

## ‘Lone Wolves’ and Collaboration: A Reply to Crippen & Robinson (2013)

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In this reply to Crippen & Robinson’s (2013) contribution to *Language Documentation & Conservation*, we discuss recent perspectives on ‘collaborative’ linguistics and the many roles that linguists play in language communities. We question Crippen & Robinson’s characterization of the state of the field and their conclusions regarding the utility of collaborative fieldwork. We argue that their characterization of collaborative fieldwork is unrealistic and their complaints are based on a caricature of what linguists actually do when they work together with communities. We also question their emphasis on the ‘outsider’ linguist going into a community, given the increasing number of indigenous scholars working on their own languages and partnering with ‘outsider’ academics. We outline ways in which collaborative work does not compromise theoretical scholarship. Both collaborative and so-called ‘lone wolf’ approaches bring advantages and disadvantages to the linguist, but lone wolf linguistics can have considerable disadvantages to communities who are already excluded from research. Documentary linguists, as representatives of their profession, should make use of the most effective techniques they can, given that in many cases, that linguist’s work may well be the only lasting record of the language.

**1. INTRODUCTION.** Crippen & Robinson (2013) (hereafter C&R) take documentary linguists to task over the prominence of ‘community-oriented’ collaborative field research in the discipline, and in particular, over the emphasis on collaborative language maintenance or revitalization programs as a way to ‘give back’ to language communities. They argue that an insistence on collaborative research as the main model for language documentation can “lead researchers into unproductive or even dangerous situations” (1) and question the ethics of advocating collaborative models at the expense of ‘lone wolf’ linguistics. In this paper we examine some of the assumptions that underlie C&R’s arguments. While we agree (along with many others) that there is no ‘one size fits all’ model of either language documentation or collaboration with communities, and while we do not dispute that there are communities without the need of, or wish for, language maintenance or revitalization programs, we question C&R’s characterization of the state of the field and their conclusions regarding the utility of collaborative fieldwork. Their characterization of collaborative fieldwork is unrealistic and their complaints are based on a caricature of what linguists actually do when they collaborate with communities. We also question their emphasis on the ‘outsider’ linguist going into a community, given the increasing number of indigenous scholars working on their own languages and partnering with outsider academics.

We write this commentary as linguists with very different backgrounds in fieldwork and community collaboration. Bovern is an Australianist with 15 years' experience in fieldwork with endangered language communities, ranging from language 'rememberers' to the last fluent speakers of highly endangered languages. She has done both collaborative fieldwork with speakers and local organizations, and lone wolf work, and has supervised students working on languages in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Warner has worked collaboratively with a native California community to revitalize their dormant heritage language for 17 years, but she has also done lone wolf-like basic research on Scottish Gaelic.

**2. WHO DOES LANGUAGE DOCUMENTATION?** Before addressing specific parts of C&R's argument, we would like to begin with illustrating some of the very different ways in which linguists interact with speakers of underdocumented languages while on 'fieldwork.' We find that in reading an article such as C&R's, it is easy for each reader to focus on the situations they are most familiar with themselves, without considering other possible situations, where the best approaches to collaboration and linguistic work might be very different. Rather than talking in abstractions, we describe several possible scenarios for varying degrees of collaboration and community-oriented language work.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Lone wolf linguist documenting an underdocumented but not immediately threatened language, no collaboration beyond elicitation:* The location might be rural India. There is stable bilingualism between the local language and a national lingua franca (and possibly trilingualism with English), which has been that way for generations. The language is healthy without intervention, as younger generations are not shifting away from it, and the community is happy with the spheres of usage and written development of the language that they currently have. The community has no negative history with past linguists, and community members are pleased to work with a visiting linguist for pay. The local government has no objection to such work. A visiting linguist does traditional elicitation-based fieldwork.<sup>2</sup> Several native speakers work a moderate amount each with the linguist, but none of them becomes seriously interested in figuring out how the language works. The linguist thanks the consultants, pays them, works respectfully with the community, and may come back to do more work at some later time or not. The linguist goes home and publishes. Klammer (2012) describes work with two languages in Indonesia that may represent this type of situation.
2. *Lone wolf experimentalist linguist working on an endangered language with an active language revitalization movement, not contributing directly to revitalization work:*

<sup>1</sup>These 'portraits' come from our experience of the types of work done by ourselves, our students and colleagues, as well as descriptions in the fieldwork literature such as Newman & Ratliff (2001). Bovern has done work of types 2 (Yan-nhaŋu), 4 (Nyikina), 5 (Bardi), 6 (Quinnipiac), and 7 (Pwo Karen), as well as supervising students working on languages in situations of all seven types. Warner has experienced situations 2 (on Scottish Gaelic) and 6 (on Mutsun), and a former student is currently in situation 4 (Lynnika Butler, working for the Wiyot Tribe). We do not intend for this to be treated as a comprehensive typology of field situations.

<sup>2</sup>In many of these scenarios, the linguist's method for the descriptive and theoretical part of their work could use any of several approaches, such as traditional elicitation, acoustic phonetics and speech perception experiments, stimulus-driven semantic experiments (as described by Majid 2011), or corpus development (Thieberger 2011, Franchetto & Rice 2014). Corpus development as a documentary method has a more direct translation to some kinds of community-oriented materials than other methods, but all have a potential for focusing primarily on the linguist's scientific goals (Franchetto & Rice 2014). Examples among many include Wilbur (2008) and Nikolaeva (2003), both deposited in the ELAR archive (elar.soas.ac.uk), and the Berkeley Ingush corpus project (see, for example, Nichols & Sprouse 2003).

The location might be Ireland, a large Native American tribe in the U.S., or another first world country. The community has a large governmental structure, as well as control over many educational institutions in their area. The language is endangered, with only a small number of children learning it at home. There are some immersion elementary schools and perhaps immersion preschools, and there are various other activities for language revitalization, up through teacher training. An outside linguist, together with a native speaker based at the linguist's university (linguist or language teacher), develops psycholinguistic and phonetic experiments to run on the language that would give theoretical insights. The native speaker and the other linguist develop ties to a college in the community and visit to run experiments, with permission of the college and local government. Community members are happy to participate in the experiments for payment, and sometimes ask what the experiments are about and discuss how the language works, but do not develop a collaboration with the researchers. The linguist and native speaker linguist/collaborator might be very interested in finding out how to work on revitalization with the community in the future, but it would be arrogant of them to visit and assume they can immediately contribute to the existing revitalization program, or have more expertise than the people doing revitalization there. Therefore, they collect data, treat everyone respectfully, leave, and publish, and may develop a long-term relationship to work on revitalization later. Hammond et al. (2014) is an example of a publication resulting from this type of work.

3. *Documentary linguistics with subsistence-farming community undergoing language shift, including community language planning as a revitalization method:* The location might be rural Southeast Asia, the Pacific, or rural Africa. The language is mildly endangered, because not all of the children are learning it and the spheres of usage are narrowing as the dominant language of the country takes over more facets of daily life. However, most children are still learning the language natively. There is little or no awareness in the community that there is language shift. Any schooling that is available is in the dominant language, and most adults are not literate in any language. There is widespread poverty. The language itself has no writing system. A linguist visits to do primarily lone wolf documentary fieldwork. The linguist notices the language shift, and notices that the community is not aware of the likely future trend toward endangerment. No adults in the community have had more than a few years' education, and none have time or resources to plan or implement a language revitalization program or primary education in the language. Community members are happy to work with the linguist for payment. In addition to doing the fieldwork he/she planned, the linguist also begins a series of conversations with adults of the community, bringing up questions like: "Who speaks the language, and who doesn't really?"; "How many of the kids speak the language?"; "When and with who do people of particular age ranges speak the language?"; "Do they speak it in front of their kids?"; and "Do you think it's important for the kids to be able to speak the language?" That is, the linguist involves the community in evaluating the state of endangerment and deciding whether they would like to change the situation. If they feel the endangerment is a cause for concern, the linguist then brings up questions like: "What would you like to do about it?" and "How would you like it to be instead?" The linguist shares knowledge of methods that could be used to increase spheres of usage and increase intergenerational transmission, and steers the community away from

suggestions that won't be realistic or won't contribute to the community's language goals. The linguist eventually goes home and publishes their documentary work, and may also publish about the community language goal-setting process. Arka (2007) describes a situation with some similarities to what is described here, for the language Rongga in Indonesia.

