(Be)Coming Together: Making Kin through Stories of Language and Literacy
Using Métissage as a Research Praxis

CHELSEA THOMAS
University of Victoria

NICKI BENSON
University of Victoria

MEREDITH J. LEMON
University of Victoria

Abstract

Inspired by our attendance at the 16th Annual Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada (LLRC) Pre-Conference and their call to undertake ways in which race, decolonization, and *unsettling* research can shift the lens of traditional language and literacy approaches, we have come together to experiment with métissage (Hasebe-Ludt et. al, 2009) as a writing and research praxis. Using this "writing as inquiry" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005) methodological and theoretical approach, we embark upon our métissage of making kin. With research interests in the fields of Indigenous Language Revitalization (Benson), Ecojustice Education (Lemon), and Decolonial/Equitable Teacher Education and Schooling (Thomas), we weave together our micro-stories, provoked by the temporal questions: Where do we come from? Where are we right now? Where do we hope things will go?

(Be)Coming Together

As three emerging scholars, we have come together to explore how an experimental and collaborative writing endeavour can both contribute to conversations about race, decolonization, and unsettling research, and shift the traditional lens of language and literacy research and practice. Inspired by the 16th annual Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada (LLRC/ACCLL) pre-conference, by writing together as an act of de/colonial liberation, we reject notions of scarcity, individualization, and competition, which run rampant within the neoliberal academy where we locate ourselves, and instead embrace a "pedagogy of making kin" (Franklin-Phips & Rath, 2018, p. 269). Making kin is anti-hierarchical and rejects both the "production of sameness as a version of equity" (Franklin-Phips & Rath, 2018, p. 270) and humanist notions of progress, which assume a deficit model (i.e., some humans to be lacking more than others.) In this way, our experimental braid is about forging new alliances in educational research. Thus, we embrace *métissage* as our theoretical and methodological framework to weave together pieces of life writing with the hope that our work will "illuminate the braided, polysemic, and relational character of our lives, experiences and memories, as well as the personal and public realm" (Chambers, Hasbe-Ludt, Donald, Hurren, Leggo & Oberg, 2008, p. 142).

Métissage: A Writing and Research Praxis

We are drawn to *métissage* because of the versatility and affordances as a research and writing praxis. Chambers et al. (2008) define *métissage* as a practice in which the writers seek:

> cross-cultural, egalitarian relations of knowing and being. It respects the historical interrelatedness of traditions, collective contexts, and individual circumstances while resisting 19th century scholarly conventions of discrete disciplines with corresponding rhetorics for conducting and representing research. It is committed to interdisciplinarity and the blurring of genres, texts and identities (p. 142).

According to Chambers et al. (2008), métissage comes from the root word 'métis', which has both Latin and Greek origins. Its Latin origin, 'mixtus', means mixed, and refers to "cloth that is woven from two different fibres" (Chambers et al., 2008, p. 151). Resisting heterophobia or the desire for a "pure, untainted space, language, or form of research" (Burke & Robinson, 2019, p. 152), researchers can use métissage as a research praxis to interweave different realities and lived experiences that can be implemented differently and wholly dependent on the individual researchers. Thus, we connect deeply with Burke and Robinson (2019) in their invitation for other scholars and researchers to consider métissage as a useful and worthy praxis.

By affirming the capacity to restructure one's subjectivity, Hasebe-Ludt et al. (2009) argue that life writing disentangles us from absorption into collectives-- even when presumably these are self-affirming cultural identities (p. 40). Moreover, by conscientiously crafting personal stories, we are able to deepen our understandings of the social conditions in which those experiences were rooted. The creative mixing of life writing prose made possible within métissage, engages dialogue and interrogates taken-for-granted assumptions about difference as inherited from colonialism and its related hegemonies in social science research (Hasebe-Ludt et al., 2009).

Métissage embodies writing as a method of inquiry, as described by Richardson and St. Pierre (2005), "writing *is* thinking, writing *is* analysis, writing *is* indeed a seductive and tangled method of discovery " (p. 1423, emphasis added). Thus, sharing in the sentiments of Hasebe-Ludt et al. (2009) regarding the use of literary métissage, we avoid hubristic claims towards universal truths. Our stories instead offer authentic glimpses into the inquiries and tensions which are alive within each of us; and we acknowledge the multiplicity of individuality that elucidates the potential for deep understanding without producing moralistic or prescriptive judgements. Moreover, métissage is a writing, research, cultural and political praxis with transformational affordances for both authors and audience alike (Burke & Robinson, 2019; Hasebe-Ludt et al., 2009). We have chosen métissage for this writing endeavor because of our desire to understand and question the embedded social conditions of our experiences with language and literacy, and the particular "memories, stories and places in which these experiences are located and created" (Hasebe-Ludt et al., 2009, p. 35).

In the coming sections we embark upon our métissage of making kin. With research interests in the fields of Indigenous Language Revitalization (Nicki Benson), Ecojustice Education (Meredith Lemon), and Decolonial/Equitable Teacher Education and Schooling (Chelsea Thomas), we weave together our micro-stories, provoked by the temporal questions: Where do we come from? Where are we right now? Where do we hope things will go? These are the three strands of our métissage braiding, within which you will

read our stories. Each author's story is introduced in the same sequence within each strand of the braid, always beginning with Chelsea and ending with Nicki.

The Braid

Strand 1: Where do we come from?

 A Voice for the Voiceless, Chelsea Thomas. I learned to read at the age of four and I was, therefore, considered an early emergent reader. I remember this vividly because of the praise I received. Though I had no idea at the time, perhaps this was my first taste of privilege within an educational system entrenched with colonial values. As a Canadian-Afro-Caribbean-Celtic young girl, from a low-income, single parent household, who, out of three siblings, was the only one privileged by strong print literacy skills. I grew to believe that everybody ought to know how to read, and I recall, from very early on, using reading and writing as the yardsticks to which I could evaluate my intelligence and the intelligence of others. For many years I still believed my reading and writing ability set me apart from anyone who appeared to struggle in school, a notion that was upheld and affirmed through my years in a public system founded upon Eurocentric notions of inferior/superior. I held judgements towards many people who were close to me, friends and family included; I was one of those "grammar police" who felt entitled to point out the common misuse of there, their, and they're, as though I was better for knowing the distinction.

