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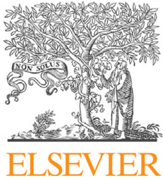

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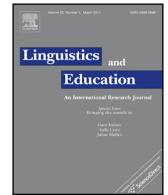

Putting the fourth crow in the sky: Using narrative to understand the experiences of one non-heritage learner of an endangered language

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ABSTRACT

Building on contemporary approaches to narrative analysis, this article examines how one non-heritage learner of an endangered Native American language described his experiences of learning Lenape in a college course. Analysis of a multimodal digital narrative created as a course project demonstrates the ways that this student employed a legend as a metanarrative to contextualize his individual language learning journey as part of a broader linguistic and cultural revitalization movement. Structural elements of the narrative downplay the narrator's individual role and agency in studying the language, showing ways that this learner negotiated his position and privilege in learning a language previously only spoken by members of the Lenape cultural community. The article considers the utility of narrative analysis and the constructs of investment and imagined communities in a language revitalization context.

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Introduction

Spurred by dire predictions of an endangered language crisis, endangered language advocates have in the last several decades developed many models for teaching endangered, primarily Indigenous, languages. Ranging from approaches that look like traditional foreign language classes to innovative models such as immersion preschools or master-apprentice partnerships (e.g., Hinton, 2013; Hinton & Hale, 2001; Hinton, Vera & Steele, 2002), language revitalization has become an area of experimentation with language instruction, and also a field of scholarly inquiry beyond the documentation and analysis of these languages. Scholarship on language revitalization both describes and advances means of engaging with such projects (e.g., Amery, 1995; Dick & McCarty, 1996; Dorian, 1994; Goodfellow, 2003; Grenoble & Whaley, 1998; Hornberger, 2008; Leonard, 2012) and critiques these projects, often for employing discourses of disappearance or essentialism (e.g., Costa, 2013; Dobrin, Austin & David, 2007; Duchêne & Heller, 2011; Hill, 2002; Meek, 2010; Moore, Pietikäinen & Blommaert, 2010).

Research on language revitalization rarely intersects with research in applied linguistics, in spite of clear areas of common concern, such as understanding the conditions that allow for successful language learning. Reasons for this disconnect may include the fear of demonstrating that revitalization programs are not effectively churning out new speakers with native-like proficiency, and dynamics of distrust between Indigenous communities and academics. This gap is occasionally lamented,

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as in a special issue of *Language and Education* that called for "cross-disciplinary networking for revitalization and education in endangered language contexts" (Cope & Penfield, 2011). In this paper, I demonstrate one way of applying insights from research on language teaching and learning to the study of language revitalization. I argue that narrative analysis, which has proven a powerful tool for understanding language learners' subjective experiences with language learning, provides an appropriate method for investigating similar questions with learners of endangered languages.

In this paper, I focus on narratives produced by one learner of an endangered language: Zack, who identified himself as "not a heritage learner" (interview, 5/24/2012) of Lenape, an Algonquian language historically spoken in the areas that are now Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and parts of New York. Zack took two semesters of Lenape language classes during his four years at Swarthmore College, an elite liberal arts college in Pennsylvania, where he majored in education with a minor in linguistics. I focus closely on Zack's language learning narratives, in particular a digital narrative combining Lenape narration, English subtitles, images, video and music, created for a class assignment. This paper is part of a larger ethnographic study of Lenape language revitalization efforts in Pennsylvania, which informs the present paper. The purpose of this investigation is to examine the motivations of a learner of an endangered language, and in particular, of a non-heritage endangered language learner, a population that I suspect is growing as more universities offer courses in endangered languages (De Korne, 2013). This growth is a result of increased awareness of language endangerment, and a sense that institutions of higher education may provide a site to teach such languages, in addition to increasing the prestige of these languages due to their use in the privileged realm of academia. This growing population of non-heritage language learners provides a useful site for developing understandings of the interaction between language learning, motivation, and identity.

Lenape at Swarthmore

Lenape language courses at Swarthmore College are a rare example of a local Indigenous language being taught as a language subject (rather than an object for linguistic analysis) at a private college, and are one part of wider Lenape language and culture revitalization efforts in Pennsylvania (see also De Korne & Weinberg, 2013; Hornberger, De Korne & Weinberg, in press). The course began after the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania's Assistant Chief and Language Specialist, Shelley DePaul, met Swarthmore Linguistics professor Ted Fernald at a conference. Fernald asked what Swarthmore could do to support local Lenape language efforts, and together they hatched the idea of a college-level course. The introductory course, which has been offered since 2009 and continues to be offered every other year, introduces college students to the structure of this language as well as providing a "front lines" view of language revitalization (student interview, 4/19/2012). In many ways, the course resembled a traditional grammar-translation approach to language teaching. Most class meetings included a review of homework from the previous session, sometimes with a vocabulary quiz, before moving to covering new vocabulary and grammar points from a textbook developed by DePaul.

