3)

Elders: (Kwakwaka'wakw – 10; WSÁNEĆ – 4)



Evaluation Results

SUCCESSSES

This section outlines the key outcomes that study participants reported, highlighting not only direct program outcomes for students, but also broader ripple effects in the wider community.

Role models and mentors

Both BEDILR communities cited as a central success the number of students who have graduated with diplomas and degrees. Many students succeeded in their programs despite entering the program with little formal education and with many family and community responsibilities. For example, one student began the program with a grade 5 education and graduated with a Diploma in Indigenous language revitalization. A well-known community Elder graduated with a Bachelor's degree. Many students were parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and important figures in their community who took lead roles in cultural events and celebrations. In different ways, all these students inspired others in their student cohort and community with their desire and motivation to learn. Given the history of residential schooling and colonial education, the importance of these role models and mentors in the participating communities cannot be overstated.

Language resurgence

The ability to speak one's own Indigenous language is a concrete example of progress in regaining what has been lost over time. Many students and program administrators named improved language competence as their primary indicator of how the BEDILR program had made a difference in the lives of individuals and the community. The story of the individual who can say a prayer in the Long House, the student who has introduced other family members, the person who can speak with Elders at a community event, the parent who can now compose a story in their own Indigenous language and share it with their children or family members—these are but a few of the examples students gave of how language pride contributed to a strong sense of accomplishment and of doing something for their community.

Exponential growth

As the number of program graduates steadily increased, more and more individuals gained the capacity to take on leadership roles in the community, sharing work done by only a few before the BEDILR's inception. During the evaluation, many students expressed a strong desire to learn and to serve. The willingness to work collaboratively



to benefit the broadest number of people is a key principle of building capacity in a community and of creating conditions for widespread success, both in language learning and program completion.

Activist teacher leaders

Students spoke about their willingness and ability to serve as activist teachers, taking on issues that concerned them and others in their communities. For example, one Kwakwaka'wakw student described the pride she felt in building her learning from a First People's English course into her lesson plans for her practicum and in using these stories to engage her students in thinking "proudly" about themselves, their communities, and their culture. A BEDILR instructor described a student who, upon learning about the history of Indigenous women losing their Indian status after marrying white men, began to actively search out ways to support women engaged in this ongoing struggle.

Legacy

Students from both Kwakwaka'wakw and WSÁNEĆ communities spoke to creating a legacy. One student highlighted the BEDILR's impact on young people, while another noted the importance of having Indigenous teacher educators working in schools and being recognized as professionals. A third student talked about how new Indigenous teachers would be able to "Indigenize" the curriculum, creating spaces for all students and teachers to learn and supporting a healing process for Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities alike. A BEDILR program administrator spoke to the program's legacy at the institutional level—specifically, about university personnel who have been forced to think about the ways that institutional processes maintain colonized ways of thinking and doing. In this deep learning process, they are becoming Indigenous allies.

Laddered success

Some participants cited the BEDILR's laddered design as an important contributor to success. This design provided community members with ongoing, visible evidence of progress. Students earned certificates and diplomas early in the program, and the community was able to see and celebrate these achievements. In other words, laddering creates a powerful motivational tool for everyone—students, community members, and program administrators.

Strong partnerships

The BEDILR's outcomes are rooted in successful partnerships between the university and the two participating communities, which helped build a program that met community needs and institutional expectations and allowed all partners to bring their strengths to the table. For example, program administrators in WSÁNEĆ commented on the sense of collaborative teamwork that developed throughout the BEDILR delivery and on the flexible, emergent nature of the partnership. As issues and concerns arose, as perspectives changed, or as needs were identified, the two organizations moved forward in tandem, responding with whatever worked for the context and the situation.

Within the university, the BEDILR program depends on strong partnership between Indigenous Education, where it is administered, and the Department of Linguistics and the Certificate in Aboriginal Language Revitalization program, as well as good relationships across many UVic faculties and departments. Courses are drawn from nine different academic units across campus.

Cultural leadership

Cultural leadership was critical to the success of developing the BEDILR. From the start, the program attracted the interest of community leaders who generated support for it and gave it a high profile. The program also had a powerful impact in giving voice to the issue of language, a central concern to community leaders and the community. Moving forward, in their work with one another and with other communities, cultural and community leaders will be able to speak about the power of the BEDILR in revitalizing language and in building a powerful platform to promote language learning in schools, affecting generations to come.

Inclusion

A key success—and a key challenge—in the BEDILR deliveries was the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges in most courses in the program. Instructors and students alike cited this issue frequently.

Many non-Indigenous instructors spoke of the program's role in supporting them to engage more fully with an indigenist stance to postsecondary education. One instructor spoke about the need for trust and the importance of building long-term relationships and reciprocity as necessary conditions for non-Indigenous instructors to truly serve

community goals. Other non-Indigenous instructors also spoke of the challenge of bringing culturally responsive practices to educational content with a strong Western focus. Faced with this challenge, one instructor incorporated several activities suggested by students into her course—for example, place-based learning, attending community events, and using Indigenous tools such as the *Circle of Courage* and the *Four Seasons Quadrant* to talk about student learning and development.