 Much of this changed, however, when I found myself in the borderlands once again (Anzaldua, 1987). As a high school 'drop out' and homeless teen, I was no longer in the middle-class suburban neighbourhood my working-poor single-mother lived in. This was a time of amplified inbetweener positionality in my life. As an inbetweener, I was caught in the blurred spaces of multiple humanist binaries and the literate/illiterate assumption informed a significant portion of my identity and belief system. I found myself in places where print literacy failed me, and everyone around me failed at print literacy. Couch surfing, living amongst career criminals, and experiencing poverty like nothing I had ever known, my origins as an early emergent reader meant very little; and I began to recognize what a privilege it was to be able to read and write. Failure in school, along with being a member of an under-resourced community, had very little to do with being "smart", or being hard working, or having merit, as I had been colonially conditioned to believe; and so, it is from this epiphany that my heart's work was realized: I would use this privilege of reading and writing in hopes that I might be a voice for the voiceless.

 Waking up: The colonizer in the mirror, Meredith Lemon. Inquiring into how my identity has been and is being shaped by colonial education is challenging for two reasons. First, the hegemonic nature of industrialized Western cultural norms, my cultural norms, means they appear universal. This power of the colonizer makes others' ways and struggles (almost) invisible. The second reason this inquiry is painful is the realization that I have unwittingly been a colonizer and undeservedly benefitted from the conditions of my birth. Like the vast majority of academics (e.g., Davis & Fry, 2019), I experience the unwarranted and pervasive privilege of white skin and membership in the dominant culture. The superstructure of both the public and university educational systems was created by people who look and act like me, for people who look at act (mostly) like me.

This colonial privilege started long before my university career. My public school teachers also looked like me: white middle-class, women (Geiger, 2018). They appreciated my quiet and respectful nature. Also, my mother was a teacher and so the culture at school was almost identical to that which we practiced at home, right down to the multiplication flash cards at the dinner table, regular trips to the library, and the written journals while on vacation. There was no question that I would go on to university and that my first degree would be funded by my parents. Is it any wonder that I succeeded here? I am not unique in my family; my relatives are professors, engineers, surgeons, and lawyers. I used to think higher education ran in the veins of our family, but now I see it as a way that those with power pass it on to their children.

This race and class privilege insulated me from any knowledge of colonial consequences for my first 20 years. Despite growing up in the multicultural city of Toronto, Ontario, I was 21 years old before I became aware of any colonial impacts. While attending a field school and traveling through the Kenyan countryside with a group of other (mostly white) Canadian university students and professors, a tall, lone Kenyan man on the side of the dusty road looked directly at me, the only one facing out that window, and spat, "F*** you, white man."

My brain rejected his comment. I could not comprehend what he was saying or even register that he was speaking to me. My first reaction was – I'm not a man! – and I rationalized that, therefore, he did not mean me. Once the immediate shock dissipated, shame arrived. I did not understand it or know what to do with it, so I tucked it away in a corner of my mind while a queasiness made itself at home in my belly. My white privilege (McIntosh, 1989) had protected me from any knowledge of the genocides and linguistic and cultural erasures in the name of the European imperial quest for power.

...

Ten years later, I had the opportunity to return to Kenya for a teaching practicum. Our group of two professors and 20 or so teacher candidates landed, excited to teach for three weeks at a Canadian funded rural primary school outside of Nairobi. We brought with us lesson plans and hockey bags full of classroom supplies for the region, but some other colonial traditions had arrived ahead of us. Unexpectedly, on the first morning, and each one thereafter, our class stood to greet us teachers. Forty-five voices rang out together, "Good morning Miss Merry" and then sat in unison silently awaiting their lessons. They wore uniforms (filled with rips and holes), sat in rows, and answered our questions in English, the language of the colonizers, *en masse*. They were good little products of the industrial educational machine imported by the colonial powers.

Questions slammed into my mind one after the other. The trip had been introduced to us as one where we would learn to teach in novel environments, experience different cultures, and hone our new teaching skills; but that suddenly did not fit. We had been taught to avoid the banking model of education (Freire, 1970) and instead were to take into account learner experiences and funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) . But, how could we? We just got there. We barely knew them, their culture, or the reality of their lives.

It dawned on me that our presence there might not be helpful and instead made little sense. Nothing made sense.

And then, suddenly, it did.

Aside from desks and chairs, the only other item in our classroom was a cardboard sign reading "Native language speaker". I thought it was an award, but when I inquired about it, I learned this sign was a punishment, a sort of dunce cap for students caught speaking anything other than the school-sanctioned languages, English or Kiswahili. No tribal languages allowed.

What were we doing there?

The Canadian Indian Residential School System burst into my heart-mind and this sign pointed me to the realization that I had not looked at this trip from the Kenyan students' perspective. Who was I to drop into their lives for three weeks, speaking a foreign language and hoping they would trust me and believe in me? The shock and shame of my earlier encounter with Kenyan colonial impacts returned. When I looked in the mirror next, I did not expect to see a present-day colonizer in my reflection.

F*** you, white man.

Finding my Place, Nicki Benson. I cannot pinpoint the exact moment I realized I was considered white. As a Jewish girl with slightly olive-toned skin growing up in an affluent part of the city, I was often asked "but where are you really from?" I was taught about the oppression my ancestors faced, and the importance of carrying on the traditions they struggled so hard to maintain. I was taught that my people were survivors, and that we must continue to work hard to survive. I was also taught that it was a privilege to live in a democratic, multicultural society that provided equal opportunities for everyone. I had a responsibility to use this privilege by doing well in school and securing a good job so I could provide for my family, as well as help those less fortunate than me. Charitable work and helping others are important Jewish values (Dorff, 2005), but these are not always accompanied by a critique of the underlying systemic issues that cause discrepancies in fortune and opportunity.

Fast forward to young adulthood when the teachings from my childhood began to unravel, and life experiences began to reveal the injustices hidden in plain sight all around me. I started to ask questions like: if there are equal opportunities for all, why is there so much homelessness in my city? And why does it seem that so many of the homeless are Indigenous and people of colour? I began to read and talk about these things and think critically about the causes of these overrepresentations and inequalities. Critical peers, like my activist sister (see Benson & Nagar, 2006), and anti-racist scholars such as Allahar and Côté (1998) helped me recognize the ways my socioeconomic background and the colour of my skin afforded me many privileges. In my career in language education, I committed to ensuring my work would help to address and dismantle injustices rather than reinforce them. I was influenced by critical pedagogy (e.g. Freire, 1970) and feminist education (e.g. hooks, 1994), and grappled with questions about how language education could be about more than repeating stereotypes and bolstering inequalities.

The answer came to me in Peru, where I had my first research contract for Indigenous language education. From a small Quechua village high in the Andes, I looked out over the mountain peaks, each a different shade of green, and I felt I was being called to help defend the linguistic diversity of the world; I had a role to play in protecting the shades of green everywhere. I understood then that it was not up to me to make language education and social justice come together -- they were already together in Indigenous Language Revitalization (ILR). Since then, I have shifted the focus of my professional and

academic work to ILR. Yet, as a non-Indigenous woman, I have questioned, and been questioned, about my place in this work.