While classroom activities involved a fair amount of memorization and repetition, Lenape's status as a rarely taught and highly endangered language[1] created opportunities for students to engage with the language in other ways. In particular, students' final assignments centered on developing the pedagogical corpus for the language, as students wrote stories that have been incorporated into later versions of the textbook, and also completed original final projects that often involved creating pedagogical materials, such as storybooks, translations of stories, or elaborating a verb dictionary. This participatory element of the class experience was particularly salient for Zack, who was one of the students in the first iteration of the class in 2009 and also participated in an advanced second-semester class. As Zack recalled in an interview, the introductory class felt very experimental: the materials that have since become a textbook were still in draft form as photocopied handouts, the orthography was still under debate, and the curriculum was being developed as they went along. In addition, his second semester of Lenape classes was focused on translating traditional stories from English into Lenape, again for use in teaching the language to others.

This paper draws from a larger ethnographic research project conducted between 2012 and 2014. Data collection included participant observation in the Lenape language class offered at Swarthmore College in Spring 2012 and Spring 2014, multiple interviews with DePaul, interviews with students who participated in the course every year that it was offered, and attendance at public and private events related to the Lenape language, such as ceremonies and museum exhibit openings. This paper focuses on one learner, especially the digital narrative he created as a final project for the course. The analysis is also informed by a 90-minute semistructured interview conducted at a coffee shop in May 2012, three years after he first took the introductory Lenape class. While most of the data presented here is about this single student, the analysis is informed by the wider ethnographic context.

Narrative inquiry and language learning

Many scholars of language learning consider learners' subjective experiences to be central to their area of study. This strand of research sees language learning as not just a cognitive process but also a process of negotiating new identities,

[1] With no living first language speakers, the Unami dialect of the Lenape (Delaware) language has been declared extinct by some sources (Gordon, 2005; UNESCO, 2010), though the most recent version of the Ethnologue recognizes revitalization efforts by labeling the language "Reawakening" (Lewis, Simons & Fennig, 2014).

cultures, and power relations. In a seminal paper, Firth and Wagner (1997) argued that second language acquisition research had been overly focused on the cognitive component of language learning, leaving little room to examine equally important sociocultural elements of the same process. Norton (2000) argues that every time a language learner speaks, they are negotiating a sense of self in relation to the larger world. Studies of language learning, identity and agency have drawn from multiple theoretical approaches, such as postmodernism, feminist theory, phenomenology and hermeneutics (e.g., Block, 2003, 2007; Duff, 2002; Kramsch, 2010; Norton, 2000; Pavlenko, 2001; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). In this paper, I employ narrative inquiry to investigate one learner's subjective experience of studying a language.

Narrative inquiry rests on the premise that people make meaning of their lives through narrative (Bruner, 2003; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Ochs & Capps, 2009). In particular, people rely on narrative to make sense of the messy, unclear experiences they have during the course of their lives. Along with psychology, linguistics, education and other fields, scholars of language learning have found narrative analysis useful in understanding learners' sense-making processes (Pomerantz, 2013). Beginning with small-scale diary studies and moving to more elaborate and theoretically grounded studies of language-learner narratives, these approaches have addressed questions of the subjective experience of language learning, moving beyond questions about success at approximating target-like linguistic forms. Learner narratives allow insight into how learners understand and narrate their own experience, both in terms of acquiring linguistic structures and the identity negotiations that are inherent in language learning. Following trends in narrative analysis more broadly, narrative studies of language learning have evinced a concern with narrative construction of identity. Narrative approaches have therefore played a role in research on the relationship between language learning and identity (Norton, 2000; Pavlenko, 2001, 2007).

In these analyses, researchers note a constant tension between the need to stick to commonly accepted and circulating plotlines or master narratives and the individual's need to insert their own singular experience (Bruner, 2003; Labov, 2013; Mishler, 1999; Ochs & Capps, 2009). Without employing a recognizable master narrative or structure, an audience will not be able to understand a narrative, but without the narrator's own details the story becomes overly generic and fails to represent their own experience. The focal narrative in this analysis demonstrates one learner's attempt to agentively reframe his language learning trajectory beyond other circulating language learning metanarratives. More generally, narrative analysis of language learner narratives asks "(a) how access to a new language shapes the ways in which people understand themselves narratively, and (b) how these narrative self-understandings shape the ways in which people come to use language" (Pomerantz, 2013, p. 3). These questions lie at the core of the present investigation.

Two helpful concepts from studies of language and identity for exploring this learner's narratives are *investment* and *imagined communities*. Investment is a construct developed to address shortcomings of the construct of *motivation* as it had been previously employed in language learning research (Norton Peirce, 1995). While motivation often implies a static character trait, investment recognizes that commitment to language learning is influenced by practices of a language classroom and community. As we will see, Zack may not have had some of the classic forms of integrative or instrumental motivation recognized in SLA literature (Dörnyei, 1990) but was highly invested in the practices and aims of the language classroom and community. This was especially true because the imagined language community that he joined by studying Lenape seemed different from other imagined language communities he belonged to.

Drawing from Anderson's (1982) classic study of nationalism, the use of imagined communities in language learning research points to the impossibility, or at least low likelihood, of meeting even most of the other speakers of a language. Norton (2000) emphasizes that while target language communities may be a reconstruction of past communities, a particularly relevant dynamic for language revitalization, they are also crucially communities of the imagination, "a desired community that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future" (Norton, 2000, p. 3). While the Lenape language community is large and dispersed enough that none of our students had met all of its other members, they did notice that being part of a small imagined community felt very different from being part of a larger language community in which they were seemingly insignificant members. In several interviews, students compared their experience of learning Lenape to learning widely spoken languages like French or Spanish, with comments about how learning a small language really meant something. This feeling was undoubtedly reinforced by DePaul's comments in class about how important the college students' efforts were to her community, and perhaps also by more widely circulating conversations about endangered languages.