Many students described examples of the program's respect for cultural knowledge and protocols, including starting classes with a traditional prayer, incorporating a talking circle into class, including storytelling by Elders, promoting Indigenous authors as content in English courses, and integrating drumming and rhythms into a math class. Looking to the future, many students also spoke to the need to continue to pull away from Western approaches to teaching and learning and to create transformative spaces in which to legitimize and honour Indigenous ways of teaching. Language learning and educational practices that value and promote Indigenous ways provide the medium for healing and spiritual engagement that build Indigenous identities and promote deep, culturally relevant learning experiences.

This [immersion] is an authentic decolonizing process, one I can speak to and support. It happens naturally. We put ourselves into that line of thinking, where we can join in the old conversation, to think the way our ancestors thought.
(SENĆOŦEN language instructor)

CONTEXTS

This section discusses the complexity, uniqueness, and richness of the BEDILR program in its diverse settings. Historical, administrative, linguistic, cultural, social, and value-based contexts had important impacts on the program directions, outcomes, and decisions. This section highlights how these contexts framed the experiences of students, instructors, and administrators.

Colonial legacies

The trauma of residential schooling shapes the experiences of BEDILR students and the communities where they hope to teach. The need for language revitalization stems directly from the history of residential schooling, which sought to erase the languages of Indigenous peoples in Canada and which resulted in few remaining first-language speakers in many communities. The Elders in this study were particularly compelling in their descriptions of the losses they experienced as a result of residential schooling. The violence and loss are significant, and require strategies and approaches that emphasize healing and giving voice to the events that have scarred and shaped Indigenous peoples throughout BC and Canada.

The current structure and focus of BC's schools, which has ignored, erased, and delegitimized indigeneity, are also part of the context that has impacted many students in the BEDILR program. These contexts value and legitimize

Western worldviews and have naturalized approaches to education and teacher education that fail to capture or recognize the potential of the epistemologies and ontologies of Indigenous peoples.

Community needs

Both WSÁNEĆ and Kwakwaka'wakw communities had strong leaders and language champions with extensive experience in language revitalization. These leaders were powerful political voices with considerable community influence and were important allies to the BEDILR program planners. They also steered the program to respond to local needs, goals, hopes, and outcomes. For example, the North Island Kwakwaka'wakw community sought to increase the number of Indigenous teachers qualified to work in the local public schools and to ensure they would receive the same professional recognition and salary as other BC teachers. In WSÁNEĆ, a key priority was to generate enough teachers to work in their band-operated SENĆOŦEN immersion school, building on their existing preschool language nest programs.

The BEDILR program was delivered in two communities with different institutional contexts. For example, WSÁNEĆ has an adult learning centre and had previous experience partnering with UVic and other institutions to offer adult programming. The North Island Kwakwaka'wakw community has fewer adult education resources, but it had a strong community advisory group to guide the BEDILR implementation process.





There is nothing more politicized than our language in our community. (Student)

The BEDILR differs from mainstream teacher education programs in its model of shared program design and administration. UVic enters into formal agreements with participating Indigenous communities, and program faculty and staff receive advice from community-based advisory groups. No program decisions are taken without deep, meaningful consultation with the community, resulting in programs that meet community needs, but also making program administration complex and time consuming.

Tensions

Both communities have strong visions about building capacity to strengthen language use and prepare teachers to increase language proficiency among children and families. However, pre-existing conflicts about which approaches might work best, which orthographies should be used, and which community leaders should be supported complicated matters in both communities, as did tensions about perceived family status and formal and informal levels of power, control, and authority. In the evaluation, some students referred to a perceived failure to treat all students or community members fairly in allocating rights and resources. These tensions influenced their perceptions of the program's successes and failures.

Several students and instructors noted that dialect differences between participants in both Kwak'wala/Bakwamk'ala and SENĆOŦEN impacted program success, adding complexity to curriculum design, instruction, and student supports. Also, within both languages, different orthographies are used, depending on local context and histories, and community members do not always agree on which systems should be used in instructional settings. In both communities, some students and families actively resisted the orthography instructors used in language classes. Finally, the level of language proficiency ranged widely among students, further complicating the complexity of teaching a local language, whether the instructors were first- or second-language speakers.

Institutional constraints

The university's system of hiring and selecting instructors at times constrained options to adapt or modify the BEDILR program. While it might have been preferable to hire more instructors from the community, existing contractual and

employment obligations sometimes imposed limits to this. Despite this factor, the university was able to accommodate community requests in most instances.

Several constraints within the university system were noted. For example, financial constraints were a constant, given the higher costs of community program delivery and institutional limits on standard program delivery costs. To counter these constraints, program staff engaged in ongoing fundraising with stakeholders in Indigenous education and language revitalization to support the unique needs of the communities in the program. Program administration also needed to work within the institution itself to influence senior policy makers within the faculty and the university to secure stronger and diverse forms of institutional support.

The greater distance from the North Island Kwakwaka'wakw communities to Victoria (compared to WSÁNEĆ, whose shared territories UVic sits on) made it harder for UVic to maintain a presence in the community, resulting in fewer site visits and a greater reliance on electronic communication.

Teacher education programs include a practicum component. While some standard UVic processes and procedures for practicum placement were useful in the BEDILR cohorts, others warranted a different approach. (This issue is addressed in more detail in the recommendations.)

CONNECTIONS

Communities' experiences with the BEDILR show that in revitalizing their languages and cultures, Indigenous communities have the power to draw from their histories, their spiritual beliefs, and the cultural traditions they have practiced since time immemorial.

