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COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES, LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES, AND LEARNER MOTIVATION IN CHICKASAW LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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Abstract

This study examines language ideologies in the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, in the context of various efforts to revitalize this Muskogean language. There are approximately sixty-five remaining first language speakers out of a total population of about 57,000 tribal citizens. I analyze the underlying discourses in the community about the importance of preserving the language. I argue that these discourses are part of a broader project of nation-building meant to foster tribal citizens' sense of identity, while demonstrating the relevance of the Chickasaw Nation to the state of Oklahoma and to the United States. These discourses justify the necessity of language revitalization to the Chickasaw community and to the larger society. This study examines people's responses to these initiatives and discourses, and their general understanding, views, and aspirations regarding language revitalization. In particular, I examine their motivation to learn Chickasaw and the challenges of motivating other people to become learners. I argue that positive attitudes towards a language and access to resources do not automatically translate into action to learn it. I also review people's views on bilingualism in English and Chickasaw, and their attitudes towards schools and homes as sites of language revitalization. I conclude that boosting people's positive attitudes towards an endangered language is an important first step towards language revitalization, but that much remains to be done in terms of producing conversationally proficient second language speakers to recreate a speech community.

Chapter one: Introduction

This dissertation is the result of my long-term interest in the importance of Native American languages to contemporary Native American communities. It focuses on Chickasaw people's ideologies towards their ancestral language, including their attitudes and motivation to learn *Chikashshanompa',* the Chickasaw language. Chickasaw is a Muskogean language closely related to Choctaw. It is today primarily spoken in south central Oklahoma by approximately sixty-five first language speakers out of a total population of about 57,000 enrolled tribal members (Russon 2014). In 2007, the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma initiated the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program with the objective of making resources available to tribal citizens so that they can learn their endangered ancestral language through classes as well as online and printed resources. The tribe does not have an official definition of languages learner, which makes it difficult to estimate their number.

I have been interested in issues of language loss, revitalization, socialization, ideologies, teaching, and second language acquisition since the beginning of my graduate studies. I have also been interested in other Native American communities before the Chickasaws. Throughout my years of living in Norman Oklahoma, I have been able to develop a good understanding of the issues of language loss and revitalization in these communities. The anthropology department at the University of Oklahoma is itself a place for language activism. Its linguistic anthropology program has a strong focus on language revitalization and four Native American languages are

currently taught at the University in 2014. The Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, located on campus, has an archival library for Native American language materials, and every year the Oklahoma Youth Native American Language Fair is organized there. Children and adolescents from all over the state come to the museum for two days of various performances in their ancestral languages. I have been able to attend a lot of these Native languages related events in Norman, in the rest of Oklahoma, and in the rest of the country. These events have included conferences, workshops, and language institutes. In the summer 2009, I attended the American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) at the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona. This allowed me to considerably broaden my perspective and knowledge of language revitalization issues by working intensively with language activists and educators from Native American communities. In particular, I took a course in Navajo language immersion, which gave me a lot of important insights and understanding about the nature of language teaching in immersion settings.

I decided to work with the Chickasaws in the spring of 2012 for several reasons. The University of Oklahoma (OU) is located on the edge of the Chickasaw Nation and thus offers geographical proximity as a research site; the Chickasaw people are also known as being generally open to share their history and heritage with the outside world. The fact that the Chickasaw Nation has a large tribal population and has been very active with language revitalization since the creation of their language program in 2007, investing money into their programs due to their economic success, made me think that there would be a lot for me to observe, and a lot of people to talk to for a

research project. Also due to the economic impact of the tribe in Oklahoma, the Chickasaw Nation benefits today from a significant level of public visibility. In addition to striving to preserve their cultural identity, this latter is also displayed to the outside world. This offers the interesting opportunity to observe how language plays into that. Additionally, given the investment made towards language preservation, one prospect for this study was to gauge people's reactions to the language program and whether it had had any impact on their language ideologies and attitudes. The director of the language program, Joshua Hinson, is also a PhD student at OU. He expressed interest in the idea of an attitudinal language survey from the beginning of our discussions regarding a potential research project. All of these reasons made me interested in the Chickasaws and in their contemporary efforts to revitalize their language.