Like many narrative studies, this paper focuses closely on a small sample, in this case particularly on one language learner. This approach provides the advantage of being able to delve deeply into the ways that this subject narrates his experiences, including in a digital narrative and in an interview. However, the limited sample may provide concerns about the generalizability of the study. I argue, however, that elements of the study are generalizable for two reasons. First, while the data used in this paper focus on one student who produced a particularly compelling narrative, his peers who participated in iterations of the same course over several years articulated similar themes in our observations of class and in interviews. Therefore, many of the themes discussed in this paper seem applicable to other students in the same course. Second, while this is in many ways an exceptional case study, of a rare course teaching an endangered language as a subject to non-heritage learners at an elite college, implications drawn in the discussion and conclusion apply as well to more common language teaching and learning situations.

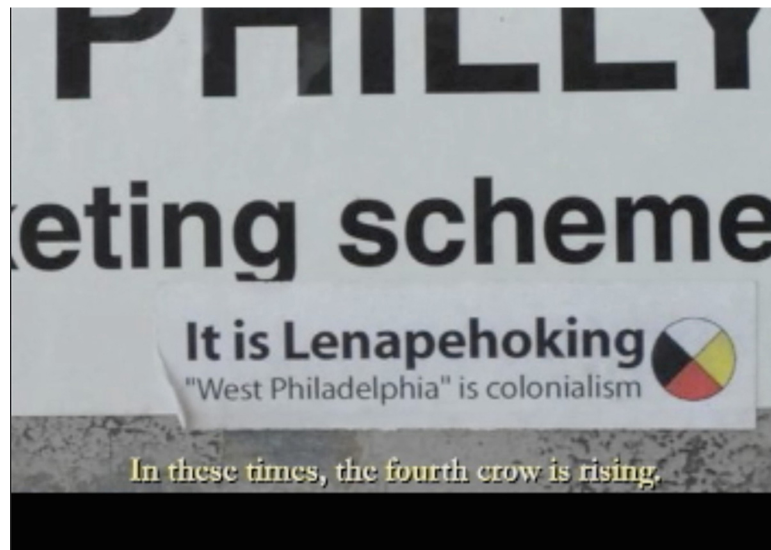

Fig. 1. Screenshot from *The Fourth Crow:* "In these times, the fourth crow is rising" (Line 16).

The fourth crow: a multimodal narrative

The narrative I focus on here is a digital story that Zack created during his second semester in the Lenape language class, and used to fulfill requirements in both his Lenape course and a course on literacy in the education department. This composition, which is publicly accessible on YouTube[2] combines Lenape narration, English subtitles, music, and images. The multimodal nature of this narrative thus creates additional opportunities for analysis beyond a written or narrated text. The rich array of visual, musical, and spoken channels unfold together, creating opportunities to analyze the ways the various channels converge or comment on each other. The nature of the text also means that it was consciously planned and went through several revisions before reaching its final form. Zack recalled in an interview that he wrote a script in English, then translated it into Lenape, and finally found images that went along with the words he was using.

Another element of the text, which it shares with other mediated forms such as YouTube videos but not with face-to-face conversation, is its potential to be recontextualized, in this case through viewings by anyone with access to YouTube. While it was originally intended to be viewed by Zack's classmates and professors, he also presented it at a 2012 conference of Lenape language educators from across the United States and Canada, and gave permission for DePaul to post it on the course website and on YouTube. While the number of views on YouTube remains modest, it has now been viewed many times by people beyond the original audience, including at academic presentations and conferences where I have talked about Lenape language education and embedded the video in the context of an academic argument. This complicates any attempt to understand the interactional text of this narrative, as Zack's intended audience is not necessarily the one that will view the narrative.

"A Lenape legend": narrative structure

In this section, I draw from Labov's (2013) studies of narrative structure, as well as a common theme in narrative research of the narrator's attempt to reconcile commonly circulating narratives with personal experiences in the act of narrative the self. As Ochs & Capps note, "everyday narratives of personal experience elaborately encode and perpetuate moral worldviews" (pp. 45–46). Through an analysis of the structure of this narrative, we see the ways that Zack used the structure of the narrative to align with a moral worldview that sees learning and speaking Lenape as something more meaningful than merely learning a new lexicon and grammar. As Zack put it in an interview, the goal of the digital story was "to show both the Lenape language community and my peers in this literacies class that it was more than just studying verb morphology, that it was something a lot bigger and a lot more complex" (Interview 5/24/2012). This is accomplished not only through the denotational meaning of individual sentences and images but also through the overall organization of the narrative.

Like many narratives, this one is composed of multiple smaller narratives (Labov, 2013; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012). Specifically, it is made up of an initial legend retelling, followed by a personal language-learner narrative. As we shall see, the personal narrative mirrors the structure of the legend presented in the first half; the effect is therefore to offer a new master narrative of language learning that places an individual's structures within a historical arc of colonization and revitalization.