4. *Tribal linguist as employee of the community, primarily community-oriented revitalization work*: The location might be a Native American tribe of moderate size, with a recognized tribal government and some, but moderate, financial resources, or an Australian regional Language Center. The language is severely endangered or even dormant. The Tribe hires a linguist as Language Program Director. The Tribe might try to hire tribal members as language program director when possible, but when not possible, hires an outside linguist (the current example). The outside linguist has been trained in graduate school about language revitalization methods, language database software, dictionary development, possible goals of revitalization, etc. The linguist discusses with the Tribal government whether he/she will be allowed to publish articles about the language or about the revitalization process, in addition to creating materials for use solely or primarily in the community. The community's goals have priority and are the only goals during the linguist's work hours, but the linguist writes and publishes some articles in his/her free time occasionally. The linguist may eventually move on to a position in academia, and may have published enough to do so, or may stay in language work funded by this or another community indefinitely. Truscott (2014) discusses a situation similar to this.
5. *Volunteer linguist for a community doing revitalization work plus documentary linguistics*: The location might be a small, recognized tribe or a non-federally recognized tribe in the U.S., or a language group in Australia. The language is severely endangered. The Tribe does not have sufficient resources to hire a linguist. A linguist begins working with the community on language revitalization. The linguist is also doing traditional elicitation-based fieldwork with a few of the elders of the tribe who are speakers. The linguist is careful to learn who the local authorities are (formal and informal), and is sensitive to conflicts between parts of the community. The linguist works with elders and younger people in the community to help determine what the community's language goals are and to help the community settle on which revitalization methods to use to try to reach those goals. The linguist reads up on revitalization methods and consults others to fill in gaps in their training. The linguist helps the community set up a few master-apprentice pairs, and provides ongoing support for them. The linguist publishes on documentary linguistic topics, as well as publishing a short article about the revitalization process, and some years later may study the language acquisition of the apprentices. The linguist may maintain a long-term or even lifelong relationship with the community if things continue to go well. Vallejos (2014) describes a situation related to this, and Stenzel (2014) describes work with Wa'ikhana as crucially using community workshops to determine the community's language goals and methods, with Stenzel working as a volunteer.
6. *Volunteer linguist for a community, exclusively community-oriented goals, no documentation research*: The situation is the same as the previous one except that either the language is dormant, or the linguist has no plans to do elicitation-based research for their own reasons. The linguist chooses to work with the community out of a

desire to work on revitalization. The linguist does revitalization work with the community, directed by the community's language goals, mitigated and guided by the linguist's knowledge of what methods are likely to be helpful for those goals and what some possible language goals might be. The linguist publishes a few papers on the revitalization process, and may eventually publish a dictionary of the language that was developed more for the community's use than for linguists', but is useful to both. These are not enough publications for the linguist to develop their career, so they also maintain an active research program in an unrelated area of linguistics. The linguist maintains a long-term relationship with the community, possibly life-long, visiting periodically and continuing to work on revitalization activities. The second author's work with Mutsun in California is of this type (Warner et al. 2006, 2007, 2009).

7. *Linguist works with a diaspora community.* The language is spoken in an area of conflict or severe poverty where direct fieldwork would be irresponsible or impossible. The linguist works with members of a diaspora or refugee community in a local town, with work conducted at the university and a local community center. The linguist works mostly on theoretical work for articles or a dissertation, but provides advice to community members about educational materials for the language, and also college preparation advice for community children seeking to further their education. An example is van Urk (2015); one could also compare the work of the Berkeley Ingush and Chechen projects and the Endangered Language Alliance, run by Daniel Kaufman (CUNY).

In summary, linguists work in many different language situations, with many different types of relationships to the local community governing bodies, and with many different potential outcomes for both the community's language work and for the linguist's career. There are also, of course, variations on these types; for example, linguists also conduct salvage documentation with the last speakers of a language, where there is either no 'community' to seek permission from or the language community is not interested in language work. Furthermore, note that all of these situations suppose that the linguist is an outsider to the community and not working on their own native or heritage language.

**3. COMMON GROUND.** We start with the common ground between us and C&R. We do not dispute that there are many types of field site, and many types of communities who have different needs.<sup>3</sup>

We also recognize that there are communities with no interest in collaborative work with linguists, and in such cases, there is nothing unethical about the linguist working with individuals with no expectation that they would participate in activities beyond the linguist-consultant relationship. Indeed, a great deal of fieldwork, particularly on larger and better-studied languages already follows this model. Like C&R, we focus on smaller communities and less-studied languages, where the linguist makes a proportionally bigger impact on the community and where the linguist's behavior is therefore all the more important.

We further do not take issue with the statement that linguists are not "social workers" (C&R:126, cf. Newman 2003:6), and that they are, on the whole, not well-trained to produce pedagogical materials, and that producing such materials can seem like a burden, par-

<sup>3</sup>We do feel that this has been recognized in the literature, however, unlike C&R. This is explicit in books such as Newman and Ratliff (2001), Crowley (2007), Bower (2008), and Austin and Sallabank (2011).

ticularly to graduate students. However, we disagree with C&R about the solution to this problem (see §5.1 below). There are many ways to be a linguist, and many ways to collaborate with communities. C&R's focus on pedagogical materials blinds them to the many other ways in which meaningful and productive relationships can be formed.

Finally, we agree that language documentation and revitalization are different activities. In fact, Bowerman (2008:207–9, unfortunately unreferenced by C&R) argues this explicitly.

**4. EXAMINING LONE WOLF LINGUISTICS.** In this section we take a closer look at some of the definitions and assumptions in C&R. First, we find it important to clarify definitions of some terms.

**4.1 DEFINITIONS OF COLLABORATION.** As C&R (124) acknowledge, the term 'collaboration' is used in field linguistics both in referring to the ways in which the linguist interacts with the speaker community, and the ways in which linguists interact with each other. This dichotomy overlooks the number of community members who are also linguists.

Although C&R discuss definitions and terminology, we need to clarify what is meant by 'collaboration' further. C&R state that they primarily discuss collaboration with community members or community leadership, not collaboration with other academic linguists. They define collaboration with a community as "collaboration with speakers of the language living in situ" and point out that this "may also entail working with local authorities or political figures in addition to or instead of language speakers" (124). This implies that if an outside linguist collaborates with a colleague linguist who is from a community to work on the colleague's language, this does not count as 'collaborative.' For example, if the second author were to collaborate with her university colleagues who are Navajo or Southern Ute to work on their languages, this would not meet C&R's definition of collaborative research, because the colleague is based at the university.

We do not necessarily disagree with this definition, since an outside linguist collaborating with another university-based linguist who is a community member is a very different undertaking than an outside linguist collaborating directly with a non-academic community member. However, because C&R put the entire question of their paper forward as being about collaborative vs. lone-wolf (non-collaborative) research, their definition overlooks important ways in which linguists and language speakers interact with each other.

C&R seem to conflate the issues of collaboration, who determines the direction of the work (community or researcher), and whether to conduct revitalization activities, and we find that to be more problematic than the definition of 'collaboration' itself. We separate the issues of whether community members are research collaborators; whether a project includes language revitalization work; and who chooses the topics of research. These issues are not completely orthogonal: if there is no community collaborator, then the community cannot be choosing the direction of the research, and revitalization work without community collaboration is not likely to get far. However, involving a community collaborator does not necessarily mean that the community chooses the direction of the research or that revitalization activities are involved.