From the fall of 2012 to the fall of 2014, I attended a number of community events in the jurisdictional area of the Chickasaw Nation and elsewhere in Oklahoma. These included the Chickasaw Nation Festival in Tishomingo in 2012 and 2013; community language classes in Sulphur, Purcell, Norman, and Oklahoma City; the Annual Chikashsha Ittifama reunion at Kullihoma in 2013 and 2014; the Chickasaw Hall of Fame ceremony at the Riverwind Casino in Norman in 2013 and 2014; the Chickasaw Language Immersion Family Camp in Stroud; the Three Sisters Spring Festival at the Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur; several lectures pertaining to tribal history and culture at the Chickasaw Cultural Center; a Choctaw hymns class at the Riverwind Casino in Norman; a hazard disposal recycling event in Chickasha; and the Chikashshaat Imaanokfila Ilakchina 5k footrace in Oklahoma City, which I won in

2013 and 2014. I attended these events with the intent of deepening my understanding of the Chickasaw Nation today, with a more specific interest in Chickasaw identity, to see how language fitted into all of that. Given the focus of my research, I was interested in being exposed to discourses about the intersection of language and identity, as produced in the community. As predicted, these discourses occurred more frequently during language related events, such as community language classes.

This study has been driven by two primary aims. The first was to document the meaning that the Chickasaw language has, in a general sense, for people. Most research participants in this study were Chickasaw, but some Native Americans from other tribes and non-Natives participated as well. Similarly, a majority of the people I included in my study are learning and speaking the Chickasaw language at varying levels of fluency, but I did not want to exclude other people who are non-learners and non-speakers and have valuable opinions about the language. I investigated people's views on the usefulness and appropriateness of language revitalization, including the positive outcomes and benefits that these initiatives may have from a community perspective. I also investigated whether people consider language revitalization as feasible, and how they envision its process, including the role that schools and families should play in that regard. The second goal of this study was to assess the motivation of second language learners of Chickasaw. As such, I documented the life experiences of people in terms of demographics (gender, age, education, income, place of residence) and level of participation in community activities, and explored whether these variables could impact their desire to learn the language. I also investigated people's responses to the

tribal programs and initiatives directed towards language revitalization. Are people aware of the resources available to learn the language and are they using them? Do these programs and resources motivate them to learn Chickasaw? What other factors motivate people to learn? For instance, are language learners more motivated by a form of personal benefit or by a sense of responsibility towards the survival of the Chickasaw language?

Since this study investigates people's perception of their ancestral language, an important theoretical concept that I have used is language ideology. The term refers to the cultural conceptions that individuals hold towards their and other language(s). It is by nature a very broad concept that can be applied to a multitude of situations, and scholars have come up with slightly different definitions of it. The definition that I am using here is that any ideas that people have towards language are ideologies, and these latter are inherently multiple and contested, representing the specific interests of individuals (Woolard 1994 and 1998, Kroskrity 2000 and 2004). Applying this concept to the study of language loss and revitalization can allow seeing which ideologies tend to have a positive impact on language revitalization, and which ones tend to contribute to language shift. While most scholars interested in language ideologies attempt to discuss trends at the societal or group level, they always vary, and individuals often held contradictory ideologies. It can be difficult to know where people get their ideologies, since members of a same community generally have different life experiences that will affect them. In this study, the question of where people get their attitudes was mainly applied to the impacts that the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program and its

campaign promoting discourses about the importance of the language have had on people.

In this study I discuss a range of language ideologies including the historical view that the Chickasaw language is not worth speaking, as it represents an obstacle in people's lives and limits opportunities in society. This ideology represents a turning point as people shift away from speaking their ancestral language to speaking a language that has greater socio-economic power at the macro level. A contemporary North American view contends that if children are taught their ancestral language as their first language, it is at the detriment of their acquisition of English and academic success. I also review the opposite ideology that promotes the preservation of the Chickasaw language is as a critically important aspect of Chickasaw identity. A related ideology states that the Chickasaws will no longer be Chickasaw without their language that is a divine gift from God. Many people today seem to have positive views on bilingualism in English and Chickasaw, believing that it can have positive impacts on someone's life.