[2] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjN4gw0A_EQ.

The first sub-narrative is presented as a Lenape legend:

Abstract	1	A Lenape legend says	Sepia trees & clouds
Complicating action	2	That Lenape time is measured	
	3	Through the passing of four crows.	Crow on gray background
	4	During the time of the first crow,	
	5	The Lenape people prospered in their homeland	Lenape man
	6	Lenapehoking	Green forest scene
	7	During the second crow's flight over the Lenapehoking	
	8	The Europeans came	
	9	And the Lenape people became very sick	Painting of pilgrims & Indians
	10	And died.	
	11	As the third crow flew over the Lenape land,	
	12	The people hid and lived secretly	Indian man w/bowtie
	13	In the time of the fourth crow,	Crow on blue sky
	14	The Lenape people will live in harmony	
	15	In the Lenapehoking with the Creator	Bumper sticker: *It is Lenapehoking/"West Philadelphia is colonialism"* (Fig. 1)
Evaluation	16	In these times, the fourth crow is rising	
	17	[pause in narration, music]	
		Though sadly	Lenape bible translation with interlinear glosses
	18	The language of the Lenape people was almost lost during the time of the third crow	

This opening situates the entire narrative within a historical framework of colonization, subjugation, and eventual reclamation and revitalization of Native American ways of life, including language. This is indicated not only through the denotational meaning of the text, which tells of the Pennsylvania Lenapes' experience of surviving colonialism by intermarrying with European settlers and passing as non-Indians, as opposed to members of present-day Lenape/Delaware groups elsewhere whose forebears moved west following the orders of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, but also through the images described in the far right column. The images in lines 1–18 hew fairly closely to the denotational meaning of the text, with crows flying and a drawing of European settlers interacting with Indians. However, the images also demonstrate a concern with the natural world, with images of pristine forests, and personal experiences of these historical changes, as demonstrated by the drawing of a presumably Lenape man in non-European clothes in line 5 which contrasts with the man in a jacket and bowtie in line 12, illustrating the ways Lenape people "hid and lived secretly." A final theme is the interaction of English and Lenape and implications of using one or the other, as illustrated in both the bible translation (line 18) and the bumper sticker stating that the proper name of West Philly is actually Lenapehoking (line 15–17).

The bumper sticker brings the visual narrative into the present day, which is where it remains for the rest of the narrative. While in the transcript above I used Labov's narrative label conventions, in the following transcript I introduce a new set of organizational labels: the four crows. It is my argument here that Zack organizes his personal language learning narrative according to the Lenape legend he has introduced in the first sub-narrative, allowing him access to a language learning narrative that shares some elements of more familiar individualistic learner narratives but also places his language learning in the wider context of a revitalization movement.

Abstract	19	So, my job is to learn the language	classroom w/furs, baskets on table
	20	And preserve it for future Lenape generations	Word doc. Title: The story of the Mountain Goats, told by Bob Red Hawk Ruth, translated by Zack Wiener
1st Crow/Complicating action	21	With the help of my teacher,	
	22	I began learning Lenape	
	23	And slowly, I fell in love with the language	
	24	Even though it is hard, I like stretching my mind to meet Lenape's challenges	photo of modern Lenape in regalia
2nd Crow	25	At times, I get frustrated and tired	
	26	Everything in the world is calling to me,	blue car; 3 old cell phones; modern building at night
	27	But I do not know what to call them back.	
3rd Crow	28	I know that everything in the world had Lenape names,	child kicking soccer ball
	29	But some are gone forever, lost as the last speakers died out.	manicured hands & feet
	30	Can you imagine how it feels to have a word simply gone?	Black screen; background music stops
4th Crow	31	But in spite of the losses,	
	32	We have to do our best.	Video of 3 students on bench; one sneezes, another says something in Lenape; others look in surprise
	33	Sometimes, we have to create new words for modern times.	iPhone screen: text messages in Lenape w/occasional English
	34	And we have fun!	
	35	Even though we are few,	

	36	We stand together, as a community of Lenape speakers.	group photo, some in regalia
Evaluation	37	When I speak Lenape,	
	38	I am part of something bigger than myself,	
	39	I do good work doing something that I love,	Classroom
	40	And something that might one day help the Lenape people	Photo: woman in regalia & children playing drum
	41	And if I can help put the fourth crow in the sky,	Crow in gray sky (from line 3)
	42	Then I am glad to work hard toward something useful.	
	43	And I can help people live the Lenape way,	
	44	And live in harmony with the Creator myself.	Bonfire

This narrative of language learning includes some elements that are common to many other language-learner narratives, such as motivations for learning and challenges faced in the course of trying to learn. However, a notable difference is the way that this narrative draws from the legend narrated in lines 1–18. Lines 19–20, the first time in the total narrative that we are introduced to the narrator's individual voice, provide an abstract for the second sub-narrative of the total narrative ("So, my job is to learn the language,/and preserve it for future Lenape generations"). The conjunction "so" implies that the relationship between the two sub-narratives is a causal one: somehow the legend of the fourth crow is the reason for Zack's obligation to learn the Lenape language. This structuring of the narrative provides some insight into the interactional aims of the text. A fundamental underpinning of narrative analysis is the double-voiced nature of narrative, and indeed all discourse, which is both addressed to a future response and peopled with the voices of others (Bakhtin, 1986; Wortham, 2001). The entire narrative functions as an answer to an implied previous question: "Why are you, someone without Lenape heritage, studying this language?" At various points in an interview, Zack referred to questions and discomfort about why he was studying the language, and whether it was an appropriate subject of study for him. The narrative is in dialog with a question about his motivations for learning this particular language, and of why he persisted through the difficulties he gestures toward in learning the language.