C&R, through most of their article, seem to include any research involving *in situ* community members as 'collaborative.' However, they imply that research is only collaborative if the community members are involved in analyzing data or directing the research (132). They imply that if community members are only collecting and processing data, this is not collaborative research. This narrows the definition of 'collaboration' considerably. We

disagree with this characterization, and suggest that if an outside researcher involves community members in collecting language data, entering language data into databases, or other 'data processing' tasks, this is also a type of collaborative research, since it increases the ways in which community members have a stake in the research, as well as opportunities to shape the research program and ways to gain insight into how research is conducted. That is, community members do not have to be controlling the research agenda in order to be collaborators.<sup>4</sup>

Much of the previous literature about collaborative linguistics is rather vague about what collaboration can entail. This could be because the authors' explanations are fuzzy, but more likely it is because they recognize that, given the myriad of communities and field situations in which linguists work, it is counterproductive to be too specific. Below, we will discuss some possible types of collaboration. Furthermore, Czaykowska-Higgins (2009; referenced only in passing in C&R) sets out a number of types of researcher-community collaborative models and Leonard and Haynes (2010:269) discuss the ways in which collaborative fieldwork can change depending on the participants and community situation.<sup>5</sup>

**4.2 WHOSE GOALS TAKE PRIORITY?** C&R imply that the field of linguistics has shifted to a point where anyone working on language documentation "*must* collaborate with the community, that the linguist's goals *should* be subordinate to the goals of community members, or that solo research is *necessarily* unethical research" (124). They argue against such requirements or expectations. We will focus in this section on the issue of who determines the goals of research, and whose goals take priority.

We agree with C&R that there are fieldwork situations where it is appropriate for a lone wolf linguist to work without substantial community collaboration, and situations where work driven by an outside linguist with minimal input from the community can be ethical—their first and third points (as in some examples in §2). As for their point about whose goals are dominant or subordinate, though, it seems that if a community has goals for language work, an outside linguist should at least listen to what those goals are and try to find a way to work toward the community's language goals while also accomplishing their own research. That is, when a community has goals for work with the language, a linguist at least should not hinder those goals, and should contribute to them if possible and if the help would be welcomed. The outsider linguist is, after all, a guest in the community. Thus, we feel that on C&R's second point here, perhaps a community's goals for their own language do necessarily take priority in some sense over research goals of an outsider, but this usually does not preclude doing the work the linguist would like to do as well. It is important to keep in mind that collaboration with a community does not necessarily mean the linguist's research goals are subordinate, and that it is often possible to achieve goals of both the community and the linguist.

There are situations where the community's language goals clearly are the dominant ones, and should be so. If a community instigates the language work, and recruits a linguist (as an employee or a volunteer) to work with the community on their language program,

<sup>4</sup>Here we build on Leonard and Haynes' (2010) implicit notion that collaboration is multifaceted, but has as its core the erasure or minimization of differences between the 'researcher' and the 'researched,' rather than Rice's (2006) statement that fieldwork is not 'truly collaborative' if the (outsider) linguist exclusively controls the research program.

<sup>5</sup>Thieberger (2011) includes a section on collaborating with communities consisting of three chapters, on ethics (Rice 2011a), copyright, and intellectual property rights (Newman 2011), and training students for fieldwork (Macaulay 2011). However, this work does not substantially address collaboration in the sense of working together to define and reach community language goals.

then the language program has the purpose of meeting the community's goals, not the linguist's. But if the linguist then develops additional basic research goals in the course of working with the community on language revitalization, the linguist may be able to pursue those goals as well. Warner has collaborated with the Mutsun community in California for 17 years under this sort of arrangement, as a volunteer working with the community's language revitalization activists. Warner began working with the Mutsuns as a mentor at the Breath of Life workshop, and then continued working with the community. This language program has created two draft language textbooks, an English-Mutsun/Mutsun-English dictionary, a parsed text collection, and various free-standing teaching materials for community workshops, has run various workshops and classes, and creates opportunities to practice speaking the language. All of these products were chosen based on the community's goal of gaining fluency in the language. During this work, Warner and two of her students have also developed basic research topics about Mutsun (i.e., phonology of metathesis; distribution of vowel length). These topics can be addressed using the database that was created for the community's goals, and this has led to a dissertation (Butler 2013) and a senior honors thesis (Arrick 2012) that are primarily chosen as basic research topics, and have some secondary use to the community's revitalization goals. To sum up, this is a case where the community instigated the language program and recruited a linguist (volunteer) to work toward the community's goals, which have always dominated the project. The linguist views the purpose of the project as being to work toward the community's language goals. Any publications the linguist or her team produce from this project are a secondary goal. However, the project has led to basic linguistic research that has met linguists' research goals, so this secondary goal has sometimes been achieved. This case study also shows the utility and importance of creating language materials that can be repurposed for a variety of language projects.

Similarly, if a community hires a linguist, for example as the Language Program Director, it is clear that the community's goals rightly dominate the project. Warner's former student Lynnika Butler is now employed by the Wiyot Tribe to run the community's language program. If the community employs a linguist, the community's goals should dominate, and any theoretical research goals the linguist develops may fall outside work hours, depending on the community's understanding of the flexibility in the job description. We suspect that C&R do not mean situations in which the community instigates the project or even hires the linguist, but we wish to point out that communities can and do instigate language projects, and that community goals clearly dominate in these cases, just as in any other type of contractual relationship. If you pay someone to paint your house, you don't want them landscaping instead.

Linguists' goals have taken priority over communities' goals in so many communities throughout the history of linguistic fieldwork, we question whether it is so bad if community goals dominate, especially where communities have clear views of what language projects should achieve. Many communities feel that linguists still come in to do the research they want to with little regard for what the community might want to achieve, and without listening well to the community's goals. It is only very recently that linguists have even considered how communities should benefit from academic research, beyond a warm and fuzzy feeling of having contributed to the documentation of global human scientific knowledge. It is only right that the community's goals should sometimes dominate by default. C&R feel that the 'pendulum' has swung too far toward prioritizing the community's goals, even at the expense of the linguist's. But the linguist's goals have been prioritized at the expense of even helping the community decide on language goals for so long, the



pendulum has a very long way to swing before parity will be achieved. Furthermore, many community members we know feel that the pendulum really has hardly yet begun to swing in their direction, since their personal experience in their own communities is with outside linguists who have failed to listen well to the community's goals.<sup>6</sup>

C&R quote, as an extreme statement of subordination of the linguist's goals, Gerdts' (2010) comment that "[a] linguist working on an endangered language must submit to the authority of the community administrators. At every turn, the linguist will have to compromise long-range scholarly goals to meet the community's immediate needs" (126). We strongly question the necessity of *compromising* research, while at the same time recognizing the need to work within a regulatory, legal, and moral framework that may give less autonomy to the linguist than they are used to in Western academia. When outside linguists are working with some communities, they may indeed have to submit to the local authorities' requirements in order to obtain permission to do the work they are planning, and in order to maintain a good relationship to the community so as to continue working with the community and the language in the future. This is simply a matter of obeying the law. For example, the Navajo Nation IRB has legal authority over what human subjects research is conducted with Navajo people, so a researcher who wishes to follow the law and maintain a good working relationship with a Navajo community needs to consider the approval process. That process requires a direct benefit to Navajo people, not just benefit to science, and requires researchers to visit and explain that benefit to the community. This does not mean that a researcher cannot ever pursue their basic research goals involving Navajo, but it does mean that the researcher needs to accede to the community's authority in determining how to integrate those research goals with benefits to the community. Even for communities with no formal structure for research approval, consideration of one's relationship to the community may mean that the researcher has to prioritize the community's wishes.

However, we dispute the idea that all linguists working with endangered languages are required to compromise their own research goals to focus on the community's needs. It is often possible to work toward both basic research goals and the community's language goals. For example, videotaping some master-apprentice language immersion activities can capture a large quantity of fluent language usage by the master for analysis and for creation of a text collection.<sup>7</sup> Even if the linguist does have to use some of the master's time later to go through the recordings and translate or explain unclear points, the two activities can be partially combined. Of course this specific method of combining linguists' and community goals will not work in every setting, but it is one example of how some creative effort can allow progress toward both goals. Benedicto et al. (2007) also discuss a way to combine community language and cultural goals with corpus creation, for the Mayangna language. Traditional elicitation is not the only way for linguists to obtain most of the data they need to answer questions about syllable structure, subordinate clauses, etc. It may be the most obvious or efficient method, but other methods that combine with revitalization or language maintenance activities are possible and feasible, even within the timeline of a PhD dissertation.

C&R argue that what is most important for a linguist creating documentation is to elicit the more complex structures, and indeed these may not come up often enough to allow

<sup>6</sup>Those outside linguists may have been trained well before the literature that C&R identify as going too far was written.