These examples demonstrate that language ideologies are never neutral, apolitical, or value-free. Language ideologies represent the interests of specific groups in society, and as such are important in the study of social identity. For instance, some endangered language communities and language activists articulate discourses that equate the loss of languages to the loss of biological species or to biodiversity in general (Muehlmann 2007: 14-34). These ideologies are not neutral because their intent is to attract various forms of support for language preservation initiatives. Other language ideologies I discuss in this study are that the language will not continue, that it cannot

be learned other than by growing up speaking it, and that its pure form is being lost at the detriment of a mixed language between Chickasaw and Choctaw.

Other language ideologies I discuss in this study stem from perceptions of the feasibility of language revitalization and preservation. While revitalization is the most commonly used term, "language maintenance" and "language revival" are often used as well (Walsh 2005: 299). In this study, I use the term "language revitalization" to describe attempts at teaching, learning, and promoting the Chickasaw language. My stance is that any initiative that contributes to the revaluing the Chickasaw language, even if it does not lead to the creation of fluent speakers, is a positive step towards the preservation of the language. Becoming conversationally fluent in a language is an important step because it means that one is able to carry on simple conversations on most topics. This can be contrasted to Native fluency, or the ability to talk about any topic in the language (Norris 2007). Conversational fluency is important because it opens the possibility for language activists to speak the ancestral language exclusively to children with the hope that it will become their first language.

Endangered language communities and scholars exhibit a range of views about the significance and importance of language preservation (Meek 2010: 153; Eisenlohr 2004) and often have different perceptions of what constitutes success in language revitalization (Leonard 2011, Meek 2011). Efforts to revitalize endangered languages allow individuals to attain varying levels of competency in their heritage languages (Basham and Fathman 2008, Norris 2007), but it is nevertheless rare for language learners to attain the fluency level of first language speakers, let alone conversational fluency. Although the master-apprentice program (Hinton 2002) and the language-nests

in New Zealand and Hawaii (King 2001, Warner 2001) are often viewed as examples of success, many language programs are seen as failing because their students do not become fluent speakers (Goodfellow 2003, Leonard 2011). One of the main issues in envisioning successful language revitalization is the expectation that language learners will speak like native speakers, which is a very rare outcome,(Webster and Peterson 2011: 7-8, Meek 2011: 51-57). Recent studies have looked at what these people do with the language despite their limited competency (Ahlers 2006, Goodfellow and Alfred 2002, Goodfellow 2003),leading to broader definitions of success in language revitalization, including the view that a language program is successful if it results in a child pronouncing a single word in the Native language (Meek 2011: 56).

Another term that is often employed in the literature and that I am using in this study is "language attitudes", which like "perceptions" or "conceptions" seems self-explanatory enough that scholars rarely take the time to define it. "Language ideology" is a concept that is more proper, although not exclusively, to the field of linguistic anthropology. It generates ongoing theoretical discussions and is constantly redefined. It also tends to be broader in scope than "attitude", as it goes deeper into where and how ideologies originate, and how they circulate and influence people.

I am also using the term motivation in this study to discuss what prompts some individuals to learn the Chickasaw language while others do not. Research concerning the motivation of second language learners of endangered languages has borrowed from the field of second language acquisition the concepts of instrumental and integrative motivation. Instrumental motivation refers to pursuing a practical benefit by learning another language, such as getting a job. Integrative motivation refers to identifying

oneself with the culture and people speaking that language (Bennett 2006: 276). As such, it is impossible to understand people's motivation without looking at their ideologies and attitudes.

As demonstrated in this study, instrumental and integrative motivations should not be seen as antithetical. While a substantial literature exists on the complexity of psychological factors and pedagogical styles involved in learning, the present study focuses on how learning motivation relates to broader socio-economic factors affecting the viability of an endangered language. Language loss is part of a broader process of socio-cultural, socio-economic, and political dislocation (Fishman 1991: 4). Some studies conducted in endangered language communities have shown that people who are more disenfranchised socio-economically, although they may have retained the traditional language to a greater extent, tend to favor linguistic assimilation, while individuals at higher socio-economic status may play a more important role in language revitalization efforts (Field 2009: 43-44; Hill 1998: 69, 70, 76; King 2013). Thus, while socio-economic forces are associated with the initiation of language shift these same factors can revalue the status and economic viability of the local culture, identity, and language (Fishman 1991: 59-60). This follows Fishman's (1991: 18-21, 66-67) view that language revitalization is part of a broader agenda of maintaining one's ethnic and cultural integrity.