Strand 2: Where are we now?

   SDE: A De/Colonial Educational Paradigm, Chelsea Thomas. I am an *unschooling*[1] mother to four children. The journey towards writing these words with confidence has not been without struggle. As a working-class, mixed-race mother, I have made many sacrifices as I navigate the middle-class world of home learning. It is valid to argue that unschooling is a class and race-based privilege, and yet, conversely, I argue that it is my (our) right to unschool; to provide my children with nurturing, connected and stable environments to grow in, when public schools do/can/will not. Schools were never really a safe space for my sisters and I, and countless other marginalized youth. Growing up as a brown-skinned little girl in an all white school, I became an overachiever to counter the invisibility that I felt from lack of representation. Not only were people with my skin colour absent from the stories and lessons, but my experiences with poverty were also politely ignored as I was implicitly encouraged to make every effort to fit in with my middle-class white peers. An effort that eventually failed as I learned the truth: that meritocracy was just a myth for a brown-skinned girl living in poverty (Betz & Kayser, 2017).

   The confusion and wounding I experienced in my youth began to heal when I discovered unschooling and the Self-Directed Education (SDE)[2] movement for my own children. To learn that I did not have to send my children to a place that would categorize them based on their literacy and numeracy skills and/or socioeconomic status (Betz & Kayser, 2018) was liberating. The healing began as I digested the underpinnings of SDE philosophy; that learning is driven by curiosity and that children are equal and deserving of mutually respectful adult-child relationships. That early print-based literacy development does not equate to intelligence or future success in children. That play[3] is vital to learning and not something to be taken up separately, or frequently segregated into siloed subject areas as we have become so accustomed to as a society.

    It has been especially healing to move closer to letting go of my need to be accepted and deemed smart. To let go of the superior/inferior dualist notion that I carried well into my academic journey. As I work on my dissertation, I am finally unpacking the colonial, heteropatriarchal normative values that caused me significant wounding throughout my earlier years in public schooling. Furthermore, the binary narrative of the teacher/student destabilizes in my mind as I witness my daughter's (9.5yo) reading develop through gaming and journal writing. Because unlike school-based approaches to literacy

---

[1] Unschooling is term first coined by John Holt (1972) to describe the type of education adopted by families who opt out of institutional education settings/schooling and engage in learning through everyday experiences, and the pursuance of the interest-led passions of each individual child/learner.

[2] Dr. Peter Gray and the Alliance for Self-Directed Education (ASDE) have established a working definition for SDE as an approach to learning that is derived from the self-chosen activities of an individual, regardless of whether those activities have been determined formally for the purpose of education (ASDE, 2018).

[3] Guided by "four educative drives" (ASDE, n/d): curiosity, play, relationship, and metacognition, SDE acknowledges the critical value of diverse epistemic and ontological beliefs, reminding us that for thousands of years prior to colonization our hunter-gatherer ancestors and Indigenous peoples around the world have been successfully educating (immersing) themselves with(in) the "tools of the culture" (Gray, 2013) they live (with)in.

development, many unschooled children report that "reading happened naturally" (Riley, 2018, p.10), without needing any formal instruction by a teacher or adult.

When she shares with such a great sense of accomplishment the ways she is seeing the letters coming together, and reads to her little brothers, little-girl-me believes a little bit more that neither mine nor her worth is determined by writing and reading abilities. Truthfully, I cannot help but cringe when I think about the ways that she would be corrected and even shamed for her literacy progression in mainstream school with its deeply embedded Eurocentric dualist measures of academic success. In this sense, I recognize unschooling/SDE to be healing for both parents who have grown up in mainstream schooling and their children alike.

I am not alone in my experience with SDE as a liberating educational path. With the connective and informative power of the worldwide web and social media, the educational possibilities for families in the margins are being unearthed. Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) families are opting out of conventional schooling to take up home learning at ever increasing rates (Mazama & Lundy, 2012). I feel such a strong sense of connection and affirmation to learn that many BIPOC families are choosing to abandon schooling practices altogether to embrace SDE with its practices of autonomy, agency and self-directed learning that disrupt the conventional educational discursive and epistemological practices that greatly disadvantage and silence historically marginalized students. I am grateful for social media as a primary mobilizer in this growing trend, vastly evidenced through online syllabi[4] such as #RaisingFreePeople and #BIPOCinSDE and podcasts such as "Fare of the Free Child" produced by Akilah S. Richards, dedicated to decolonizing and deschooling BIPOC minds through SDE.

It is without argument that access to "alternative" teaching and learning methods or lifestyles such as SDE in North America are socially stratified and options are limited for most poor and working-class families. Speaking from firsthand experience, there are many ways that this can and must change. Teachers can become more familiar with SDE pedagogy so that it might be experimented within public schools. Scholars can use their voice to write about the liberating possibilities of supporting families in their alternative educational paths. Community centres and libraries can offer their space for SDE families to come together to support one another. Truly equitable education can begin when we enact intellectual humility and accept that there are many ways to be human and allow children to grow and learn in ways that work for them. This is the essence of de/colonial and equitable education as I see it.

How the past colonizes the present, Meredith Lemon. The past colonizes the present through two mutually reinforcing practices that, thus far, have been difficult to interrupt. The first is our failure to recognize that words are a cultural phenomenon and therefore, like other cultural practices, have a history (Bowers, 2016). They are not a simple conduit for universal meanings. Cultural assumptions have been encoded into our languages as

---

[4] Hashtag syllabi are crowd-sourced digital documents that include contributions from academics, artists, and activists, acting as a guide to inform current events and promote deeper engagement of topics that remain virtually absent from traditional schooling and spaces of dominant discourse. Such lists "often include texts written by people who have not achieved the status of expert and/or do not have access to the structures that determine one's status as an authority. They are usually named for the particular event or topic that they focus on" (Franklin-Phipps, 2017, p.20).

root metaphors that hold power through repetition (Bowers, 2001; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 2010; Lent, 2017). The second way the past colonizes the present is through the elevation of print information to "high status knowledge" (Bowers, 1997, p. 17) promoted in public schools and universities, which has demoted other knowledges including ecological and emotional literacies.