<sup>7</sup>Warner's example of the use of the Mutsun database for work in phonological theory is another example. Bovern's (2012) Bardi reference grammar began as a project where she was employed to document community oral history and help with school materials.

a thorough analysis in spontaneous conversation or during master-apprentice sessions one could record (125), but see Vallejos (2014) on how those complex structures came up only during more collaborative work. Since it is impossible to create a complete record of a language, we recognize that all language work involves making choices about what to document. However, it is shortsighted to advocate a single type of elicitation (or project) as being 'better' than another. The best documentation project is the one that capitalizes on the strengths of all participants. Furthermore, such a blanket statement overlooks the very different levels of language data available for different types of projects. Because Warner works with a language that has been dormant since 1930, she is used to working with whatever data is in the existing corpus, with no option to gain more information about specific structures if the data is not there. Relative to the documentation we have for most dormant languages, hours of audio and video recording of fluent conversational language usage would be an incredible improvement. While such naturally occurring data may not answer every question, it is the community's and the elders' choice whether to put the fluent speakers' time toward a Master-Apprentice program in order to gain young relatively fluent L2 learners, or to dedicate time to elicitation of complex structures that do not occur during fluent conversation in order to get more thorough documentation.

C&R seem to assume that communities already have language goals, and that a collaborating linguist has no role in helping to guide the choice of those priorities. They also mention, though, that there are endangered language communities where the community is not even considering language work, and where it would not be realistic to develop a language program (129). For example, in a country where community members are subsistence dwellers in poverty, or where the language is spoken only within a war zone, language maintenance and revitalization are unlikely to be a high priority (cf. Arka 2007). Many other communities, even in developed countries, may not have clear community language goals simply because they have not yet discussed among community leaders and members what they would like to do with the language; they may also simply lack awareness of what types of language goals are possible.

C&R view community language goals and linguists' research goals as an opposition, but linguists can be very productive in helping the community develop their language goals, especially if the community has not discussed goals directly yet. Pecos and Blum-Martinez (2001) describe this process for Cochiti Pueblo, and Stenzel (2014) describes community meetings to determine language goals as one of the important activities conducted for Wa'ikhana. Calling meetings of community elders and leaders, in a culturally appropriate way, can lead to discussion of how often the language is currently being used in what settings (i.e., taking stock of the state of endangerment). This leads to discussion of what the community would like the state of the language to be, and discussion of how much they value having the children be able to speak fluently, for example. A linguist well-trained in stages of endangerment and in methods for reversing language shift (Reyhner 1999; Fishman 2001; Rice 2009) could then facilitate a discussion of what to do to bring the language toward the usage status the community wishes. At this planning and assessment stage, a linguist could contribute greatly by knowing which methods are likely to lead to which outcomes, and what makes a given method work or fail. That is, the linguist has expert knowledge and training that the community can benefit from, much like a homeowner benefits from the specialist knowledge of a plumber. For example, if the community initially suggests having the language taught as a subject in the local high school for one hour/week, but has identified increasing the number of fluent speakers as a goal, a linguist trained in revitalization could suggest methods that are more likely to create fluent speakers, such

as summer immersion camps. Even in a community of subsistence farmers with very few resources for a formal language program, a linguist might be able to facilitate discussion among community leaders regarding what they would like to see happen with the language in the future, and this could be a large contribution toward identifying community language goals, rather than simply waiting passively while endangerment and language shift take their usual (and otherwise inevitable) course.

C&R seem to assume that the community's language goals are usually to develop 'kindergarten language primers,' and that the linguist's goals are to analyze some abstract aspect of language structure,<sup>8</sup> perhaps something about syntax or phonology, and that these goals have no point of contact. If instead one of the linguist's goals is to help the community determine what their language goals might be, it might be easier to plan work that benefits both parties. Even communities that have been working on language revitalization for some years may not have considered explicitly what language goals they want to reach (e.g., do they want to increase the number of fluent speakers? restore intergenerational transmission? be able to use the language for occasional ceremonial purposes such as opening prayers at public events? just teach the children enough words of the language to provide the children with a sense of their identity?). Such a discussion, with a linguist informed about language acquisition and revitalization methods present, could be very useful.

Finally, we do not agree with C&R's characterization (through quotation of Gerdtz 2010) of linguists' research goals as long-term and communities' language needs as immediate. A linguist might wish to obtain just enough information to answer a specific question about the vowel harmony system of a language, because it has been discussed in past literature, for example. This could be published in a paper the following year. A community may be working toward creating a stable bilingual speaker population from a starting point of endangerment as for Hawaiian a few decades ago (Warner 2001; Wilson & Kamana 2001) or creating fluent speakers where there currently are none (as for Mutsun). These are very long-term goals. Linguists with mid- or long-term relationships with the language community also have both short-term and long-term goals, which are prioritized during different phases of fieldwork. For example, a first field trip might have the immediate goal of gathering enough information to write a sketch grammar or develop a topic for a dissertation; the second trip may be specifically oriented towards dissertation goals, or towards corpus compilation for future work. Bower's three field trips to the Bardi community at One Arm Point during her graduate training all had both short-term goals (a small book of edited texts, reference grammar data, and editing of archival materials and specific construction elicitation, respectively) and medium- to long-term goals (to create school materials for testing and refinement on future trips, to build a corpus of oral history data, and for all trips, to collect and analyze lexical data for a dictionary).<sup>9</sup>

We return now to the issue of who chooses the direction of the research or the questions to investigate. As mentioned above, we suspect that C&R are thinking of cases where a

<sup>8</sup>In our experience, it's very rare for a linguist to go to the field with a single research goal. A more explicit recognition that linguists go to the field with many aims, not all of which are realized, leads both to a more realistic characterization of field research and makes it easier to see how the linguist's goals can be combined with community-oriented input.

<sup>9</sup>Of course, the scope and number of goals is also highly dependent on the length of the field trip. In addition to the general aims described in this section, Bower had smaller, very specific field goals (e.g., "find out if sentence X is grammatical") and general planning goals (e.g., "try to work with speaker Y more" or "try to get more discussion about traditional ethnographic practices and material culture"). Goals of different scope are also important for linguists, such as graduate students, who might not be in the position to make a firm, long-term commitment to a particular community beyond the timeframe of their dissertation.

linguist wishes to study some very abstract part of language structure that native speakers are not even consciously aware of, such as syllable structure, underlying representation of tones, paradigmatic suppletion, or long-distance anaphora. It is true that non-linguist community members will never happen to suggest these topics as something to work on, and in most cases, linguists will be hard-pressed to even explain intelligibly what it is they are trying to find out, or why they care. This does not mean that linguists are forbidden to study abstract topics, just because this would be prioritizing the linguist's goals over the community's goals. What we suggest is that the linguist work with the community on the community's language goals, and also work on the theoretical topics of the linguists' choice, with speakers who are happy to be consultants for such work, and in ways that do not hinder any language revitalization activities the community wants to be working on.<sup>10</sup> It is unrealistic to wait for the community to suggest working on syllable structure or sluicing, and unrealistic and problematic to say that such work should not be done unless the community suggests it.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, it is counterproductive to claim that abstract theoretical work can only be done if one ignores the community's language goals, as C&R seem to suggest. What we propose is that both an outside linguist and a community can suggest research topics and goals, where the community's topics are likely to be directly applied to revitalization, and the outside linguist is likely to suggest the abstract theoretical topics. Perhaps the community would suggest starting a master-apprentice program, while the outside linguist would suggest figuring out the vowel harmony. But both can be done, even if it takes longer than doing only the linguist's topics, by the traditional elicitation method alone.

##### **5. ADVANTAGES OF COLLABORATION AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE LONE WOLF APPROACH.**

C&R appear to conclude that what they call collaborative research provides few or no successful benefits, and comes at considerable cost. It is true that collaborative fieldwork doesn't always produce outcomes that either side is happy with. However, we believe that with good training of linguists in language revitalization methods, collaborative work with a strong focus on community-driven language goals can produce great benefits, without a trade-off in quality of theoretical work. We also find that the lone wolf approach is not immune to most of the negative outcomes that C&R associate with collaborative fieldwork.