Involving Elders

Elder involvement is key in language revitalization. In both communities, Elders participated in the language classes and as advisors and language mentors in the program. Elders spoke at evaluation focus groups about the importance of working together to realize the vision of a language-rich community. They told about their efforts to create language-learning resources—tape recordings and stories that can be circulated to community members. The Elders' stories inspire BEDILR students to learn more, to listen deeply, and to reflect on their work to restore the Indigenous language in their community.

Linking to community resources

Both communities linked BEDILR students with key local initiatives. *WSÁNEĆ* placed preservice teachers in their tribal schools to create strong partnerships between new and experienced teachers. The preservice teachers in the North Island Kwakwaka'wakw community were valuable resources in plans to create language nest programs and a tribal immersion school. Existing language teachers in the Nations and nearby public schools supported these efforts.

Community boards and advisory groups provide another important link to the community. In the Kwakwaka'wakw communities, many Elders and professionals sit on the BEDILR advisory board, helping link the BEDILR with broader language revitalization and educational work in the community. In *WSÁNEĆ*, the school board made sure that mentor-apprentice candidates were able to participate in the BEDILR certificate and degree programs. BEDILR students have accessed key resources developed by the school and the adult education centre.

Although Elders were invited and involved in most of the courses in some way, moving forward, more work can still be done to access existing community-level resources. For example, an Elders-in-residence model could provide continual support to students in the program and to other language learners in the community.

STRATEGIES

This section, drawn largely from surveys and interviews with students and instructors from UVic and the community, explores strategies for more successful teaching and learning. Most instructors used multiple teaching methods, both during a single class and throughout a course. Students identified a variety of methods they had experienced in the BEDILR. These methods, listed below from most to least commonly cited, include:

- Team teaching model (teacher and Elders or master language teachers)
- Single teacher (language modelling and direct instruction)
- Cultural immersion to support language learning (organized by instructor as part of class)
- Oral communicative approach
- Written language and decoding approach
- Use of classmates as “language buddies” during class
- Practical language projects chosen, developed, and completed by students
- One-to-one tutorial instruction during class with teacher or tutor
- Language immersion in a home/community experience (organized by instructor as part of class)

Oral is the way to go. That approach is best. Writing is important, but it shouldn't be in the classroom until a certain amount of time has gone by. We need to engage our senses—our eyes, hands, body, ears—actively learning and acquiring our language. If I didn't have to write things down I would be much further ahead in my speaking/language game. (Student)

I learned more from the Elder speakers than [from] the younger ones. They had more experience in teaching in the classroom, they were more understanding in terms of being patient with the language... (Student)

Based on survey data, the most effective methods were oral communication, the team teaching model, and practical, self-developed language projects. Cultural immersion was effective for some but not all students, as were written approaches. Below, we discuss students' and teachers' perspectives on some of these methods in more detail. (Note that below, several methods are often discussed simultaneously.)

Oral instruction

Most students were familiar with the traditional classroom model and perceived it to be beneficial, whether led by Elders who were proficient speakers, by UVic instructors, or by both working together in a co-teaching model. Most students expressed a preference for Elders as instructors, whether alone or as co-instructors. Having Elders in the classroom enabled an emphasis on oral language and supported instructors with limited proficiency in the language. Several oral methods—some of which were used in classrooms and some of which took place partly or completely outside the classroom—are worthy of special comment.

TPR and the Greymorning method

Many students identified total physical response (TPR) and the Greymorning method, which are often combined in practice, as particularly useful in their learning. Both methods help to build connections between language and other modes of experience. TPR actively engages learners in combining spoken language with movement, and the Greymorning method emphasizes visual cues to language. These methods encouraged learners to take risks in using language and to take small steps in learning, allowing for successes along the way and helping to build confidence.

Mentor-apprentice model

This method pairs language learners with language mentors for an intensive (100 hours per university course) of individualized, community-based language learning. Students attribute the success of the mentor-apprentice model (also called master-apprentice) to several factors, including the naturalistic context (daily life rather than the formal setting of the classroom) and the time spent practicing and speaking the language (several hours at a time, without resorting to English). Both communities made



use of a mentorship model like this, but it was much more prevalent in WSÁNEĆ, which had a stand-alone mentor-apprentice program in place prior to the BEDILR. While not all WSÁNEĆ students were able to participate in the mentor-apprentice model, instructors drew on the model in language classes to ensure that everyone had language exposure. Fewer Kwakwaka'wakw students participated in mentorship opportunities outside of the program, so the community worked with UVic to develop a hybrid model and course to support this method. While some students did not engage in this model as expected, others found the experience very helpful in increasing their proficiency.

Language mentorship courses

Separate from the mentor-apprentice program, both communities offered two language courses using a mentorship model. An instructor who was affiliated with the BC First Peoples' Cultural Council Mentor-Apprentice Program taught all four courses. Students worked in small groups with local mentors / proficient speakers. Student success varied, possibly due to group size, differing levels of pre-existing language proficiency, and/or insufficient practice outside of class.

Cultural immersion

Pedagogies that respect the spiritual significance of the land and that draw on traditional activities and ceremony provide a powerful context for learning. Such approaches also reflect traditional ways of teaching, which are essential to decolonizing the educational experience of Indigenous students. Many students cited the effectiveness of cultural immersion in promoting their language learning. Kwakwaka'wakw students described singing, dancing,

and cooking, or being immersed in language in the Long House / Big House, in prayer, or at a community event. These perspectives were echoed by students who had participated in the ÁLENEŊEŊ program in WSÁNEĆ, which engaged people in land-based activities, emphasizing names and sacred places in the traditional territories of the WSÁNEĆ people.