A root metaphor is "the most basic assumption about the nature of the world or experience that we can make when we try to give a description of it" (MacCormac, 1976, p. 93). Bowers (2018) describes root metaphors simply as moral/explanatory frameworks. They tacitly shape our thinking and influence our actions (Cachelin, Rose & Paisley, 2015; Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2013) and thus are imperative for educators to understand. Bowers (2012) explains that "understanding how words (metaphors) reproduce earlier ways of thinking, including the silences and prejudices, is as essential to the educator's craft as knowing anatomy is to the physician" (p. 2). Prevalent colonizing root metaphors include anthropocentrism, individualism, and a linear view of progress that views technological changes as both neutral and inevitable (Martusewicz, Edmundson & Lupinacci, 2015). Each culture has different basic assumptions about humans and our relationship to living and non-living others, technology, and competition, and these will be encoded in their languages. However, these diverse understandings are increasingly silenced as Western culture continues its colonization through the process of globalization facilitated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization (Martusewicz *et al.*, 2015).

The second intersecting way the past colonizes the present is through the elevation of print communication to "high status knowledge" (Bowers, 1997, p. 17). This high-status knowledge promoted in public education systems undermines the value of the local, contextualized knowledge of the colonized. It subverts respect for those whose practices and knowledge are passed down orally. This cultural elevation of print knowledge influences who, or what types of people, end up with the credentials to obtain positions of power in our society (Bowers, 1997) who ultimately reproduce these same beliefs in what knowledge, what literacies, hold value. Cultures who have lived for millennia in one place (at least before dislocation was enforced through the reserve systems in Canada) by definition, have lived sustainably within the ecosystem (Campbell & Butler, 2010). Ironically, those in power right now will need to lean on and learn from the very people oppressed by this practice to find local, contextualized solutions to ameliorate ecological crises. Given the current global climate crisis, the industrialized West could set our hubris aside and learn from eco-centric cultures and their relationships, principles, and practices (Evering & Longboat, 2013).

Bowers (2012, 2015),a critic of the apex position of print communication, points out several shortcomings that, in addition to undermining local, context-specific knowledge, many Westerners may fail to notice. Other drawbacks include: (a) carrying forward past assumptions and silences, and thereby hindering the evolution of outdated, anachronistic ideas (e.g. root metaphors such as anthropocentrism); (b) undermining oral, face-to-face, and intergenerational communication and knowledge, and lastly; (c) creating a focus on abstract, context-free, and "exportable" knowledge. This exportable knowledge is often written in English, steeped in the colonial Western root metaphors, like anthropocentrism and individualism, and can be spread through the internet. Since we are immersed in a hegemonic culture that valourizes the printed word, we may struggle to see

the drawbacks of this form of communication. However, the elevation of print communication in the education system is just one way colonialism continues to undermine and ultimately oppress non-Western cultures.

Learning from Language Revitalization, Nicki Benson. Indigenous peoples have shown incredible resilience in the face of colonization and deliberate assimilation policies that have sought to eradicate their cultures, languages, and ways of life. For decades in Canada and elsewhere, Indigenous children were forced to study in residential schools where they were forbidden from practicing their languages and cultures (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). This practice had a profoundly negative impact on Indigenous communities, including declining rates of Indigenous language use and transmission. Indigenous peoples continue to face discrimination and marginalization, without full political control of their lands, legal systems, or education systems. Indigenous language revitalization (ILR), then, is an act of anticolonial resistance (Pine & Turin, 2017) and "part of a larger fight for Indigenous cultural survival, human rights, and self-determination" (McCarty, 2012, p. 1172). It is also about wellbeing, with recent scholarship evidencing a strong link between language strength and better health in Indigenous communities (Jenni, Anisman, McIvor, & Jacobs, 2017; McIvor, 2013; McIvor & Napoleon, 2009).

As a non-Indigenous scholar in ILR, I have a responsibility to consider my role in the wider decolonial project. In my reflections on how to do this well, I have committed to taking up calls from Indigenous scholars to engage in critical reflection of both self and systems (Absolon, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012), to centralize relational accountability in my work (Wilson, 2008), and to take the lead of the communities I work with to ensure my work is meaningful and beneficial to them (Ball & Janyst, 2008; Battiste, 2014; Land, 2015; Schnarch, 2004). Perhaps the most important thing I have learned, so far, is to listen. This sounds simplistic, but as teachers and academics, we are often eager to share what we think we know. Yet, there is so much we do not know, and cannot know. Indigenous peoples come to language education with motivations related to their sovereign rights and identity, orientations that cannot be fully understood by someone without the same lived experience, and certainly not by someone who has benefited from colonization. As non-Indigenous scholars, it is not our role to assert our ideas about language and literacy. Only when we listen and begin to understand the context, can we consider a response.

By listening to ILR practitioners and activists, I have learned that approaches to teaching Indigenous languages are different from teaching dominant languages, and that, in many cases, these approaches are more nurturing and more conducive to successful learning than Eurocentric teaching models. Many Indigenous languages are structurally different from European languages, requiring them to be taught in a different sequence and with different approaches (Kell, 2014); and the types of resources one can rely on for other languages (print materials, trained teachers) do not exist for many Indigenous languages (Hinton, 2011). Yet, these differences beg the question of what is really important in language teaching. Do language learners need a structured curriculum, a textbook, and other print resources? If the Indigenous languages of Canada are oral languages, why attempt to teach them through Eurocentric teaching practices that emphasize reading and writing? Should reading and writing be the foundation for language education at all?

Part of the decolonizing project is to question these ways of thinking, to make Western knowledge systems, rather than Indigenous knowledge systems, the object of inquiry (Denzin, 2008; Smith, 2012). Successful ILR programs (e.g. Baldwin & Costa, 2018; McCarty, 2003; Wilson & Kamana, 2011) teach us that what learners need is a nurturing environment that provides abundant oral input in the appropriate sequence, similar to how a child would learn their first language naturally at home. A non-threatening learning environment that teaches through relationship, reflection, and experience, rather than text and memorization, has long been advocated for by Indigenous educators (e.g. Battiste, 2013; Hinton, 2011; Johnson, 2017; McIvor, 2015). Battiste (1998) argues that:

> Aboriginal people cannot rely on colonial languages and thought defined in provincial curricula to shape our reality … Indigenous languages offer not just a communication tool for unlocking knowledge; they offer a process of orientation that removes us from rigid noun-centered reality and offers an unfolding paradigmatic process for restoration and healing (p. 24).

I suggest such a shift in orientation would be positive for all learners.

Strand 3: Where Do We Hope Things Will Go?