**5.1 WHAT FORMS DO THE RESULTS OF COLLABORATION TAKE?** C&R focus on pedagogical materials (especially so-called kindergarten primers) as the main results of collaboration. We feel that this is shortsighted and does not appropriately reflect either the range of collaborative activities that linguists engage in, nor the range of outcomes that communities find important. C&R's reasoning behind the claim of disadvantages to collaboration is that: 1) 'kindergarten language primers' take effort to make but are not very useful and may serve only symbolic functions, and 2) linguists' careers are damaged by putting time into creating pedagogical materials instead of theoretical work. We will address each of these claims,

<sup>10</sup>We also suggest that linguists make the effort to explain their theoretical topics at some level, if not in detail, to non-linguists. This is a good skill for writing grants and Human Subjects proposals, not just for communicating respectfully with non-linguist community members.

<sup>11</sup>Benedicto et al. (2007) discuss sending a team of community members to a nearby university in Nicaragua to study linguistics, with each choosing a topic on the Mayangna language for their senior thesis. This led to an unusually high level of community-directed research goal setting, but this method is obviously not possible in many communities.

and then turn to the advantages of taking a collaborative approach that includes community goals.

First, language revitalization products do not have to be 'kindergarten primers,' as C&R imply. It is extremely important to keep in mind that a language revitalization program often includes many other products and methods. We agree with C&R that booklets with a picture on each page and the word in the language printed below the picture are of very little use in maintaining current levels of language usage or creating new fluent speakers. We imagine this type of booklet is what C&R mean by 'kindergarten primers.' If the community's goal is to increase the number of fluent speakers, this type of product will not help. However, if the community's goal is to give the children enough exposure to their dormant heritage language to give them a sense of identity, such booklets may be useful.<sup>12</sup> They may also be a first step in showing goodwill towards the language at the school level, and encouraging family members to interact with one another in tasks specifically *about* the language (much like reading with very young children socializes the children to the value of books, for example). If the community's goal is to increase the number of fluent speakers, a linguist trained in revitalization methods can produce something much more useful than such a booklet. A linguist can work with the community to develop a summer immersion day-camp, or a collection of songs for teaching grammar points, or a training program for training fluent speakers to stay in the language while teaching non-speaker children, or they can provide linguistic training to language teachers so they can better understand theoretical materials about the language, or help set up a master-apprentice program. Thus, C&R devalue collaborative revitalization work by focusing on one of the least effective revitalization products, by caricaturing what revitalization work involves, and by failing to consider the range of language goals that communities may have.

C&R suggest that sometimes linguists try very hard to do collaborative work with the community but that the products may not benefit either party (131). C&R also claim "[i]t is quite common that a language community requests linguistic outputs such as dictionaries and grammars, but community members may not use these materials once they are produced, and indeed may never even have had the intention of using the materials" (124). They then shift to an emphasis on "a collection of kindergarten primers" (125) as the product one might make for community use. We find this claim extremely problematic as a generalization about problems of linguists trying to do collaborative, community-oriented work.

A linguist who has not received good training in language revitalization may begin work with a general idea that the field of linguistics now advocates 'giving back to the community.' This linguist may know only a few of the least effective ways to do that, particularly producing a teaching grammar that is intended to be readable to both linguists and community members, producing the primers discussed above, and producing CDs that allow a user to click on pictures and hear a recording of a word. However, C&R's focus on the problems of these products avoids two important points: 1) the community's goal is not always to create new fluent speakers, and 2) there are far more effective language revitalization methods.

Some communities may have a goal of learning a few words and teaching these to children as a symbol of their identity. Linguists need to recognize that this is also a valid goal (see also Bower & James 2010). It is difficult for children to grow up not being able to answer when other children ask "Well, what are you then?," and even knowing a few words

<sup>12</sup>One of Bower's community language resources has the dubious honor of being the book most regularly stolen from the local school library.

can convey a sense of identity. Learning enough to be able to speak a prayer in the heritage language at the opening of a ceremony can also be an important goal. It is crucial to recognize that linguists are not the arbiters of which language goals are valid, and that even a small amount of language material taught to children can convey identity through reclaiming a lost language.

If the community's language goals include increasing the number of fluent speakers, then there are many ways linguists can contribute. We agree that traditional linguistic training usually does not cover these methods, but linguists can be trained in good practices for revitalization methods, and can read up on them. A linguist well-trained in what tends to make specific revitalization methods work vs. what makes them fail would know that at certain stages of endangerment, it can be very useful to set up immersion preschools. This linguist would also know that immersion preschools are more likely to produce fluency in children if they include language classes for the parents, designed not to bring the parents to fluency but to allow the parents to support use of the language at home, so that children do not conclude that the heritage language is only for use at school.<sup>13</sup> More generally, a linguist well-trained in revitalization methods would know a range of revitalization methods, including but not limited to Master-Apprentice program, immersion preschools, summer immersion camps, and community planning as a revitalization method (§4.2 above). This linguist would know, based on other communities' experiences, which methods tend to be helpful at what stage of endangerment and what factors about a community lead to a preference for one method or another. This situation is worlds apart from a traditionally-trained documentary linguist who comes into the community with an idealistic goal of 'giving back' but no idea of how to do that other than writing 'kindergarten primers' or attempting to make their descriptive grammar of the language readable to community members.

C&R suggest that because typical linguists are not trained in language pedagogy, they should simply call in the education experts and hand the revitalization project off to them, so that linguists can spend their time on abstract theoretical work that the community does not need and would not understand (124). We dispute two things about this claim: 1) most education experts are not trained in language endangerment or pedagogy for endangered language situations, let alone methods of language revitalization (cf. Amery and Buckskin 2012), and 2) we suggest that linguists can learn these skills relatively easily, and can be more effective in doing language revitalization as part of a language team than an education expert without a linguist can be. Furthermore, suggesting that a linguist is not the right expert for language revitalization, and therefore linguists should just hand the work off to someone else, seems like an excuse. The fact that many linguists are uninformed about revitalization methods does not mean that they have to *stay* uninformed. If the field of linguistics overall has not traditionally trained graduate students in revitalization, we can (gradually) change the field to make that training available. Warner and her colleagues teach a full course on Revitalization<sup>14</sup> and students who do not have such courses available could obtain training through intensive courses at AILDI and related institutes developed at other locations, the Institute for Collaborative Language Research (CoLang), the LSA Summer Institute, or another summer school, as well as through volunteering at a Breath of Life

<sup>13</sup>Parker et al. (2014) constitutes a very practical manual for setting up a successful immersion preschool, and a linguist lacking training in that but faced with a community where this method could be useful could learn quickly from this resource.

<sup>14</sup>Back syllabus at <http://www.u.arizona.edu/nwarner/teaching/421.pdf>

workshop or similar collaborative venue. Warner's department now offers a Ph.D. major specialization in Language Revitalization<sup>15</sup> that also includes training through such sources.

Finally, such an attitude implies that there are such education experts locally available who can take up the slack. Realistically, however, the choice is not between linguist or qualified pedagogy expert; it's a choice between linguist or no one.<sup>16</sup> With a few exceptions, most Schools of Education do not focus on how to provide language education outside the formal school setting to indigenous language communities. Graduate students in Education who are interested in doing collaborative community work can certainly also learn language revitalization methods (and they sometimes take Warner's Revitalization course). However, a linguist with a good understanding of phonology, morphology, and syntax, or with the ability to teach pronunciation of ejectives for example, will probably still have a head start relative to an education expert when it comes to producing a truly community-friendly dictionary, or to helping community leaders design immersion activities to target structures of the language.

Overall, C&R's argument on pp. 124–125 seems to be that communities often state that they want dictionaries or grammars or 'kindergarten primers,' but they actually only want them for symbolic or political purposes (for the effect of showing someone that the language is 'real' because it has written materials). Since the work will only be used for symbolic purposes, according to C&R, linguists should be allowed to spend their time on whatever work they want to do, presumably abstract theoretical research, because producing any document about the language at all will serve just as well for the symbolic function. However, before a linguist can conclude that a community only wants language materials for symbolic or political purposes, they would need to meet extensively with community leaders to discuss the state of endangerment, how community members feel about language shift, and what the community's language goals might be. If the linguist has not discussed with community leaders what some possible language goals and methods to reach them are, it would be premature to conclude that the community's only language goal is to have written materials to point to for symbolic value.