Personal practice

Some students cited their concerted efforts to practice speaking the language in multiple settings as key to their language learning. These individuals mentioned listening to audio recordings and/or repeating words or phrases guided by a text or script they had created to help with language practice. Language instructors strongly encouraged students to practice frequently outside of class, but most students said they felt too overwhelmed by coursework and their personal lives to spend as much time practicing as they would have liked. Students and instructors noted that, to be meaningful and effective, practice needs to be integrated into everyday life. While the mentor-apprentice program may be the best model, whatever the method, is it important for students to develop an intrinsic desire to practice the language rather than rely on external pressure to do so.

Written methods

Written methods were not a preferred language-learning method for many students. Especially in the North Island Kwakwaka'wakw community, students often cited the primacy of the oral tradition and the view that writing was a less appropriate learning medium. However, many students also described keeping notebooks to write down words they wanted to remember or learning the Kwak'wala/

[The Mentor-Apprentice model is] so effective... I work at lunch, and in the evening, and we go on outings together. We might travel and speak in Kwak'wala, and talk about going to a campsite, so we get to do outdoor language, too. (Student)

I was really hoping ... to take more learning outside of the classroom and to give students, participants in this program, that experience.... I would really recommend that we do a significant piece [of the next program] learning on the land. (WSÁNEĆ program administrator)

Bakwamk'ala writing system to label indigenous and medicinal plants. In general, SENĆOŦEN students were more receptive to using written texts, possibly because of community member David Elliott's role in developing SENĆOŦEN fonts. Students enjoyed learning to write/spell in their own language and, as their spelling improved, they were better able to read Indigenous texts. Language instructors in both communities relied on written texts to demonstrate orthographic representations of sounds, words, phrases, and stories and highlighted the importance of writing in language learning and preservation. These perspectives indicate that while written approaches to learning need not dominate the Indigenous language classroom, they can play an important role in deepening language competencies and cultural knowledge.

The performing arts

Instructors engaged students in a wide range of performance and aesthetic activities to extend their language learning. For example, one instructor encouraged students to use aesthetic methods and cultural objects in a math class; in response, some students created math lessons that integrated weaving, pattern making, string art, drumming, or drawing. Other instructors noted asking students to embody and demonstrate their understanding of course concepts through play/skit performances or by creating posters. Another asked students to create their own biographies as a foundation from which to describe their daily activities.

Evaluation

In general, evaluation of language learning was less stressful than evaluation of other BEDILR courses because most language courses were graded on a pass/fail basis. One instructor described her attempts to have students track their weekly practice in a language log. Two students raised a concern about the evaluation of Indigenous language learning by non-Indigenous-language-speaking instructors.

One student suggested that students record themselves at intervals as a self-assessment method. Given the diversity of language proficiency levels among the cohort, this idea holds promise. If students had a personal portfolio enabling them to engage in periodic self-reflection and goal setting, instructors could use this resource to support students at differing points in their language-learning paths.

Summary

Despite intense motivation and deep commitment, many students expressed deep anxiety about their progress in learning their language. Many assumed that BEDILR completion would result in language proficiency and many felt intense pressure from their communities to become proficient speakers and community leaders and to teach the language to others. This pressure to succeed created tensions between expectation and reality. A single program with several courses in the local language cannot create proficiency for all. Any student comments about the BEDILR's effectiveness must be interpreted in this context. That said, students were generally positive about instructors and approaches to language teaching.

As one might expect, the methods that students identified as effective varied. However, the following three observations can be made on the basis of this study:

- Students with less confidence and competency in their own language favoured oral methods—in particular, the TPR and Greymorning methods—that gave them time to listen repeatedly to particular words, phrases, or sounds.
- Students with greater initial competency and ability to understand, if not speak, the language preferred cultural immersion experiences and written approaches to language learning.
- It is important to continue incorporating diverse language-learning strategies into the BEDILR, including visual, aesthetic, and written strategies.

Building on Strengths

Both challenges and strengths of the BEDILR program were noted during the evaluation interviews and surveys. This section summarizes these in three sections and presents recommendations for building on the strengths. First, challenges experienced by the first two cohorts of BEDILR students are noted, with several recommendations to support future students by strengthening the program's quality and effectiveness. Second, recommendations are made to enhance program policy and administration. Finally, a few broad recommendations address the institutional context for the BEDILR within the University of Victoria and its Faculty of Education.

SUPPORT STUDENTS BY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Language proficiency

A major obstacle to learning that many students identified was that language classes were offered at the beginning of the program and the focus shifted to teaching credentials as the BEDILR progressed. Also, short language lessons early on were seen by instructors and students alike as not providing the same strong foundation of language skills that a deep, prolonged immersion approach would offer.

Recommendation #1: Change how language is taught and integrated throughout the program.