The entire complicating action section of the narrative, then, follows the same stages as the initial legend (Table 1):

Thus, from an untroubled beginning state, to troubles and a period of loss to a present stage of redemption, these two sub-narratives follow parallel trajectories. This is an example of a narrator's agency in engaging with the tension between recognizable metanarratives and personal details. While a general plotline of untouched paradise marred by contact with the outside world followed by a promised return to life in harmony with the supernatural is hardly unique to the Lenape storytelling repertoire, Zack's telling of the story invokes it as particularly Lenape, both in previous tellings ("a Lenape legend", line 1), and place ("the Lenape people prospered in their homeland/Lenapehoking, line 5–6). His story of learning is therefore tied to a Lenape metanarrative rather than any generic learning narrative. The following sections examine further implications of a learner's narrative contextualized within this metanarrative.

"Almost lost": contesting extinction

A notable accomplishment of employing the four crows metanarrative is that it negates any claims that Lenape is an extinct language, or even truly endangered. This is part of a move that has been made by other linguists and linguistic anthropologists, both in questioning the biological metaphors of language shift, which invoke natural selection and random chance as explanations for historically influenced, power-imbued language shift, and in questioning the supposedly irreversible nature of language extinction (Hinton, 2001; Leonard, 2008; Pennycook, 2004). Lenape is considered extinct by experts like the Ethnologue (Gordon, 2005) or linguist Ives Goddard, who has extensively documented this language (Goddard, 1978). The four crows rubric, though, poises Lenape on the verge of a reemergence through the work of students like Zack and their teacher, Shelley DePaul. Another effect of this narrative, then, is to make studying Lenape something other than a fool's errand, attempting to study a language already beyond hope. Again, this seems to be a response to the implied skeptic's voice: "Why are you studying a dead language? Why not study something *useful*?" Zack's answer is that

Table 1
The four crows in two sub-narratives.

	Legend	Learner Narrative
1st Crow	the Lenape people prospered in their homeland, Lenapehoking (4–6)	With the help of my teacher, I began learning Lenape and slowly, I fell in love with the language (21–23)
2nd Crow	the Europeans came and the Lenape people became very sick and died. (7–10)	At times, I get frustrated and tired. Everything in the world is calling to me, but I do not know what to call them back. (25–27)
3rd Crow	the people hid and lived secretly. (11–12)	I know that everything in the world had Lenape names, but some are gone forever, lost as the last speakers died out. (28–29)
4th Crow	the Lenape people will live in harmony in the Lenapehoking with the Creator. (13–15)	But in spite of the losses, we have to do our best. Sometimes, we have to create new words for modern times. Even though we are few, we stand together as a community of Lenape speakers. (31–36)

this may not be useful in the ways that the skeptic means, but it is more important than instrumental use, and in fact has to do with restoring balance to the order of the world. This is demonstrated in the final evaluation section of the narrative:

Evaluation	37	When I speak Lenape,
	38	I am part of something bigger than myself,
	39	I do good work doing something that I love,
	40	And something that might one day help the Lenape people
	41	And if I can help put the fourth crow in the sky,
	42	Then I am glad to work hard toward something useful.
	43	And I can help people live the Lenape way,
	44	And live in harmony with the Creator myself.

By using the metanarrative of the Four Crows, Zack's narrative avoids engaging with the biological metaphors for languages that would label Lenape an extinct language. Instead, the narrative invokes an imagined community of Lenape speakers, spread over a long time period but united in engagement with the same language.

"We stand together": groupness in language learning

In addition to avoiding a cultural narrative of language death, Zack's narrative avoids an individualistic understanding of the process and outcomes of language learning. This narrative contrasts with dominant understandings of language learning as an individual cognitive process (cf. Firth & Wagner, 1997), or, as Zack ventriloquated the dominant understanding of linguistics at Swarthmore, "'your mind is a computer, this is how your computer mind works," (Interview, 5/24/2012). Instead, his narrative is one of learning a language as part of a group and for a purpose that serves a group rather than any single individual. This is evident not only in the denotational text of the narrative's script but also in the ways it portrays others' voices and the images portrayed along with the narration. At the same time, this remains a personal narrative of language learning complete with descriptions of Zack's emotional state as a learner (e.g., "I fell in love with the language," line 23; "At times, I get frustrated and tired," line 25; see Pavlenko, 2007, on the relevance of learners' emotional states to language learning).

The very first line of the narrative establishes that Zack is not just speaking for himself: "A Lenape legend says" (line 1). The invocation of legend creates a production format for the whole of the first sub-narrative (lines 1–18) in which Zack is a mere link in a long chain of retellings of the legend of the four crows. While Zack animates this particular instantiation of the legend, the words of a legend are not necessarily his but rather those of an indeterminate chain of past tellers of the story.