In a recent study about Chickasaw language ideologies and learners' motivation, Kari Lewis interviewed a current employee of the language program who discussed how her exposure to "ongoing dialogues about the importance of its [the language] revitalization" has increased her motivation through time (Lewis 2011: 23). This is an

example of how people's motivation, and for that matter their ideologies, can evolve through time. In this study, I have investigated this question at the community level, i.e. how are people in the community influenced by ideologies regarding the importance of language revitalization? Have these discourses caused learners to develop a new appreciation for the language and impacted their motivation to learn it?

Given that language ideologies are inherently multiple, contested, and contradictory in a society, it is important to pay attention to the institutions where they are created and discussed (Woolard 1994). Social contexts promote mechanisms that in some instances may encourage the use of the ancestral language by second language learners and at other times may discourage them from doing so. Susan Philips (2000) talks about *sites of ideological production*, while Silverstein (1998) and Kroskrity (2004) talk about *ideological sites*. Ideological sites are essentially places where language ideologies are expressed, performed, and reinforced, indexing specific identities and social relationships (Kroskrity 2004). While I have attended various community events over the span of two years, my intent in this study is not to compare ideological sites across the Chickasaw Nation. However, I have looked at the multimedia program of the language department as an ideological site, since its intent is to promote discourses about the importance of language preservation, as well as to how people have been responding to them.

A study investigating the complexity of language ideologies in the context of language loss and revitalization could pay attention to the various social contexts in which language learners find themselves throughout their daily lives. In her ethnographic study of language shift and revitalization among the Kaska of Yukon,

Barbra Meek used the term *disjuncture* to comment on a number of practices and ideologies that in her opinion contribute to language shift, contradicting the official policy of the Territory's government and of the tribe to preserve the language (Meek 2010). The concept of disjuncture can be very useful to discuss ideologies and practices across ideological sites. Meek investigated how, despite official support for language revitalization, contemporary sociolinguistic practices and ideologies may reinforce the process of language shift. The concept of disjuncture is relevant to my study because I am interested in people's language ideologies across the board, through their various views and aspirations towards the Chickasaw language. I am also interested in consistency and disjuncture when looking at the ideologies of the language program and the ideologies of language learners and tribal citizens.

In the next chapter, I am presenting the Chickasaw Nation through its history, with a specific focus on their language. I discuss the current vitality of their economy in Oklahoma, their public visibility, and the current programs they have in place to revitalize the Chickasaw language.

In chapter three I explain my methodologies in more details, starting with the language survey I developed and administered in collaboration with the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program, and which, with a total of 483 responses, was a central aspect of my study. I also discuss my ethnographic observations and my follow-up interviews.

Chapter four focuses on the film and multimedia component of the language program. I analyze the various online and multimedia resources that are available today

to learn the language, as well as how they are used to promote discourses and ideologies about the importance of preserving the Chickasaw language. These resources include for the most part the website Chickasaw.tv, as well as other videos broadcasted on local television and often available on Youtube.

Chapter five deals with people's responses to the current programs and initiatives to preserve the language. It is mostly based on the results of the Chickasaw Language Survey. The chapter examines people's views on the language revitalization efforts and compares them to the ideologies discussed in chapter four, to see if the former could have been influenced by the latter.

Chapter six explores the issue of motivation to learn the language, from the different types of motivation that people can have in learning, to what seems to motivate some people more than others. It is based both on the language survey and my follow-up interviews in the community.

Chapter seven is about the role and importance that people give to schools and households, respectively, in language revitalization. Given that language revitalization in the Chickasaw community is a relatively recent endeavor at a coordinated community level, these perspectives are for the most part based on what people envision should be done rather than on what they are currently doing.

I draw my last conclusions in chapter eight, where I discuss the applicability of this study's methodology beyond the Chickasaw Nation, and the implications of its findings for language revitalization work and research more broadly.