Given the foundational nature of Indigenous language revitalization to communities and to the BEDILR, it is important to more fully embed language acquisition and revitalization work into the program. Specific ideas to consider include the following:

- A. Redesign the sequence of language classes to integrate them more fully over the full four years of the program.
- B. Provide students with more language tools, such as audio recordings, video recordings, workbooks, and other materials to practice oral and written language outside of class.
- C. Introduce personalized planning processes for language learning in the program's first months.
- D. Expand co-teaching between Elders and non-Indigenous speakers to ensure more language components in all courses.
- E. Assign language revitalization projects parallel with coursework, either for credit or to meet service-learning requirements.

Language was supposed to be a keystone of what we were trying to accomplish.... The other things are important, but more time spent building proficiency and then going to the core courses that teachers need would be better. (Student)

- F. Develop, early in the program, an e-portfolio for students to document their language learning.
- G. Create a new position of language mentor/guide to support students in their language learning and faculty in grading/assessing language activities in professional program coursework.

The evaluation sought to document which language-learning methods were most effective. While the data are limited, one finding is that more proficient speakers learned more from language immersion experiences, while less experienced speakers learned more from instructor-initiated vocabulary and word/phrase recognition activities. This finding suggests that pre- and post-class language assessment activities could be conducted to better document readiness for particular language activities in classes. Such assessments could, in turn, support more in-class pairing of skilled and less-skilled speakers. However, existing research does not provide an adequate foundation for deciding which methods to promote or resource.

Recommendation #2: Continue to study and evaluate the effectiveness of particular language-learning strategies or pedagogies.

To address the need to research and discuss best practices, Indigenous Education faculty could consider some of the following ideas:

- A. Host a conference with language instructors, as was done in the first year.
- B. Continue offering regular workshops or institutes focused on enhancing Indigenous language learning, possibly including keynote speakers or experts in the field.
- C. Develop a research plan to document the effectiveness of particular strategies and apply for SSHRC or other research funding.
- D. Develop a network of on-campus language teachers to share resources/strategies.
- E. Develop a database and online repository for language-teaching resources.





There is a lot of learning that is taking place in that classroom, healing and development that doesn't happen in the same way on campus, where students have more opportunity and a more homogenous population. So for all of these things, we need time ... and we have to take the time to have conversations about what we were doing. They were critical. (Student)

Support for academic life

Many students expressed a need for more and different forms of support for computer literacy, writing academic papers, application/registration processes, and academic policies and program requirements. While program administrators noted that such information was shared frequently, and that tutors and tutorials were always made available, students nonetheless expressed that they sometimes did not know about certain requirements.

Recommendation #3: Restructure and revise the program orientation.

All study participants discussed the importance of orientation and readiness to participate in the BEDLIR. Based on the comments received, some specific ideas to enhance the student orientation include the following:

- A. Continue to include a clear introduction to all program expectations and responsibilities.
- B. Engage new students in a multi-day academic “boot camp” or intensive that builds a learning team while drawing on the value of place and Indigenous ways of knowing.
- C. Continue to enhance and develop technology training.
- D. Continue to provide opportunities for instruction in study and time management skills.
- E. Introduce students early on to Indigenous research and inquiry.
- F. Engage student commitment through language and cultural immersion experiences.

Program intensity

Students, instructors, and program administrators noted how hard students worked to complete their degrees, many with multiple levels of responsibility to family and community and full-time jobs. In response to requests from both communities, the program was designed to accommodate full-time workers, so the BEDLIR included one condensed week-long course and two three-day weekend courses. However, the pacing of courses, their overlap with prerequisite courses, and the condensed nature of the

above-noted courses all conspired to create a pressured environment in which survival and ‘getting through’, rather than learning, dominated many students’ experiences.

Recommendation #4: Recruit students who are not working full time or who are able to step out of full-time work for the duration of the program. This reduction in intensity would increase the richness and value of the program to participants.

Prerequisites

To create space for all students who wished to participate, the program offered prerequisites concurrently with program courses. However, this approach created such high pressure that many students had difficulty completing the courses. For some students, the prerequisites were the breaking point and they withdrew from the program. Some weren’t able to meet the expectations for university-level coursework and were dropped from the program, creating incredible disappointment for these individuals.

Recommendation #5: Require successful completion of prerequisites prior to acceptance into the program.

Curriculum approaches

Several instructors noted the potential of emergent curriculum design in allowing them to break free from the strict confines of the syllabus and content-oriented thinking. In addition, many administrators, teachers, and students expressed a desire for more engagement with community- and land-based learning opportunities. Some students described the importance of learning in place, particularly when accompanied by Elders. Others noted the power of place to deepen their engagement and connect them to course content and linguistic diversity. Ceremonial places like the Long House or Big House were mentioned as powerful contexts for learning, as were land-based activities such as visiting sacred sites, hunting, fishing, or gathering. The power of place and language to heal and build strong Indigenous identities was noted by SENĆOŦEN and Kwakwaka’wakw instructors. These tools hold potential to decolonize and indigenize postsecondary learning sites.

Recommendation #6: Restructure the curriculum to more fully incorporate Indigenous pedagogy and co-constructed curriculum that draws meaningfully from both community and institutional knowledge.

Some specific ideas include the following:

- A. Encourage and support faculty to more deeply Indigenize their curriculum and draw on community resources and students' knowledge and interests by utilizing generative, emergent, and place-based curriculum approaches.
- B. Offer faculty workshops, brown bag lunches, and/or meetings focused on Indigenous ways of knowing, co-constructed curriculum, and generative, emergent, and place-based curriculum approaches.
- C. Involve Elders and Indigenous faculty in seminars and meetings as experts who can convey information and approaches to Indigenous ways of knowing and teaching.
- D. Use indigenization as a criterion for teaching in the program when recruiting faculty.