A Different Way Forward With SDE, Chelsea Thomas. The intense epistemic and ontological separateness between people on either side of various boundary-making binaries (myths) uphold the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018) and Eurocentric values in education. I began thinking about education through a de/colonizing lens after about three years of unschooling with my own children. This alternative educational decision awakened me to the omnipresence of colonialism and also to an awareness that new (different) possibilities exist. SDE, self-directed learning, and unschooling, are commonly used terms that define the educational philosophy that shifts away from a colonial, deficit-based conventional educational paradigm to one that acknowledges that learning is non-linear and ubiquitous (Blashke & Hase, 2017). SDE acknowledges the critical value of diverse epistemic and ontological beliefs by resisting polarizing binaries that separate concepts such as teacher/student, learning/play, and cognitive/emotional. The philosophy is a reminder that for thousands of years, prior to colonization, our hunter-gatherer ancestors and Indigenous peoples around the world have been successfully educating (immersing) themselves in the world and learning through cultural transmission and access to the "primary tools of the culture" (Gray, 2014, p.180) they live in.

As a de/colonizing approach to learning, SDE naturally embodies multiliteracy expression, recognizing the cultural and linguistic diversity that exists for all people regardless of being Indigenous or non-Indigenous (Boche, 2014). Unique from past educational reform efforts targeting changes from within a colonial system, or Indigenizing colonial curriculum content, SDE offers a framework that supports diversity, cooperation and freedom that expands beyond the boundaries of conventional school models (Gray, 2014). In stark contrast with standardized, teacher-driven, ministry mandated approaches, SDE is a relational philosophy that emphasizes "being and becoming" (Lysaker, 2018, p. 79).

In the context of literacy education, SDE encourages us to de-emphasize correctness or technical writing ability, by re-defining affectual aspects such as imagination, memories, and moral work as being central to an individual's comprehension

or composing skill. In a longitudinal collaborative research project, Lotherington (2017) documented an SDE approach taken up in a "super diverse" (p. 5) elementary school in Toronto, Ontario with great success. The study was motivated by a desire to create plurilingual learning designs that were inclusive to the diverse linguistic and cultural affiliations of students and teachers and created "a self-governing learning community co-developing cross-curricular project-based learning for creative, collaborative and agentive learning" (p. 10). In this same way, SDE aligned approaches in public education can create spaces for de/colonization in education. Diverse narratives and ways of expressing language and multiliteracies are a natural part of the SDE process, and can become more than merely a theme, unit, or elective choice in the public school experience. Project-based, self-governed, and collaborative learning, all typical of SDE, open up infinite possibilities to meet the requirements of curricular mandates to Indigenize curriculum and embrace Indigenous language resurgence in Canadian provinces, since each is based on complete open-endedness, diversity and inquiry. SDE is an unrestricted educational paradigm that removes the privileging of the English language, and print literacy as the only intelligible means of knowledge production. A matter that is especially urgent for anyone who faces unjust educational encounters such as, children and youth, those living in poverty, Indigenous communities, and English language learners (Murris, 2017, p. 533).

In this way, I would argue that SDE is inherently de/colonizing because it acknowledges the "in-the-moment realities of literacy learnings" (Kuby, Rowsell, Rucker & Hauge, 2017, p. 288), both linguistically and non-linguistically and trusts in the innate capacity of all humans to learn (Calderon, 2009; Romero, 2017). As an embodiment of interdependence expressed through our "affinity to all things beyond universalized curriculum and human-centred practice" (Reddington & Price, 2018, p. 467), SDE expands the purpose of education beyond the boundaries of English print literacy. As I previously mentioned, SDE is not a new paradigm; humans have been learning naturally since time immemorial and most certainly before the inception of schooling. Yet, despite its potential as a powerful decolonizing tool in modern educational contexts, SDE remains a mere alternative pedagogical approach at best. So, how do we get there from here? Well, for starters, I say that we continue these conversations.

Rethinking our language and relationships, Meredith Lemon. Prior to reading Bowers' extensive works (1997, 2001, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2018), I had never thought about how language, the printed word, Western education systems, and technology allowed past paradigms to colonize the present. These are presented as the norms in my universalized, colonizing culture and are taken for granted as progress. My initial post-secondary education was in the sciences, which, like print information, holds a prestigious place in Western culture, and indeed was a fundamental tool of the colonization of other cultures and practices. During my own travels, my perception of Western cultural norms as universal likely prevented me from deeply making space for others. I did not have (or was not given) the time or language to inquire into other ways of living and being in relationship to others. This is the double-bind of privilege, it recreates itself while ostracizing others. At 21 years of age a Kenyan man taught me this lesson.

Because Westerners generally are not aware of, and therefore cannot explicitly teach about, the assumptions embedded in our language (Bowers, 2016), these beliefs are tacitly carried forward generation after generation. Our practices of calling other living

beings "natural resources" or declaring we are "self-made" or "individuals" are just a few examples of how these inaccurate anthropocentric and individualistic beliefs are perpetuated in our discourse. Teachers and professors who have not had their eyes opened to the ethnocentric ways of the West will take for granted the anthropocentric and individualist nature of our culture. For example, that our economic and aesthetic desires can hold more value than the existence of other species. According to Martusewicz *et al.* (2015), phrases like "think for yourself" (p.87), also highlight the deceptive idea that we are individuals and our thinking can be separated from our cultural norms. This world is interdependent and emergent, not static as language can make it seem.

For decolonization to take place, we need to make space for more just, sustainable, and diverse ways of knowing and being. We must embrace new, more accurate root metaphors that frame humans as a *part* of the environment, not apart from it (Plumwood, 2007). To do this, we could investigate how other cultures position themselves in their languages. How do other cultures describe humans and our relationships with each other, the land, and our more-than-human relatives? This is one reason why preservation of the world's languages is so vital.

It will take time to unlearn colonial beliefs and recognize them for what they are -- just one way of seeing the world rather than the *right* way. Let us first identify and then unlearn these oppressive colonial beliefs. Let us incorporate life-sustaining ideas into our root metaphors, our discourse, our curricula, and our classrooms, if parents chose to send their children there. Let us de-centre the Western way of being and re-think the Social Darwinian assumption that 'West is best' so we can learn from other cultures and other beings and live in respectful, reciprocal relationships (Kimmerer, 2013). We need to honour all our relationships with humans and more-than-human others (Abram, 1996); they are our kin, they sustain us, and they make life worth living. As Davis (2009) says,

> the myriad of cultures of the world are not failed attempts at modernity, let alone failed attempts at being us. They are unique expressions of the human imagination and heart, unique answers to a fundamental question: What does it mean to be human and alive (p.19)?

Who misses out when we restrict our definition of what it means to be human and alive? What happens when we restrict our definition of literacy to print literacy only? What other ways of knowing, other literacies, are missing in traditional Western schooling? By improving educators' and students' colonial literacy we can start to answer these questions.