**5.2 DO REVITALIZATION ACTIVITIES HARM LINGUISTS' CAREERS?** Second, we turn to the issue of revitalization work harming linguists' careers. We agree with C&R that producing booklets with pictures labeled in the language generally will not help a linguist's tenure case. Doing language revitalization work in collaboration with a community clearly takes time, often a great deal of it, and that is time that cannot be spent writing theoretical journal articles. Helping start a language immersion camp or helping design an immersion preschool, or conducting community planning meetings to determine language goals, will be counted as 'service/outreach' in a tenure case, if it is counted at all. However, linguists can develop research publications that do count toward promotion and tenure through revitalization work as well. A dictionary, grammar, or parsed text collection are possible research products (Rice 2011b). Another is a journal publication on the revitalization process, on what works or fails in revitalization and why, and on what methods a particular community has tried with what outcomes. Both authors of this article have published this type of work, and in fact, C&R's own paper, as well as the ones in the past literature that they

<sup>15</sup>Details can be found at <http://linguistics.arizona.edu/sites/linguistics.arizona.edu/files/NEW%20Grad%20Handbook%202014.pdf> (pp. 11–12).

<sup>16</sup>Of course, the situation regarding available expertise differs in each community. If there are two linguists working with the community, of whom only one has training or interest in revitalization, it might not be best for both to work on revitalization. Each community should of course consider what personnel resources are available.

criticize, are also examples of this type of publication. It is still true that a hiring or tenure committee may not value publications about revitalization as highly as publications about theoretical linguistics, but one can at least increase the number of one's refereed publications by publishing about the revitalization process. Furthermore, linguists are increasingly finding ways to combine revitalization activities and data collection, as mentioned above, so that they can collect data for theoretical topics without hindering revitalization activities. Linguists can analyze the language used in revitalization projects and publish on the process of language acquisition and language change during revitalization, as Leonard (2007) has done for Myaamia. Finally, being attuned to the community's language goals and aiding them is a way to cement ties with the community and to help ensure that the linguist will be able to continue research into the future. Thus, the options for participating in revitalization work while building one's publication record as an academic include at least traditional linguistic work, analysis of language usage in revitalization, and publications about the revitalization process.

Still, the current authors are aware that doing revitalization work in collaboration with a community takes considerable time and effort, and that this work has to be fit into the available hours together with the work necessary to maintain the linguist's career. Although we may work to change this, many hiring and tenure committees do not consider revitalization work sufficient, even if one publishes about the revitalization process. Thus, this is a real problem. Graduate student linguists need to publish enough to get a job that will allow them to continue doing linguistic work, and assistant professor linguists need to publish enough to get tenure. If linguists at these stages fail to publish enough to further their careers, they will not be able to continue doing linguistic work at all (unless hired by the community or unless they can do the work entirely as volunteers). Language communities are often not aware that university linguists are in some sense paid in the opportunity to publish, and that without chances to publish, they will lose not only their current jobs, but their careers.<sup>17</sup> An open conversation between an outside linguist and community members about why the linguist needs to publish and what will happen if the linguist does not publish could be very helpful, especially since the general public is not often familiar with how academics are hired and evaluated. It is perhaps important for the field of linguistics at this stage to work toward changing how language revitalization work and collaboration with a community to determine language goals are evaluated in hiring and tenure decisions. The burden of fitting work toward the community's language needs and work toward theoretical research together need not fall entirely on the individual researcher.

C&R suggest that authorship problems could be detrimental to the career of a linguistics graduate student who does collaborative work with a community and publishes on it (131). The graduate student will need to be the sole author in qualifying papers and their dissertation, at a minimum. We do not see a problem in this. In experimental linguistic subfields such as psycholinguistics, it is very common that graduate students' work is co-authored with the faculty supervisor when it is submitted to a journal, but single-authored when it is a qualifying paper or dissertation. If the linguist has a good relationship with the community, it should be possible to have the community language leader or primary consultant as a co-author on publications, but to have qualifying papers and dissertations be single-authored,

<sup>17</sup>Warner has witnessed a case where community members became much more concerned about making it easy for their linguist to publish when they learned about this aspect of how academia works. In Bower's experience, speakers viewed academic linguistic work either as the price to be paid for getting a linguist who would also work seriously on their community projects, or as a way to show others that the language was just as 'good' a language as major European languages such as French or German.



with an extensive acknowledgement note about the role of community collaborators and a reference to any co-authored publications. The meaning of co-authorship is variable across sub-fields of linguistics as well as other fields.<sup>18</sup>

**5.3 COMBINING COMMUNITY-ORIENTED AND ACADEMICALLY-ORIENTED WORK.** We see several possible models for how linguists can combine substantial language revitalization work with the need for publication in order to maintain their careers.

1) The most obvious model may be what Bowerman has done: publishing traditional linguistic documentation work and traditional theoretical linguistic works on the language, while also creating language teaching materials and collaborating with the community on revitalization, maintenance, pedagogical activities. Since she lives a long way from the field site, and frequent travel to the community is impractical, a revitalization program that relies heavily on her presence would be doomed. The community-based materials form a flexible documentary corpus that can be used for theoretical linguistic work ranging from a reference grammar to acoustic phonetics. Most recently, materials prepared for a school story-telling program have been used to test forced alignment software. Given that corpus materials would need to be created for the linguistic work anyway, it is not much additional work to curate them in such a way that they become accessible for school programs. More recently, Bowerman's undergraduate students have received training in documentation methods while helping to prepare materials for community dissemination. For example, a final project for a class on the languages of Indigenous Australia was a co-authored learners' guide, where each student researched some aspect of the language using linguistic sources and wrote an accessible introduction to the phenomenon for students of the language. Such projects provide community materials while also teaching the students about language structure and accessible writing.

2) An increasingly frequent model occurs when the university-based linguist is not an outsider to the community at all, but a community member, and the linguist works on both revitalization activities and academic publications. Warner's colleague Stacey Oberly, who is Southern Ute, was developing language teaching materials before she began studying linguistics, and continued doing both types of work while writing her dissertation on Ute. As a faculty member, she now does revitalization work in the community and publishes both about theoretical or descriptive topics and about the process of revitalization (Oberly 2010, 2013).

3) Warner takes a different approach by largely separating language revitalization work from the remainder of her research. She has two separate research areas: Mutsun revitalization and phonetics of spontaneous speech. Most of her work in phonetics is on English, Dutch, and other non-endangered languages, and is completely separate from her work on Mutsun. Her work on Mutsun is driven by the goals of the community, and is first and foremost for the benefit of the community, with any publications on Mutsun (descriptive such as a dictionary, or papers on the revitalization process) viewed as a bonus.

4) The final approach we discuss is for the linguist to be hired by the community to do language revitalization work (as Warner's former student has been by the Wiyot Tribe in California), or to work for the tribe as a volunteer while having a career in some non-linguistic, unrelated field.

These four approaches can all be viable ways for a linguist to do language revitalization work, and the first three all can be viable ways for linguists to maintain their academic

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<sup>18</sup>One hopes that a discussion between the linguist and community members could solve this problem if it arises.

careers as well. None of these approaches is easy. The first approach has the disadvantage that the revitalization part of the work is often not funded, except as a by-product of other work. Conflicts within the community or between the community and the linguist can certainly make the situation difficult, or prevent the linguist from continuing to work with the community. This is also true of lone wolf linguists doing no revitalization work, however. In the second approach (linguist from the community), this situation can be more stable because the linguist has a life-long tie to the community already, but conflicts still occur and can be all the more damaging and difficult to manage. For both the first and second approaches, the linguist has to produce enough publications that count for job hiring or toward tenure to maintain a career, and doing both types of work can certainly be challenging. However, if the linguist succeeds, they will be better able than a lone wolf linguist to train future graduate students in how to do successful collaborative work and how to help maintain and revitalize a language.

The third approach avoids the ethical problem of balance between the community's needs and the linguist's career needs by declaring that all work done on the language is done primarily for the benefit of the community and the language itself, and that publications are not the primary goal. However, it may well be possible to publish descriptive works and/or papers on the revitalization process, as well. The downside of the third approach is that the linguist has to balance two complete research programs in separate subfields of linguistics. The linguist has to save enough time to publish enough in their other research area (phonetics in Warner's case) to maintain their career exclusively through those publications, without relying on publications from the collaborative community project. It can be difficult to function as one whole academic in two fields at once, but this does remove the potential conflict of needing to publish theoretical works on the language that may not benefit the community.