Core competencies

While the importance of Indigenizing the BEDILR curriculum cannot be overstated, it is also important that key teaching skills, such as planning and preparation, assessment, and classroom management, be fully addressed in the program so that students are truly able to "walk in both worlds" when they engage in their final practicum and when they seek employment as teachers.

Recommendation #7: Develop core competencies for the BEDILR.

Specific ideas to ensure that the program covers crucial teaching skills include the following:

- A. Develop a list of core competencies for the BEDILR, specifying courses in which these competencies receive particular emphasis.
- B. Distribute the list of competencies to all instructors who teach in the program and to all BEDILR students.

Practicum

The BEDILR practicum differed somewhat from those in the traditional BEd. Specifically, it included a practicum restricted to language settings in the third year, as was required by the Ministry of Education for the Developmental Standard Term Certificate, rather than teaching across the curriculum. Thus, the final practicum was more challenging for BEDILR students, as they were required to teach in elementary classrooms in all subjects for the first time. This challenge was compounded by several factors, including a province-wide teacher strike in 2014, staff inexperienced in practicum coordination, lack of preparation for mentor teachers, the greater complexity of the BEDILR compared to the BEd (i.e., learning a language while also learning to teach it in addition to other subjects), and, possibly, cultural biases about teaching practices among some mentors and supervisors.

Recommendation #8: Reconsider and revise the practicum experience.

Some specific ideas include the following:

- C. Adapt the third-year DSTC practicum experience to include more in-school observation.
- D. Eliminate the DSTC from the BEDILR to create more flexibility in third- and fourth-year course offerings and to open up opportunities to teach across the curriculum in the third-year practicum, thereby optimizing success in the final practicum.
- E. Provide a series of practically oriented planning workshops by practicing Indigenous teachers to help orient students to working full time in schools for their final practicum.
- F. Offer decolonization-oriented, strength-based supervision workshops to potential supervisors and mentor teachers.
- G. Continue to work closely with and seek the advice of existing Field Experience Office staff in the Faculty of Education.
- H. Develop criteria for selecting mentor teachers and/or practicum supervisors.
- I. Recruit more Indigenous educators to take on the roles of practicum supervisors.

ENHANCE EFFECTIVE POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION FOR THE BEDILR

Community-level administrative supports

The evaluation research highlighted the importance of coordination and communication between program administrators in the community and the institution. Where this connection was strong, communication was regular, issues were identified early on, and strategies were developed to support and accommodate student or instructor need. Sometimes, though, coordination and problem solving were hampered by infrequent or irregular meetings, lack of responsiveness to emergent concerns, or divergent opinions about the best approach to take, resulting in frustration on both sides of the partnership. These dynamics point to the importance of establishing or reconfirming formal roles and processes sometimes already included in written partnership agreements, including details about employee supervision in community administration.

Recommendation #9: Continue to hold regular meetings and develop policy protocols and issue-management procedures to ensure that all important program activities are appropriately addressed.

While this recommendation is deliberately broad, it is intended to address communication and decision making between Indigenous Education and community-based

administrative units. The formal protocols and agreements that guided the initial development of the BEDILR served the community and university well in principle, but they did not always adequately support day-to-day program operation.

Recommendation #10: Develop formal evaluation policies jointly with community partners to guide senior program administrators in conducting effective supervision and community coordination.

Clear, effective human resource practices will improve coordination between program administrators in the community and the institution and allow greater support for BEDILR students at the community level.

Attendance and punctuality

Students, instructors, and program administrators cited concerns about attendance, punctuality, and absence more than any other issue. Indigenous communities strongly value attending community events, cultural activities, and funerals, and students often felt a deep need to fulfill their cultural roles in the community or their personal obligations to their families. Yet, instructors feel that absences and lateness disrupt learning. Further, while instructors and administrators did provide students with parameters as to how many days of class could be missed and for what purposes, these parameters were not always followed, and some students felt that favouritism was extended to some families over others.



Recommendation #11: Further formalize a policy on attendance, punctuality, and absence.

UVic should work with communities to create a formal policy on attendance, punctuality, and absence, further to that of the UVic calendar, to be ratified by students on an annual basis. The policy should acknowledge and legitimize students' right to participate in community and cultural events while also making clear the responsibility that flows from absence and clarifying that attendance will affect student grades and course completion requirements. This policy should be printed on all program documents and included in all course outlines.

Whatever the policy, it should be enforced as much as possible through the lens of equity for all. For maximum effectiveness, students should vote on, or adopt by consensus, the relevant rules for each course at the beginning of each semester to help remind them of the requirements on a regular basis.

Conflict resolution

A difficult issue raised by BEDILR students was how decisions were made about policy matters, including grades, grade appeals, and requirements for students to leave the program. While program administrators made repeated efforts to support all students, some decisions led to the perception that favouritism was in play relating to some families in the community. Program administrators took important steps forward in resolving such conflicts by sponsoring a healing circle in both communities and developing policies about appeals and student conduct, but additional measures may help resolve future conflicts.

Recommendation #12: Further formalize appeal and adjudication processes to make decision-making processes more transparent at the community and university levels.