Shifting to Nurture, Nicki. STOL₵EŁ John Elliott, a respected Elder and language revitalization activist of the Tsartlip First Nation on Vancouver Island, led my classmates and I on a hike up LÁU,WELNEW in the summer of 2019. As I looked over the forest below, I once again saw the shades of green everywhere and felt a deep sense of responsibility. While I sometimes wonder about my place in ILR, I know that I have a responsibility to the people of this place I call home which has been home to Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. I have also learned from ILR that language learning happens most naturally in an atmosphere of nurture, inquiry, and respect, and I believe this must be true for all learners.

Many have written about the possibilities of better education systems that incorporate Indigenous perspectives, emphasizing that "moving towards decolonization requires extensive transformation of education where learning is rooted in Indigenous

knowledges rather than treating these knowledges as an 'add-on' or 'other' way of knowing" (Munroe et al., 2013, p. 320; see also Battiste, 2013; McCarty & Lee, 2014; Smith, 2008). Perhaps one small example of this is to deconstruct the notion that reading and writing are essential in language education, and to rethink what a nurturing learning environment looks like when we shed our reliance on the written word. Meyer (2008) posits that knowledge is "the by-product of slow and deliberate dialogue with an idea" (p. 221). Perhaps we each need to begin to dialogue with the idea that Indigenous languages are essential to the wellbeing of our collective culture and environment. Perhaps we all have a role to play in supporting Indigenous language learners, and all other learners, by actively working across the system to dismantle Eurocentric education practices that have deprioritized authentic communication, experience, and relationship.

Tying the Knot

Through this collaborative, kinship making endeavour, we have begun to unearth the roots of our language and literacy connections. This integrative reflection feels vital to us as emerging thinkers in the broad field of education. We acknowledge along with Franklin-Phips and Rath (2018) a desire to:

> Take up pedagogical practices that dislodge our authority in favour of collective exploration and engagement with difficult knowledges, unresolvable problems, contradictory ideas, fundamental uncertainties. We must not think ourselves outside of or above the trouble (p. 270).

It is for these reasons that we embraced uncertainty regarding how our work would be received by colleagues and peer reviewers regardless of the discomfort we felt during the process. Choosing métissage for this paper meant that we were not alone through the process and the mutual support and feelings of togetherness made the messiness and risk of our experiment well worth it. This was further confirmed during our roundtable presentation when we were approached by one woman who was curious about our process and offered us her encouragement. We also shared openly about the ways we had to overlook our individual and societal conditioning towards the "right" way of doing things (Nisbett, 2003). Finally, as three women scholars, we were questioned about our consideration of our experiences as women within our explorations. This has led to a much deeper reflection within each of us as we sit with the realization regarding the absence of a feminist lens within our conversations. With limited space to expand upon this further, we are excited about the opportunity to grapple with this in a future braiding experience.

Métissage allowed us to challenge the polarizing binaries that uphold current language and literacy research by embracing the "points of affinity or rhizomean connections" (Chambers et al., 2008, p. 142) that are both obvious and aplenty. From early conversations and drafts, we immediately saw that although we each had unique experiences and different research interests, our questions about language and literacy overlapped and intersected in important ways. We share an understanding of the ways in which print-based literacy has been essentialized and thus become unified in our various approaches to the de/colonial projects that we must take up moving forward. The need for healing, land-based, and relational pedagogies also surfaced as common threads among our stories.

We find ourselves inspired and excited by the generative potential afforded by métissage as both a methodological and theoretical framework. Consciously suppressing

our inner critics regarding whether this work is indeed "academic" enough, we instead shift our focus towards new language and literacy conversations that take us in novel directions through the blending of mainstream and alternative approaches to social sciences research (Chambers et al., 2008). Our work here brings further into question why such transdisciplinary collaborations are not being taken up more often in the spaces we find ourselves, and more specifically (with)in decolonizing language and literacy conversations. Just as we work to decolonize (with)in our respective fields of inquiry, making kin, as we have shown here, imagines new and de/colonial possibilities for our futures as scholars and also for others who share in the desire to do so.

References

Abram, D. (1996). *The spell of the sensuous: Perception and language in a more-than-human world*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.

Absolon, K. E. (2011). *Kaandossiwin: How we come to know.* Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Allahar, A. & Côté, J. (1998). *Richer and poorer: The structure of inequality in Canada.* Toronto, ON: Lorimer.

Alliance for Self-Directed Education. (2019, June 4). *What is self-directed education?* Retrieved from: https://www.self-directed.org/sde/

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands: La frontera: The new mestiza*. San Francisco, CA: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.

Baldwin, D. & Costa, D.J. (2018). Myaamiataweenki: Revitalization of a sleeping language. In Rehg, K.L. & Campbell, L. (Eds). *Oxford Handbook of Endangered languages* (pp. 553-570). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Ball, J., & Janyst, P. (2008). Enacting research ethics in partnerships with Indigenous communities in Canada: "Do it in a good way." *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*, *3*(2), 33–51.

Battiste, M. (1998). Enabling the autumn seed: Toward a decolonized approach to aboriginal knowledge, language, and education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, *22*(1), 16-27.

Battiste, M. (2013). *Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit.* Vancouver, BC: Purich Publishing.

Battiste, M. (2014). Research ethics for protecting Indigenous knowledge and heritage: Institutional and researcher responsibilities. In N. Denzin, Y. Lincoln, & L. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* (pp. 497–510). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Blaschke, L. & Hase, S. (2016). Heutagogy: A Holistic Framework for Creating Twenty-First-Century Self-determined Learners. In B. Gros, Kinshuk, & M. Maina (Eds.), *The Future of Ubiquitous Learning*, (pp. 25-40). Berlin, Germany: Springer.

Benson, K. & Nagar, R. (2006). Collaboration as resistance? Reconsidering the processes, products, and possibilities of feminist oral history and ethnography. G*ender, Place and Culture*, *13*(5), 581-592.

Boche, B. (2014). Multiliteracies in the classroom: Emerging conceptions of first year teachers. *Journal of Language and Literacy education*, *10*(1), 114-135.

Bowers, C. A. (1997). *The culture of denial: Why the environmental movement needs a strategy for reforming universities and public schools*. New York, NY: State University of New York Press.

Bowers, C. A. (2001). *Educating for eco-justice and community*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Bowers, C. A. (2012). *The way forward: Educational reforms that focus on the cultural commons and the linguistic roots of the ecological/cultural crises.* Vancouver, BC: Eco-Justice Press.

Bowers, C. (2015). *An ecological and cultural critique of the common core curriculum.* Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang.

Bowers, C. A. (2016). *Reforming higher education: in an era of ecological crisis and growing digital insecurity*. Anoka, MN: Process Century Press.