The fourth approach, where the linguist works solely for the community and does not attempt to maintain an academic career, may be ideal for some linguists who do not wish to continue in academia, but does not meet the needs of those who do. Furthermore, only a few endangered language communities can afford to hire a half- or full-time linguist for the long term, so that that work can simply be the linguist's career.

By discussing these four approaches, we hope to point out that doing collaborative language revitalization work does not doom a linguist's career, and that there is more than one way to combine revitalization and traditional linguistic work. The collaborative portion of the work is frequently not funded, and its results are often not as valued in academia. It is a serious problem that most granting agencies exclude revitalization activities from the fundable items (C&R:131), especially for dormant languages, whether the exclusion is based on the idea that language revitalization is too applied to be 'science' or the idea that it is more important to fund languages with living speakers. Because of the limitation on grant funding, unless the community can hire a linguist, much revitalization work has to be done by the linguist effectively as a volunteer. However, this does not mean it is impossible to do both theoretical research and revitalization.

**5.4 ADVANTAGES TO COLLABORATION.** We turn now to direct advantages of incorporating community collaboration or language revitalization work into a project. The difficulties are clear, but there are also many advantages. First, collaboration with community members can improve the quality of the language documentation (Rice 2011b). Speakers are more likely to invest time and effort in a project if they can see benefit in the results for themselves and their community. This may take the form of simply showing up to sessions more

reliably, or it may take the form of the language speaker pointing out relevant data that the linguist is unaware of. This has certainly been Bower's experience in northern Australia. It may provide the linguist with access to aspects of linguistic practice and community life that lone wolf researchers would be denied. Vallejos (2014) gives examples of how much more morphological complexity speakers used when interviewed by community members than in previous work that was closer to a lone-wolf methodology, so that she realized her previous impressions of the morphology were incorrect. Moreover, being a participant in a documentation project is very time-consuming and intellectually demanding, and linguists too often do not appreciate the effort that speakers make in answering their questions.<sup>19</sup>

A second benefit lies in the possibility of keeping languages healthier for longer, so that future linguists have the opportunity to study them. Language endangerment worldwide is currently getting worse, not better. This is a scientific problem for linguists, as well as being a human rights issue. If we want future linguists to continue to have access to languages to study, we should be doing everything we can to support communities who wish to retain their languages. Collaborative work that includes a language revitalization component along with documentation can make a small contribution to this. If taking communities' input seriously in collaboration facilitates future linguistic research, this is a reason to do it. This could also be viewed as a reason for hiring and tenure committees to value revitalization work.

Another reason to incorporate collaborative revitalization work while working on an endangered language is simply the human rights or ethics argument (Krauss 1996). If an outside linguist has a relationship with a language community for purposes of basic linguistic research, and the community expresses interest in trying to maintain or increase usage of the language, should the linguist not make an attempt to help? In situations where a community has noticed the endangerment of their language and has begun to think of doing something about it, a linguist can make a positive contribution that can make the revitalization efforts more successful. (We will return below to the question of linguists' training, or lack thereof, for this task.) The current authors believe the community has the right to try to improve the stability of their language, and why should linguists who already have a relationship to some members of the community not try to offer help based in their knowledge of language endangerment and language acquisition?<sup>20</sup>

The authors of the current article also feel that it is worth doing collaborative revitalization work because it is personally rewarding. While one may hope that one's theoretical articles on speech perception or final devoicing or long-distance agreement are still being cited 30 years from now, collaborative revitalization work in a community has an immediate impact on people's lives that is likely to continue in the long term. If one creates the first easily usable dictionary of a language, the chances that it will still be used in 30 years are probably far higher than the chances of long-term citation for theoretical papers. Applying one's knowledge of linguistics to directly impact language use in a community can be extremely rewarding. Warner has found it rewarding to carry on daily life conversations with community members in a dormant language that has not been used in conversation since approximately 1915, and to see the community members' joy at speaking and hearing the

<sup>19</sup>This was driven home to Bower's field methods class in Spring, 2014, when we 'turned the tables' and had students be the language consultants, answer each other's questions, and do translation into languages in which they were fluent.

<sup>20</sup>Related to this is the way in which access to knowledge and education is a human rights issue. Academics with access to free broadband internet and JSTOR sometimes forget the asymmetries in access to knowledge between those in academia and those in the wider community.

words of their ancestors, even if non-fluently. Hinton (2001) describes the joy that members of many dormant language communities have shown during revitalization activities. This work is extremely motivating for many linguistics students, despite the difficulties that come with it.

C&R claim that the field is not educating young linguists about the difficult aspects of doing collaborative work with communities, and that rather the field is telling them that "collaboration is always easy and fruitful" (131). This is an exaggeration. We do not know of anyone telling graduate students that work with endangered language communities is always easy or successful, or even implying this. Instead, various sources argue for the need to teach younger linguists about the difficulties of fieldwork, in works such as Macaulay (2004, 2011), Bower (2008), Chelliah & de Reuse (2010), and Stebbins (2012). The journal *Language Documentation & Conservation* constitutes an excellent source of information on difficulties and rewards of many types of fieldwork. We cannot imagine how a linguistics graduate student could get as far as making their first trip to work in an endangered language community without realizing that linguists collaborating with communities often encounter conflicts, differences of opinion about writing systems or dialects, issues of authority over publication, and setbacks in efficacy of revitalization methods.<sup>21</sup> When an outside linguist who is a young graduate student is first introduced to a member of a community, it is likely to be obvious to the linguist that they will have to put considerable effort into developing a relationship of long-term trust, and that trust is not the community's default in dealing with the university or with academics.

We do think that some graduate students or future graduate students who have no experience with an endangered language community at all may have unrealistically optimistic hopes about contributing to language revitalization. This may simply reflect goodwill, idealism, and a legitimate distress at the prospect of loss of so many languages. However, the solution to this is to provide better education about the language documentation and revitalization process, not to advocate abandoning collaborative work in favor of an exclusively lone wolf approach.

**5.5 DISADVANTAGES OF THE LONE WOLF APPROACH.** For a paper that makes empirical claims about both discourse and behavior, C&R are rather light on empirical justification for their claims. For example, there is no supporting evidence for the statement that pedagogical materials are not used in the communities for which they have been developed (124). There are two brief, anonymous, case studies, devoid of any context, along with the authors' own field site anecdotes. The paper gives no empirical data about the frequency of different outcomes with lone wolf vs. collaborative research protocols. One area where a natural study is possible is Australia, where collaborative research protocols have been standard (indeed, almost the only way to get research done) for more than 20 years. An examination of the number of publications listed in the online bibliography *OzBib* shows that there has been no decrease in academic publications as community-oriented research becomes more standard.<sup>22</sup> We can compare this to research on the genetics of Australian

<sup>21</sup> Warner's course on Language Revitalization, mentioned above, covers all of these topics extensively.

<sup>22</sup> OzBib is available at [ozbib.aiatsis.gov.au](http://ozbib.aiatsis.gov.au). Numbers of publications were sampled by year. The Northern Territory Land Rights Act (1976) gave Northern Territory communities (through the regional Land Councils) the right to restrict researchers' access to remote communities and required all researchers to obtain a permit and research approval before research could commence. The *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies* were first published in 2002, and contain a heavy emphasis on collaborative research. However, despite little change in the number of linguists working on Australian languages across the last 10 years, publications on the languages have continued to increase.

Aboriginal populations. While linguists in Australia embraced the collaborative paradigm, geneticists did not; and while research on Australian languages has continued to increase, research on genetics has come to a standstill as communities refuse to participate in research in which they are purely 'subjects' rather than active research participants (cf. Kowal & Anderson 2012).

There are other disadvantages of a lone wolf approach. Working within a community framework usually makes it easier to talk to a variety of community members about past language work. This can be invaluable in finding out who has worked on the language and what they did (particularly if that work did not result in publications). This makes it easier to avoid duplicating a prior linguist's work, which is especially important for small language communities, where the burden for work with linguists often falls on a few speakers.