The university and the communities share responsibility for addressing students' concerns about how decisions are made and communicated. In line with these principles, UVic should develop or redistribute a formal appeal process that includes one-over appeal mechanisms, neutral adjudication

requirements, written notification, timelines for adjudication and appeal, a requirement for ongoing student ratification (each term or class), and inclusion of the policy on all course outlines or program summary documents. It is important that the adjudication process take place at a different level from that where the original decision was made and that it be administered by others within the relevant institutional hierarchies.

INDIGENIZE THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND THE UNIVERSITY

The BEDILR is situated at a critical juncture in time and forms part of provincial and federal processes of reconciliation and recovery. Thus it is important to continue closing the knowledge gap between the Indigenous Education unit, including BEDILR staff and faculty, and the University of Victoria and its Faculty of Education.

Recommendation #13: Indigenize the Faculty of Education.

While the faculty and the university support the work of the BEDILR, formalized efforts are needed to ensure greater integration of institutional goals and internal decision-making protocols. For example, if BEDILR administrators provided information on UVic's Aboriginal Services Plan and/or the collaboration agreement between UVic and the WSÁNEĆ School Board (2014) to the greater faculty, it could launch a discussion within the Faculty of Education about how to indigenize internal processes of decision making, program evaluation, and program operation, including the establishment of culturally appropriate benchmarks.

Recommendation #14: Create a decolonizing protocol to inform program planning and decision making throughout the Faculty of Education.

A decolonizing protocol could highlight how decisions impact commitments to Indigenous communities and students. On an ongoing basis, the faculty needs to consider how its methods of assessing, judging, and valuing program outcomes contribute to the continued domination or marginalization of Indigenous peoples, educational beliefs, and knowledges.



*The biggest success is that we now have many ... fully qualified Indigenous teachers who will be able to work in the public- and Band-operated schools, teachers who are fully certified with credentials that can last forever, and they will affect the lives of hundreds of children and families they will work with. And much of that work will involve teaching young children their language.
(UVic program administrator)*

Moving Ahead

AN EVOLVING, RESPONSIVE PROGRAM

Since the evaluation was completed in 2014, numerous changes have been made to the BEDILR program. Some of these changes were spurred by the evaluation recommendations. Many others have been made in response to the communities and the students, and have evolved through practice and delivery changes. As program administrators, we are proud of the program and its evolution, and we continue to strive to improve it with each community-based delivery and each new community partnership we engage in.

Program Structure

The most significant change since 2014 and the graduation of the two initial cohorts was the development of an alternative first year of courses in the Diploma program. This path provided communities with an option to focus more on building language proficiency in the first year than on language revitalization skills and theory. It also allows the program to be more responsive to community needs. The program's new structure is outlined below.

Year 1

Option A – The Certificate in Aboriginal Language Revitalization provides students a successful exit point after Year 1. This option has always existed in the program. It includes six courses on language revitalization, documentation, and learning context and three courses of direct language teaching.

Option B – In the proficiency-building path, students do not earn a separate Year 1 credential, but complete their first year toward their Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization with a strong focus on language learning and proficiency building. This path offers five language-learning courses, two of which follow the mentor-apprentice immersion model and three which are direct language teaching. The other courses in this first year are offered as tools to support language learning, and include a course called “Learning to Learn” to encourage self-directed learning.

Year 2

Students complete requirements for their Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization. This year, too, has options around course offerings. Communities can choose to focus on further proficiency building with ten mentorship/immersion and direct language-learning courses and two practicum and practicum-preparation courses, or they can choose instead to have UVic offer five language courses, the practicum courses, and five academic and education courses, thereby creating a path for students to continue into the Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization.

Years 3 and 4

If students have the appropriate prerequisites, they can continue into the BEDILR program in Years 3 and 4. These last two years contain four more language courses, five practicum or practicum-preparation courses, two academic requirements, and ten education courses, satisfying the requirements of the BC Ministry of Education Teacher Regulation Branch for a professional K–12, elementary-focused professional teaching certification.

Community partners can choose delivery paths and plans that depend on funding and student numbers. Communities can choose Option A or B in Year 1, a particular focus in Year 2, and whether or not they want a DSTC path (which we no longer promote for the reasons stated in practicum section above) in Year 3. They can also choose to have the cohorts complete on campus or in their communities, or cohorts can just complete with the diploma. Our programs have always sought to be as responsive as possible to community needs, and the new options now provide partners more choice in how they want to tailor their community delivery. They also provide more options for including and supporting more language-learning opportunities.

RESPONDING TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Certain recommendations are already being met in a variety of ways in our new program deliveries. Others remain a challenge due to restrictions such as funding, staffing, Ministry of Education regulations, and community and university policies. The programs have been responding to community requests and evaluation recommendations in the following ways.

Building Language Proficiency

Our programs have integrated many more options and opportunities for language learning within the program, as described above, as well as developed new courses and methods for language learning and teaching. We have always provided professional development opportunities for our language instructors, either through workshops we host or by encouraging engagement in conferences and other resources. Besides these ongoing efforts and responsive changes, we have implemented the following changes since the evaluation:

- We offer three different series of language-learning methods courses (mentorship, direct teaching, and self-directed immersive contexts courses).
- We introduced a course on personalized planning and language learning.