The more literal production format of the narrative was similarly a group effort. As Zack recalled:

> I worked with, from the literacies class side, I worked with some of the digital storytelling things, like, from that I got the instructions for storytelling. Shelley and I worked–I wrote up a script, and Shelley and I translated it together. She helped me translate like a lot. Then we recorded it together, and then I went back to literacies and turned that into–I also took some of the pictures of the community and some of the, I took all of the pictures and visual content I could find, both from Shelley. I got the soundtrack to the story from Bob Red Hawk, and I made this piece. (Interview, 5/24/2012)

The production of this narrative was therefore a group effort, between the guidelines and tools learned in literacies class, help on translation and visual content from DePaul, and music from Bob Red Hawk Ruth, then chief of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania. These are not only Zack's words and images, then, but in a more literal sense a combination of efforts by multiple people including Shelley DePaul and Chief Red Hawk Ruth.

The group membership dynamic of this narrative does not end here, though. After narrating a legend, Zack turns to his own experiences. However, after a discussion of his emotional engagement with language-learning in lines 19–29, we encounter the Lenape language community with a shift to first person plural pronouns:

4th Crow	31	But in spite of the losses,	
	32	We have to do our best.	Video of 3 students on bench; one sneezes, another says something in Lenape; others look in surprise
	33	Sometimes, we have to create new words for modern times.	iPhone screen: text messages in Lenape w/occasional English
	34	And we have fun!	
	35	Even though we are few,	
	36	We stand together, as a community of Lenape speakers.	group photo, some in regalia

The section that uses the first person plural pronoun is the section that I have argued aligns with the fourth crow, or the time when "the Lenape people will live in harmony/in the Lenapehoking with the Creator" (lines 14–15). Learning for the future of the Lenape language is, through the use of the pronoun "we" in every occurrence of a pronoun in this section of the narrative, represented as a group activity rather than an individual one. The group nature of this enterprise is also illustrated through the images that appear in this segment of the digital narrative, which all show multiple people presumably working together for the future of Lenape (Figs. 2–4). In particular, it demonstrates Lenape in use, through the video of an interaction

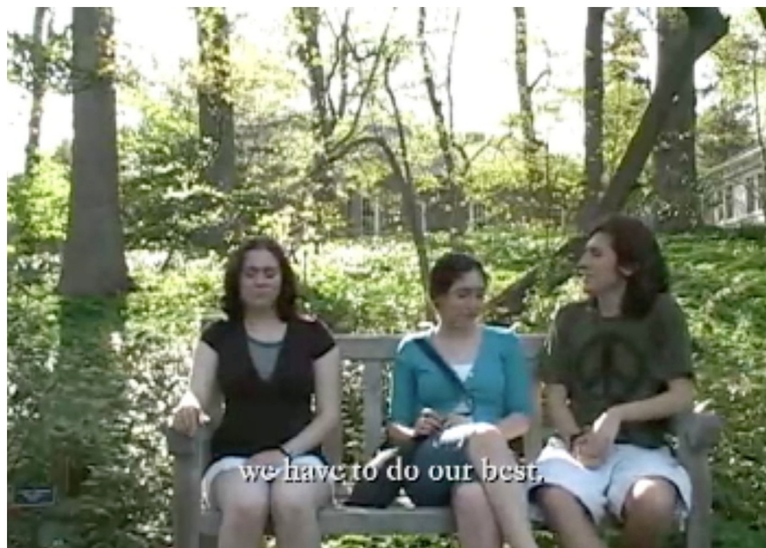

Fig. 2. Illustrating groupness: "We have to do our best" (Line 32).

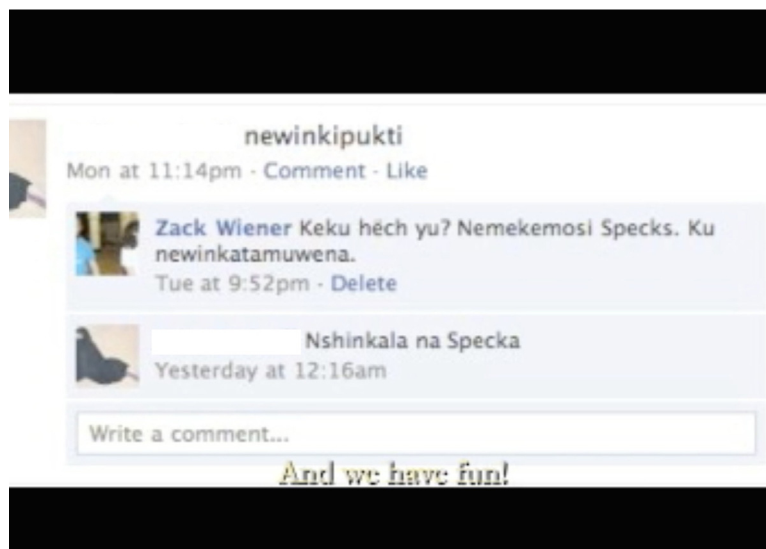

Fig. 3. Illustrating groupness: "And we have fun!" (Line 34).

in Lenape (the only video clip in the narrative, as opposed to the still images throughout the rest of the narrative) and the image of text messaging. While the image accompanying line 36 is less explicitly about Lenape language use, it contributes to the feeling of solidarity and group membership, as opposed to earlier images of single people. In the time of the fourth crow, it seems, no one stands alone.