Bowers, C. (2018). *Ideological, cultural, and linguistic roots of educational reforms to address the ecological crisis*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Bowers, C. A., Jucker, R., Oba, J. I., & Rengifo, G. (2011). *Perspectives on the ideas of Gregory Bateson, ecological intelligence, and educational reforms.* Vancouver, BC: Eco-Justice Press.

Brooks, S. D., Dean, A. S., Franklin-Phipps, A., Mathis, E., Rath, C. L., Raza, N., Smithers, L. & Sundstrom, K. (2017). Becoming-academic in the neoliberal academy: A collective biography. *Gender and Education*, *32*(3), 281-300. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2017.1332341

Burke, S., & Robinson, R. (2019). Reflections on métissage as an indigenous research praxis. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, *15*(2), 150-157. doi:10.1177/1177180119837755

Cachelin, A., Rose, J., & Paisley, K. (2015). Disrupting neoliberal discourse in critical sustainability education: A qualitative analysis of intentional language framing. *Environmental Education Research*, *21*(8), 1127-1142. doi:10.1080/13504622.2014.974023

Calderon, D. (2009). Making explicit the jurisprudential foundations of multiculturalism: The continuing challenges of colonial education in US schooling for Indigenous. In A. Kempf (Ed.), *Breaching the Colonial Contract,* (pp. 53-78). Berlin, Germany: Springer Science.

Campbell, S. K., & Butler, V. L. (2010). Archaeological evidence for resilience of Pacific Northwest salmon populations and the socioecological system over the last ~ 7,500 years. *Ecology and Society*, *15*(1), 17.

Chambers, C., Hasebe-Ludt, E., Donald, D., Hurren, W., Leggo, C., & Oberg, A. (2008). Métissage: A research praxis. In J.G. Knowles & A.L. Cole (Eds.)*, Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues*, (pp. 141-153). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Davis, W. (2009). *The wayfinders: Why ancient wisdom matters in the modern world*. Toronto, ON: House of Anansi Press.

Denzin, N. K. (2008). Emancipatory discourses and the ethics and politics of interpretation. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (3rd ed., pp. 435–472). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Donald, D. (2012). Indigenous métissage: A decolonizing research sensibility. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *25*(5), 533-555. doi:10.1080/09518398.2011.554449

Dorff, E.N. (2005). *The way into Tikkun Olam (repairing the world).* Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing.

Evering, B. and Longboat, D.R. (2013) An introduction to Indigenous environmental studies: from principles to action in Kulnieks, A., Longboat, D. R., and K. Young (Eds.). *Contemporary studies in environmental and indigenous pedagogies: A curricula of stories and place* (pp. 241-257). Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Franklin-Phipps, A. (2017). Possibilities and the unintended and unanticipated post qualitative researcher. *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology*, *8*(3). doi:10.7577/rerm.2547

Franklin-Phips, A. & Rath, C. L. (2018). How to become less deadly: a provocation to the fields of teacher education and educational research. *Parallax*, *24*(3), 268-271. https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2018.1496578

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.

Geiger, A. W. (2018, August 27). Public school teachers much less racially diverse than students in US. Retrieved from www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/08/27/americas-public-school-teachers-are-far-less-racially-and-ethnically-diverse-than-their-students/

Gray, P. (2013) *Free to learn: Why unleashing the instinct to play will make our children happier, more self-reliant, and better students for life*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Gray, P., & Chanoff, D. (1984). When play is learning: A school designed for self-directed education. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, *65*(9), 608-611.

Gray, P. & Riley, G. (2015). Grown Unschoolers' Evaluations of Their Unschooling Experiences: Report I on a Survey of 75 Unschooled Adults. *Other Education: The Journal of Educational Alternatives*, *4*(2), 8-32.

Hasebe-Ludt, E., Chambers, C., & Leggo, C. D. (2009). *Life writing and literary métissage as an ethos for our times*. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang.

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Holt, J. (1972). *Freedom and beyond.* Boston, MA: Holt GWS LLC

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

Jenni, B., Anisman, A., McIvor, O., & Jacobs, P. (2017). An exploration of the effects of mentor-apprentice programs on mentors' and apprentices' wellbeing. *International Journal of Indigenous Health*, *12*(2), 25-42.

Johnson, Sʔɪ́mlaʔxʷ M.K. (2017). Breathing life into new speakers: Nsyilxcn and Tlingit sequenced curriculum, direct acquisition, and assessments. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, *73*(2), 109-132.

Johnston, B. H. (2002). One generation from extinction. In Karpinski, E. (Ed.) *Pens of Many Colours* (3rd ed. pp. 147-154). Toronto, ON: Harcourt Brace Canada.

Lysaker, J. (2018). Expanding meaningfulness in literacy research: Possibilities of a relational perspective. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, *67*(1), 64-85.

Keating, A., (2013). *Transformation now: Toward a post-oppositional politics of change*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Kell, S. (2014). *Polysynthetic language structures and their role in pedagogy and curriculum for BC languages: Final report.* Victoria, Canada: Aboriginal Education Team, BC Ministry of Education. Retrieved from http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed

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

Kovach, M., (2009). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations and contexts*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Kuby, C. R., Rowsell, J., Rucker, T. G., & Hauge, C. (2017). Early literacy and the posthuman: Pedagogies and methodologies. Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, *17*(3), 285-296. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798417715720

Lakoff, G. (2010). Why it matters how we frame the environment. *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture*, *4*(1), 70-81. doi:10.1080/17524030903529749

Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M., (1980). *Metaphors we live by.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Land, C. (2015). *Decolonizing solidarity: Dilemmas and directions for supporters of indigenous struggles*. London, UK: Zed Books Ltd.

Lears, T. J. J., (1985). The concept of cultural hegemony: Problems and possibilities. *The American Historical Review*, *90*(3), 567-593. doi:10.1086/ahr/90.3.567

Lent, J. R. (2017). *The patterning instinct: A cultural history of humanity's search for meaning.* Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books.

Lotherington, H. (2017). Elementary school language and literacy education for civic engagement: An evolving playbook for postmodern times. *Language and Literacy*, *19*(3), 4-20.

MacCormac, E. R. (1976). *Metaphor and myth in science and religion.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Martusewicz, R. A., Edmundson, J., Lupinacci, J. (2015). *EcoJustice education: Toward diverse, democratic, and sustainable communities* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Mazama, A. & Lundy, G. (2012). African American homeschooling as racial protectionism. *Journal of Black Studies*, *43*(7), 723-748.

McCarty, T. (2003). Revitalising Indigenous languages in homogenising times. *Comparative Education*, *39*(2), 147-163.