- We engage language mentors in as many learning contexts as we can (minimum 100 hours of language mentorship per term).
- We engage with communities to develop or access language-learning supports for students outside of their language classes.
- We piloted, but did not continue with, the computer-based learning (and e-portfolio) for university preparation, due to barriers around computer literacy and connectivity in Year 1.
- We considered distributing language and education courses differently through the program, but did not, due to certification and credentialing restrictions. Instead, we increased the number of possible language courses in the first three years.
- We recommend that our language instructors utilize the curriculum and pair learners to maximize their learning opportunities in class.
- We now require video assessments and written self-assessments term by term. (We use an assessment tool developed by a team of researchers at UVIC, which can be found at <https://www.uvic.ca/research/partner/home/currentprojects/language-assessment-tool/index.php>)
- Faculty have engaged with certain partner communities to research different methods of building Indigenous language proficiency in adults.



Supporting student academics and experiences

Finding the balance between accessibility and opportunity for community members who want to learn their language and ensuring academic preparation for university coursework has always been a struggle in our language revitalization programs. Led by the advice of Elders, we must find ways to support both. Therefore, we have tried to strike that balance in different ways, such as providing flexible entry opportunities and, in some cases, delaying the need for prerequisites until absolutely necessary. We have built in different options for community partners to choose regarding academic requirements. We will continue to work closely with program partners in the development year to ensure that potential students are better prepared academically. We seek to have students with stronger comfort with technology as well as English and math skills when they enter the program, so we can focus on language learning once they are enrolled. We are also working in respectful ways to encourage punctuality and attendance in accordance with postsecondary expectations, and to facilitate conflict resolution when these expectations clash with students' family/community responsibilities and cultural protocols.

Each community we work with brings different goals, a different profile of students, and differing levels of physical and technological accessibility. Some require intensive schedules due to students' work and travel requirements; others prefer the daily scheduling of courses—both have their challenges. We will continue to distribute program documents to students and program partners detailing the required elements and courses within the program. This includes documents around university and program policies and appeals processes. We also provide an opportunity for thorough orientation to UVic and the academic and other supports students can access from a distance, as well as learning support and time management workshops. This model does not work for all partnerships, however, and we will continue to work with new and existing partners to create orientations that fit each community's cultural and academic landscapes and goals. We want to work toward an immersive cultural experience as a starting point for each cohort, funding and community resources permitting.

To improve the effectiveness and quality of the practicum experiences, we no longer promote the laddered step of the DSTC within the BEDILR. This opens up opportunities to teach across the curriculum in the third-year practicum, thereby optimizing success in the final practicum. We have also added a seminar course in Year 2 to provide a stronger foundation for practicum success early in the program.



We are working to ensure that mentor teachers are better informed about the goals of the program and practicum before placements begin. We are restricted with practica due to administrative capacity, funding, and requirements of the Teacher Regulation Branch of the Ministry of Education.

One important recommendation that the program administrators are working to meet is the development of core competencies, both for each course and for the program as a whole. Currently, we coach instructors to build core skills in self-assessment, orality, planning, writing, and leading, as examples. The next step is to develop a formal articulation of these skills and outcomes, overarching the individual course goals. This will provide a more cohesive description and model to guide learning and skills acquisition for students, instructors, and program administrators.

Further Indigenizing curriculum and learning contexts

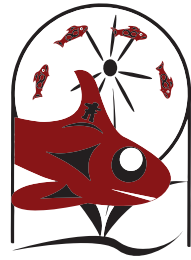
Indigenous pedagogy and Indigenous resurgence are at the heart of the Diploma and Bachelor of Education programming. The current cohorts undertaking our Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization provide strong examples of indigenized courses and program delivery. Because the program goals are to create language learners and educators who are grounded in their own ways of knowing, learning, and teaching, we seek out Indigenous

instructors, encourage and support place-based activities, and offer support to Indigenous and non-Indigenous instructors alike by providing contexts and resources, reviewing course outlines, and coaching around certain topics. The community partners, in turn, provide local knowledge and support relevant cultural activities, such as place-based medicine gathering, drumming, cedar weaving, and willow harvesting. Whenever possible, we work to find local knowledge keepers as instructors. The program is piloting three new Indigenous-led course deliveries this year that are experiential and place based, and we seek to have at least one immersive, place-based delivery per term in each current partnership, as well as two immersive mentorship language courses per year. This kind of design and delivery require not only adequate funding, but full participation from community partners, Elders, and knowledge keepers.

Another recommendation the Faculty of Education is working to meet is creating an 'Indigenization' plan for the entire faculty, not just for the programs within Indigenous Education. The BEDILR and Diploma programs reside within UVic's Faculty of Education, and not only have a number of Indigenous faculty been hired in the last year, we also have a half-time Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator working to support faculty to Indigenize their curriculum and develop the Indigenization plan, providing further direction and support faculty and staff.

SUMMARY

Overall, as program administrators who continue to work toward further improvements, we are proud of the progress we've made toward more responsive and effective programming. More improvements can always be made and new initiatives developed. Alongside our partners, we continue to work within the constraints of funding, logistics, academic requirements and readiness, certification requirements, diminishing numbers of first-language speakers, distances, and other, often challenging, contexts. Each partnership and delivery presents its own set of resources, challenges, goals, gifts, and opportunities for learning. We continue to strive to create new speakers who will teach their language, in their language. We are grateful to the communities who have partnered with us, in trusting that our programs can support their goals.



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