C&R point out that in the case of fieldwork with Tlingit in Alaska, if a linguist were to come to the community and attempt to start collaborative projects without good knowledge of the societal structures and personal relationships within the community, they would "find themselves on the wrong side of various long-running disputes" (129). C&R suggest that a lone-wolf linguist could begin work quickly and successfully with little background knowledge of the relationships in the community. We do not dispute C&R's analysis of that particular case. However, we suspect that in general, a linguist focusing on lone wolf style documentation cannot go into a community and do successful work without knowing which groups in the community or local government they need to get permission from, and who has formal or informal authority to approve of their work. In fact, we know of cases where a lone wolf documentary linguist attempted to do this, and the rest of the community perceived the linguist as working with the 'wrong' speakers, or the 'wrong' dialect, or with non-fluent speakers. In short, they perceived the linguist as taking sides, but the linguist didn't know what the sides were. A lone wolf linguist working with a single speaker may be more quickly thrown out of the community and prohibited from continuing to work there if problems come up. And when the work is not collaborative, the community does not have a stake in making sure it continues.

Finally, we argue that outcomes for lone wolf linguists are often no better than outcomes for linguists who work collaboratively or do revitalization. This is simply because many of the negative situations that linguists encounter in their fieldwork are a product of the same social dynamics that are associated with the language becoming endangered in the first place. The problems associated with high rates of poverty, alcoholism, violence, oppression, or other problems do not magically disappear, or cease to impinge upon the work of linguists and speakers, just because the linguist does not try to collaborate with community members. Moreover, linguists who try to work outside of community structures (at least in some parts of the world) make themselves more vulnerable to charges that they are in the community for motives other than language work.

**6. WHY DO LINGUISTS COLLABORATE?** C&R suggest that linguists push collaborative research because of a sense of guilt (131). We find this puzzling, partly because C&R could mean several things by this. One is that linguists might push collaboration (because of expectations of the field) even when their knowledge of the situation implies that it will not be productive. Another is that linguists as a group might emphasize collaboration because of a sense of guilt about past injustices to indigenous and minority groups. The first is about the extent to which a linguist can live up to the personal and ethical expectations of the field and what they should do about it if circumstances make collaboration difficult, impossible, or unwanted. The second is a much larger topic; however, we note that ascribing individual

motivations for actions to a larger framework of 'Western Imperialist Guilt' trivializes a very complex issue, for both sides, and makes it easy to fall back on caricatured behaviors (for example, of linguists coming to 'save' a language).

We suggest that linguists think about the personal and professional reasons for pursuing a collaborative project, as discussed above. The advantages may include access to more nuanced data, access to more language consultants with an active interest in the linguistic documentation, a chance to directly apply one's research training to a project which could have tangible, practical results, and better opportunities for setting up long-term field research. But as we stated in §1, and it bears repeating here, field situations are sufficiently different that the forms of collaboration are likely to vary across communities. Moreover, there are plenty of communities where there is no expectation of long-term collaboration.

We further suggest that a default expectation of collaboration (in some form) is one that encourages linguists to think about the consequences of their actions in doing fieldwork and the implications of their choices for the people they work with. Academic linguists are used to a great deal of autonomy in their work, from the freedom to choose the topic of their dissertation to directing their own research programs as faculty. But fieldwork—particularly with endangered languages—has consequences. Fieldwork linguists are representatives of their discipline, and it is only reasonable that the field have expectations of their behavior, particularly when they are making what may well be the *only* record of a language. Linguists' behavior has consequences for both the form and extent of data collection, their ability to conduct adequate documentation, and the way linguists are viewed in minority communities. It is only right that linguists should think both individually and collectively about their responsibilities as researchers.

C&R claim that if the field of linguistics assumes that all communities want the help of outside linguists, this "reinforces the stereotype that indigenous people are helpless and require the assistance of an outsider" (127). We do not advocate assuming that all communities want outside linguists to work on language revitalization projects, and we do not advocate requiring community-directed collaboration in every situation. However, there are plenty of cases where a community is not aware of what a linguist could do to help the community bring the language to the status or usage level they would like it to have. This would likely be the case for any community that has no contact with universities or linguists, for example many minority groups in rural Southeast Asia. To take one example, Arka (2007) does not address this question directly for Rongga, but given the extreme poverty and lack of control of local government described, it seems unlikely that this community was aware of the language development they could do with the help of a linguist before Arka's project began. Furthermore, communities whose only past experience with linguistics was with a lone wolf documentary linguist who had no interest in community-oriented work have good reason not to know that a linguist could help them realize their own goals for maintaining and expanding use of their language. This is especially true if the relationship between the community and the past documentary linguist ended badly. This situation may apply to a large proportion of the language communities in North America even now.

Thus, some communities may not initially ask a visiting linguist to collaborate on community-oriented language work, but they might welcome such work if they knew about the possibilities. This is not a matter of assuming indigenous communities need saving by outsiders. Communities with a mildly endangered language at early stages of language shift may often not be aware of how language endangerment and death are likely to progress if they do not take action. C&R mention a situation in the Philippines where the language is becoming endangered, but the community has "virtually no awareness of the imminence of

language loss" (129). They also usually do not know that there is a field of linguistics with a specialization of language revitalization that has some methods, however imperfect, for addressing endangerment. This lack of awareness of linguistics is not specific to minority groups (after all, most middle-class white Americans are not aware that there is a field for the scientific study of language, as can be attested by any faculty who have staffed their department's freshman course fair exhibit). When endangerment is more extreme, community members are often aware of the loss and concerned about it, but they may have an impression that the only way to solve the problem is to have the language be taught in the schools (regardless of how that is implemented, for how little teaching contact time). Or they may realize that people are not speaking the heritage language often, but feel that there is no problem because many people know how to speak the language, without realizing that children are not receiving sufficient input to acquire the language.<sup>23</sup> If it were generally known in most endangered language communities that one could send a community member to learn linguistics with a focus on language revitalization (and if every linguistics program could successfully direct prospective students to programs with a strength in revitalization methods), then perhaps we could say that communities do not need outside linguists to suggest collaborative revitalization projects. However, since knowledge about the endangerment process and about language revitalization methods is not widespread, we do feel that linguists should at least bring up these issues with communities to find out what goals they might want to develop.

**7. CONCLUSION.** In conclusion, we disagree strongly with C&R's claim that "[...] the primary goal of documentary linguistics is the documentation of particular human languages in a principled scientific manner" (124). We wonder who has the right to define what the primary goal of a field is. One can perhaps define 'documentary linguistics' very narrowly, as understanding the syntactic, morphological, and phonological structures of underdocumented languages (that would not be Himmelmann's (2006) definition, though). Their text then goes on to argue that linguists really should not be working on language revitalization, and that language revitalization work is really just a misguided attempt at being a social worker. Language revitalization is one part (perhaps now a sub-field) of linguistics as a whole; it is not excluded from it and it does not mean pretending to be a social worker when one is not. Such a claim is offensive to people who are linguists and do language revitalization work as part of their linguistics.

This allows C&R to argue that, if the primary goal of linguistics in general is to do linguistic science by documenting languages, then linguists should not spend time (they imply 'waste time') on other activities, such as building strong collaborations or doing revitalization work. The current authors view language revitalization as one part of linguistic science. The fact that it has applied goals does not prevent it from being science, any more than hydrology or medicine are disqualified as sciences for having applied goals. We also advocate against linguists taking an exclusive approach to what counts as linguistics, as that is often harmful.

Collaboration is a "hot topic," as C&R state (123). This is because of the increasing recognition that linguists work with many different types of communities, including those who have been historically disenfranchised by researchers and excluded from a chance

<sup>23</sup>An endangered language speaker once told Warner that it's not a problem that no one was speaking her language much around where the conversation took place, because people *can* speak the language, they just *don't*. When Warner pointed out that children might not hear the language enough to learn it, she responded with surprised recognition of the situation.

to participate meaningfully in the research process. Both collaborative and lone wolf approaches bring advantages and disadvantages to the linguist. But lone wolf linguistics can have considerable disadvantages to communities who are already excluded from research. We disagree with C&R that the 'pendulum' has swung too far in favor of collaboration. Language work is demanding and intrusive and both communities and individuals should be given choices about what they want to get out of it. We have outlined ways in which collaborative work does not compromise theoretical scholarship. We agree that linguists are not social workers, but documentary linguists, as representatives of their profession, are obligated to do the best work they can, given that for many of the world's thousands of endangered or already dormant languages, that linguist's work will be the only lasting record, for linguists and communities alike.

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