Returning to the questions of how access to a new language shapes the ways people understand themselves narratively and how these narrative self-understandings shape the ways in which people come to use language, we can begin to examine the ways Zack narrates himself as a Lenape learner throughout this narrative. This is accomplished first through his narration of the entire three-minute video in unhalting Lenape. While I, like most of the audience of this video, am unqualified to judge the accuracy or complexity of his language use, his fluency seems impressive for a second-semester student of a language, especially of a language unrelated to any he had previously encountered or studied. In addition, by opening with "a Lenape legend" (line 1), Zack positions himself as someone familiar with Lenape knowledge and with the authority to pass on such knowledge.

Beyond these elements, though, Zack narrates himself as a Lenape language learner with the potential to work for a broader goal of justice through learning a language, and as a member of a Lenape language community. This is where it is particularly interesting to see Zack's repeated use of "we" in lines 32–36: who is in the group that Zack narrates into being? In the broader study, we have noticed that students rhetorically maintained a clear separation between the Lenape

Fig. 4. Illustrating groupness: "We stand together as a community of Lenape speakers" (Line 36).

language community, which included non-heritage language learners as well as people of Lenape descent, and the Lenape ethnic community, which did not include the college students, none of whom were of Lenape descent (De Korne & Weinberg, 2013). On the basis of the students' usage of "language community" as opposed to "Lenape people" in the class and interviews, it seems that Zack's "we" invokes the more inclusive language community, a reading supported by Zack's recollections during an interview of his personal and public struggles with where he fit in the language community and politics of Lenape learning. At the same time, the repeated invocation of "we," (32–36) as well as "a community of Lenape speakers" (36) and "something bigger than myself" (38) make it clear that Zack felt that learning Lenape had made him part of an imagined community comprising both his fellow students and people of Lenape descent, an opportunity that arose through learning a language.

This is a reading reinforced by interviews with Zack and other students. While Zack gave the most elaborate and articulate discussion of the feeling of being "inducted" into a speech community, he was not the only student we talked to who reported similar feelings. In particular, often prompted by an interview question about how the Lenape language class compared to other language learning experiences, students discussed the greater weight of learning a "small" or "endangered" language. Zack, in response to the final interview question, "Is there anything else you think we should ask?," discussed these issues while also demonstrating that he had determined the direction of our research questions from our initial emails and interview process:

> I think Swarthmore Lenape language learners are positioned in a really interesting way. That is *specific* to learning an endangered language and to learning an indigenous endangered language. There's a lot of forces, and a lot of (.) entering that community means a lot more than entering the Spanish speaking community or like another kind of community. I think you guys are right on to be exploring it. (Interview 5/24/2012)

Through learning an indigenous endangered language, Zack claims, language learners are incorporated into a community, a form of belonging that "means a lot more" than learning other languages. Again, while Zack phrased this more succinctly and strongly than many other students we interviewed, he was far from the only student who expressed this feeling. This may be related to the institutional culture of Swarthmore College, where social justice and community involvement are heavily emphasized values. In addition, this was a view that Shelley DePaul encouraged her students to have, both through explicit statements such as "You need to be proud of the fact that you are increasing the number of Lenape speakers in the state. That's a big deal" (Fieldnotes, 4/17/2012) and through actions that valued students as members of a speech community who could contribute to revitalization efforts through materials development and advocacy.

At the same time, it is remarkable how rarely Zack's narrative portrays him as having agency in his actions. This may again be related to a sense of collective action, or to the fine line that these students were aware of walking between enthusiastic participation in Lenape language learning and overstepping the limits of appropriate engagement (Hornberger, De Korne & Weinberg, in press). From the beginning of the personal sub-narrative in line 19, Zack portrays learning Lenape as an obligation (So, my job is to learn the language,/and preserve it for future Lenape generations), an implication reinforced later through the modal *have to* ("we have to do our best," line 32; "Sometimes, we have to create new words for modern times," line 33). In other cases, he is described as learning Lenape "with the help of my teacher" (Line 21) or as part of a bigger group, through the repeated use of "we" (lines 32–36). In addition, while Zack does show up in some of the images that make up the visual track of the digital narrative, he is never identified for people who do not already know what he looks like, nor is he portrayed as a central figure in these images. While Zack clearly chose to act and speak in certain ways, which I have

argued demonstrate creativity and agency particularly in creating his own language learning metanarrative, some elements of the narrative seem to represent him as displaying little agency in his own actions.

Discussion and implications

In this paper, I have offered an analysis of narratives produced by one non-heritage learner of an endangered language. A narrative approach to language learning provided a means to understand aspects of this learner's subjective experience of learning Lenape, with a focus on elements of investment and relation to an imagined speech community. The analysis demonstrates the ways Zack employed a Lenape legend as a metanarrative for his own language learning journey, linking his personal language acquisition to a larger set of issues, such as colonialism and reclamation. The use of this metanarrative also rejects the idea that Lenape is an "extinct" language or exotic relic of the past, while other elements of the narrative including the visual mode promote an understanding of Lenape language learning as a group enterprise. At the same time that he links Lenape learning to an important cause and relates his emotional relationship with the language, structural elements of the narration as well as a lack of images explicitly depicting the narrator downplay his individual role and agency in this engagement.