Chapter Two: Overview of the Chickasaw Nation and its Language

General History of the Chickasaws

After having presented the main research questions of this study, I am delving in this chapter into Chickasaw History. The first part of this chapter is a general outline of Chickasaw history, while the next section goes into much more details about the History of the Chickasaw language.

Chickasaw origin stories tell us that the tribe was at one time one people with the Choctaws and that they crossed the Mississippi River coming from the east (Atkinson 2004: 1). Two leaders of the people were brothers Chikasah and Chatah and they used a sacred pole leaning in the right direction to guide their migration (Green 2007: 3). At one point Chatah considered that the pole was no longer leaning and consequently that the people had found their new homeland, while his brother Chikasah disagreed and wanted the migration to continue to the east. This is how the two tribes came to be distinct from each other. The Chickasaws established themselves in what is today northwestern Alabama (Gorman 2011: 3) and later moved to northeastern Mississippi by the source of the Tombigbee River (Barbour 2006: 17).

It is in this location that Spanish explorer Hernando De Soto encountered the Chickasaws in the winter of 1540 (Barbour 2006: 21). Chickasaw warriors tried to stop him from crossing the Tombigbee River but he was able to enter their homeland (Gorman 2011: 3). De Soto and his men stayed through the winter by eating corn from

the Chickasaw supply (Green 2007: 20). As they were ready to leave in March, Chickasaw warriors attacked them by surprise, inflicting great losses upon them (Green 2007: 22-23).

In 1682, a group of Chickasaw warriors encountered the La Salle expedition on the Mississippi River (Gorman 2011: 3). La Salle did not get to visit their villages since the encounter took place too far west from them (Green 2007: 32). By the end of the seventeenth century, the Chickasaws had established trade agreements with the British (Green 2007: 27). The English provided tools, guns, and cloth, in exchange for hides and slaves (Gorman 2011: 4).

During the eighteenth century, the Chickasaws were allied with the British and were at war almost constantly against the French until the end of the French and Indian War in 1763 (Gorman 2011: 4). Chickasaw warriors illustrated themselves by stopping the advancing French army at the Battle of Ackia in 1736 (Green 2007: 55). However, due to warfare and European diseases, the Chickasaw population was severely reduced by the 1760's.

After the end of the French and Indian War, the Chickasaws enjoyed a period of relative peace with the British, the Spanish, and later the Americans (Gorman 2011: 5). In the 1780's however, they were divided between one faction supporting the Americans and another supporting the Spanish (Green 2007: 69). They both signed treaties with the Americans and the Spanish that guaranteed their land. Ultimately, only the Americans remained in the lower Mississippi Valley in the early nineteenth century.

As a result, the United States government no longer needed a military alliance with the Chickasaws. The first decades of the nineteenth century were marked by an

increased pressure of white farmers to illegally settle in Chickasaw country, several land cessions (in 1805, 1816, and 1818), and a progressive loss of sovereignty over their territory. The states of Mississippi and Alabama ultimately denied the sovereignty of the Chickasaw Nation in 1829 and 1830 and the Indian Removal Act was passed by the Federal Government in 1830 (Gorman 2011: 5). As President Jackson told the Chickasaws he could not defend them against the states of Mississippi and Alabama, the tribe ultimately saw removal as inevitable (Green 2007: 78). A few more land sessions were made between 1830 and 1837, while Chickasaw officials went west to find a new suitable homeland for the tribe. Finally, the Treaty of Doaksville in 1837 marked the removal of the Chickasaws to Indian Territory (Barbour 2006: 24). The tribe purchased the western part of the Choctaw Nation in Indian Territory, and also lost its political autonomy to become part of the Choctaw Nation (Green 2007: 79).

The Chickasaw removal is considered to not have been as cruel and deadly as the Cherokee or Creek removals (Gorman 2011: 6) as the tribe paid for it with money from the sale of their homeland in the East, and as such, had some form of control over its process. However, it still resulted in about 500 deaths due to food shortages and diseases (Green 2007: 86) and is seen by many scholars as having damaged the political and social cohesion of the Chickasaw Nation, especially by increasing the division between the full-bloods and the anglicized mixed-bloods (Gorman 2011: 7, 44-46).