McCarty, T. & Lee, T. (2014) Critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy and Indigenous education sovereignty. *Harvard Educational Review*, *84*(1), 101-124.

McCarty, T.L. (2012). Indigenous language revitalization. In J. Banks (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education* (pp. 1172-1176). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

McIntosh, P. (2003). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 191–196). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

McIvor, O. & Napoleon, A. (2009). Language and culture as protective factors for at-risk communities. *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, *5*(1), 6-25.

McIvor, O. (2013). Protective effects of language learning, use and culture on the health and well-being of Indigenous people in Canada. In M. J. Norris (Ed.), *FEL XVII: Endangered languages beyond boundaries: Community connections, collaborative approaches and cross-disciplinary research: Proceedings of the 17th FEL conference* (pp. 123–131). Bath, England: Foundation for Endangered Languages, in association with the University of Carleton, Ottawa, ON.

McIvor, O. (2015). *Adult Indigenous language learning in western Canada: What is holding us back?* In E. Bourassa, K. Michel, J. Miller, and P. Watson (Eds.), *Our living languages* (pp. 37-49). Ronkonkoma, NY: Linus Books.

Meyer, M. A. (2014). *Indigenous and authentic: Hawaiian epistemology and the triangulation of meaning*. In N. Denzin, Y. Lincoln, & L. T. Smith (Eds.), Handbook of critical and Indigenous methodologies (pp. 217–232). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mignolo, W., & Walsh, C. E. (2018). *On decoloniality: Concepts, analytics, praxis*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Moll, L.C., Amanti, C., Neff, D. & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice*, *31*(2), 132-141.

Munroe, E., Orr, A., Toney, D. & Meader, J. (2013). Decolonizing Aboriginal education in the 21st century. *McGill Journal of Education*, *48*(2), 317-338.

Murris, K. (2017). Learning as 'worlding': Decentring gert biesta's 'non-egological' education. *Childhood & philosophy*, *13*(28), 453-469

Murris, K. (2017) Reading two rhizomatic pedagogies diffractively through one another: a Reggio inspired philosophy with children for the postdevelopmental child. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, *25*(4), 531-550. doi:10.1080/14681366.2017.1286681

Murris, K., Reynolds, R.-A., & Peers, J. (2018). Reggio Emilia inspired philosophical teacher education in the Anthropocene: Posthuman child and the family (tree). *Journal of Childhood Studies*, *43*(1), 15-29.

Nisbett, R. E. (2003). *The geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently -- and why*. Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey.

Patel, L. (2014). Countering coloniality in educational research: From ownership to answerability. *Educational Studies*, *50*(4), 357-377.

Pine, A., & Turin, M. (2017, March 29). Language revitalization. *Oxford Encyclopedia of Linguistics.* Retrieved 24 Jun. 2020 from: https://oxfordre.com/linguistics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.001.0001/acrefore-9780199384655-e-8

Plumwood, V. (2007). *Environmental culture: the ecological crisis of reason*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Reddington, S. & Price, D. (2018). Pedagogy of new materialism: Advancing the educational inclusion agenda for children and youth with disabilities. *International Journal of Special Education*, *33*(2), 465-481

Richardson, L., St. Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 959-978). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE

Richardson, T. A. (2012). Disrupting the coloniality of being: Toward de-colonial ontologies in philosophy of education. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *31*(6), 539-551. doi:10.1007/s11217-011-9284-1

Riley, G. (2018). Exploring unschoolers' experiences in learning to read: How reading happens within the self-directed learning environment. *Journal of Unschooling and Alternative Learning*, *12*(24), 1-33.

Romero, N. (2018). Toward a critical unschooling pedagogy. *Journal of Unschooling and Alternative Learning*, *12*(23), 56-71.

Schnarch, B. (2004). Ownership, control, access, and possession (OCAP) or self-determination applied to research: A critical analysis of contemporary First Nations research and some options for First Nations communities. *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, *1*(1), 80–95.

Smith, L. T. (2008). Building a research agenda for Indigenous epistemologies and education. *Anthropology & Education*, *36*(1), 93-95.

Thibodeau, P., & Boroditsky, L. (2013). Natural language metaphors covertly influence reasoning. *PLOS One*, *8*(1), e52961. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0052961

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). *Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Retrieved from http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/Honouring_the_Truth_Reconciling_for_the_Future_July_23_2015.pdf

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

Wilson, W. H., & Kamanā, K. (2011). Insights from Indigenous language immersion in Hawai'i. In Tedick, D.J., Christian, D. & Fortune, T.W. (Eds). *Immersion Education: Practices, Policies, Possibilities* (pp. 36–57). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Author Biography

Chelsea Thomas – Born and raised in Hamilton, Ontario on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg, Chelsea is a Canadian-Afro-Caribbean-Celtic mom of four unschoolers. She has an MA in Interdisciplinary Studies from Athabasca University and is a PhD candidate in Educational Studies and becoming-teacher-educator at the University of Victoria. Chelsea's doctoral research will explore how educators can use their own stories of resistance to oppositional binary logics to create de/colonial projects that are invitational to everyone. Her advocacy work is connected to We Learn Naturally, paving the way for Self-Directed Education and improving the quality of adult-child relationships here in Canada. Chelsea also works as an Education and Curriculum Coordinator for The Living Lab Project, a university-community-schools partnership

project and is the communications officer for the <u>Canadian Association for the Study of Women and Education (CASWE)</u>.

Nicki Benson – Nicki is of Jewish ancestry and grew up on Sḵwx̱wú7mesh, səl̓ilwətaʔɬ, and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm territories in Vancouver. She has an M.A. in Language Education from the University of British Columbia and is a PhD candidate in Indigenous Language Revitalization at the University of Victoria. She works as a research assistant with the <u>NEȽOLNEW Indigenous Language Research Partnership</u> and her doctoral research will explore success factors in adult immersion education for Indigenous language revitalization. Nicki is the founder of <u>Esperanza Education</u>, the facilitator of the <u>Spanish for Social Justice Teacher Network</u>, and the mamá of a bilingual three-year-old.

Meredith J. Lemon – Meredith was born in Toronto, Ontario on traditional Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, and Anishinabewaki territories. After receiving an MEd from the University of Washington, Meredith went on to get her BEd at Nipissing University where, on an international practicum she came face-to-face with present day colonial education. Currently, Meredith is a PhD candidate in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria with Drs. Wanda Hurren and Jennifer Thom as supervisors. Her doctoral research employs an ecojustice education framework to inquire into the linguistic roots of the global sociological-ecological crisis that are present in the BC curriculum. She works as a teacher, a teacher educator, and an adult educator and is involved as a research assistant in a project on Indigenizing education.