While this discussion has painted a rosy picture of the relationship between the Swarthmore learners and the Lenape language community, it is worth taking a moment to consider the power dynamics at play in this relationship, and in my analysis of Zack's narrative. As Ochs and Capps (2009) and De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012) demonstrate, not all potential narrators are given the chance to tell their stories. Pomerantz (2013) and Pavlenko (2001) note that narrative researchers must consider whose language learning stories are recognizable as language-learning narratives and are deemed worthy of study. The fact that Zack was given an audience, and even multiple audiences, to tell his story may point to a privileged position as a student at an elite liberal arts college, and perhaps as a non-heritage learner of an endangered language. The digital format of the narrative also broadens the potential audience of this narrative, which is accessible to anyone who cares to watch it on YouTube. In contrast to Zack's story, DePaul's narrative of learning Lenape, which she shared with students orally and in written form in the textbook, tells of being in the woods and feeling the natural world calling to her in her own language, which she was unable to speak (DePaul, 2008; note the similarity to Zack's lines 26–30). In DePaul's story, she recalls listening to her relations in the woods, a category that includes all living things, and feeling frustrated that she could not fully understand their language. After studying Lenape, and consciously breaking out of English-language ways of thinking, she can more fully understand what she hears in the woods. Zack's language learning narrative may seem more legible as part of the language learning genre than DePaul's. On the other hand, there seems to be a contrary power dynamic tied to authenticity that would make it difficult for me as a non-Indigenous researcher to analyze DePaul's language-learning narrative; Zack's story, produced by a fellow non-Indigenous person seems like fair game. While there are certainly dynamics of power and inequality at play in the Lenape language project and in our research project, they are also part of the scope of the investigation, and Zack's concerns about those dynamics appear to be an important influencing factor in the form of his language learning narrative and engagement with the language.

As a single narrative case study, there are some limitations to the implications of the study. Zack was an exceptionally articulate and engaged student among a group of highly articulate and engaged students. Due to these exceptional characteristics, we cannot assume that all language learners will have the same experiences. Analyzing his narrative about studying this language, carefully crafted to fulfill course assignments and with particular audiences in mind, is not the same as understanding what happened in the classroom that produced these opinions and attachments (see Hornberger, De Korne & Weinberg, in press, for more on classroom dynamics within the Lenape course at Swarthmore). However, the implications that I draw out below and throughout the paper stem not only from this narrative but from conversations with Zack, with other students, and I argue are generalizable beyond this single case.

It is also worth noting the limitations of the implications of this case study for language revitalization practice. Certainly not all language communities would be interested sharing their languages in a higher education context and with non-heritage language learners. The format of this program, and the factors that enable those participating in it to consider it a success, are the result of a high level of openness among Lenape speakers regarding sharing their language with others, and also a set of personal relationships built over several years. While it may not make sense to replicate all elements of this program model with other language groups, elements such as explicitly including learners as members of an imagined language community or encouraging a sense of participating in a social movement through language learning are more generalizable implications of the study.

A central implication of this study is the high level of investment that this non-heritage learner of an endangered language felt in the language classroom and imagined language community. This was tied to an impression of being part of a bigger movement, linked not just to increasing the number of speakers of a language but also to redressing the historical evils of colonialism. While I have only demonstrated this in the narrative of one particularly articulate learner in an exceptional language class, I have gestured to similar sentiments expressed by other students in this class, and suspect that similar dynamics of investment for reasons of social justice and powerful imagined communities may apply to other endangered language learners. As language revitalization continues to be an area of investigation for scholars and activists, hopefully future research will lead to a better understanding of motivation and investment on the part of students of endangered languages.

In addition, this study and more generally the study of investment, motivation, and imagined communities in endangered language learning has potential implications for teachers of all languages. Many of the students contrasted their strong investment in the small Lenape language community with a feeling of low investment when studying major world languages like Spanish and French, a contrast which has implications for instruction in larger languages. Language learning as part of a revitalization project has a relatively direct connection to issues of social justice and social movements, in this case even for students who are not heritage language learners of an endangered language. In contrast, learning major world languages like French or Spanish may not be transparently connected to some sort of movement or cause. However, finding ways to make students feel that they are "part of something bigger than myself" could encourage heightened levels of investment in language learning for other languages. This provides one avenue for generalizing from the particular dynamics of this case study to a broader set of language learners. As Norton (2000) discusses, high levels of investment in a learning community may have an effect on language learning. In this and other studies, investment is therefore used as an analytic tool, but seems to have potential as a pedagogical tool as well. Teachers who can develop students' investment in a classroom community or commitment to language learning as a community exercise, as DePaul did in this case, may have greater success in helping students develop language proficiency and communicative competence. Encouraging learners of any language, no matter the number of speakers, to identify as members of the language community, and to see their learning as having some larger purpose than their own proficiency, may allow for the level of investment that these learners developed, and thereby strengthen language teaching in disparate contexts.

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