The first two decades in Indian Territory were marked by raids from western nomadic tribes that wanted the Chickasaws' cattle (Barbour 2006: 30). Many Chickasaws stayed further east with the Choctaws in order to avoid these raids (Gorman 2011: 45). The US Army finally built Fort Washita and Fort Arbuckle in the 1850's in

order to maintain peace between the tribes. Gibson (1971) describes a disrupted culture and society at the time, marked by a division between the mixed bloods and the full bloods, with the former now dominating the social and political order (Gorman 2011: 45-46).

In 1856, the Chickasaws adopted a new Constitution in order to establish their independence from the Choctaws (Barbour 2006: 31). They created a new Government in Tishomingo. During the Civil War they allied themselves with the Confederacy, given that their social and economic model of society – including plantations and slavery – was closer to that of the southern states (Gorman 2011: 8). After the Civil War and up to the beginning of the twentieth century, what brought dramatic changes to the Chickasaw Nation was the sudden enormous increase of white settlers into their territory, completely outnumbering the Chickasaws. This led to an important increase of agricultural and stock raising activities. The tribe became sharply divided between the Progressive party and the Pullback party. The former saw the railroad and immigration into their territory as positive for the economic development of the Nation, while the latter wanted to be much more pro-active in controlling and limiting what they saw as an encroachment into their land (Gorman 2011: 8). Given this situation, the Federal Government was increasingly pushing for the allotment of Indian reservations.

During that time period, the Chickasaws saw education as a necessary way for them to adapt to white society. The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaws Females opened in 1852 as well as four other boarding schools, two decades before the federal government started the boarding school system for Native Americans across the United States (Cobb 2006: 34). Contrary to other tribes, the Chickasaw developed their own

national, education system through the Bloomfield Institute and other schools (Gorman 2011: 76). From 1852 to 1867, education was primarily religious with an emphasis on "Christianizing" and "civilizing" the students. From after the Civil War to Statehood (1867-1906), Cobb saw this period as the "golden age" of the institute, with the Chickasaw Nation being most in control, the education becoming secular, and with a curriculum focusing on national self-reliance. Finally, from 1907 to 1949 the Bureau of Indian Affairs took control of the institute, with a new emphasis on assimilating the Chickasaws into patriotic Americans.

With the passage of the Dawes Act (1887), the Atoka Agreement (1897), and the Curtis Act (1898), Chickasaw land was allotted in plots of 160 acres to tribal citizens and freedmen. The reminder was sold to settlers. Given that the Chickasaws were now a minority in their homeland, allotment led to the loss of their political sovereignty, which in turn led to the creation of the state of Oklahoma in 1907. The goal of the Curtis Act was to weaken tribal structure by encouraging individualism (Morgan 2010: 21). Most of the land was sold by 1930 (Gorman 2011: 9). From 1906 to 1971, the governor of the Chickasaw Nation was appointed by the President of the United States (Barbour 2006: 32) and the federal government took over the judicial system (Morgan 2010: 21).

After Oklahoma statehood in 1907, the Chickasaws continued to take education as being very important, even if the nature of schools changed dramatically since they no longer had control over them. Children and teenagers who went to public schools and institutes learned homemaking, agricultural, and professional skills (Morgan 2010: 55). Many students who went to these schools in the 1930's-1950's reported having had

a good experience because they learned useful skills during times of economic hardship (Morgan 2010: 57). During that time period (1906-1971), in the absence of an official national organization, Chickasaw churches played a critical role in maintaining the Chickasaw social order (Morgan 2010: 85). Churches served as important sites of cultural and linguistic preservation, where traditions such as the Pashofa dish and dance were maintained (Morgan 2010: 63-64). Other sites of community activities which served a similar purpose included ceremonies, dances, and sports events (the traditional stickball as well as modern sports).

In the 1950's and 1960's, several Chickasaw political activists met to discuss the reformation of the tribe's government, at which the Choctaws had succeeded in 1955. Overton James was appointed chief of the Chickasaw Nation in 1963 (Morgan 2010: 105). His goals were to develop jobs, education, health care, and the preservation of tribal heritage. Most importantly in terms of politics, he formed a council to reorganize a tribal government and develop a new constitution. In 1971, the first popular election in the Chickasaw Nation since statehood took place and Overton James was elected governor (Barbour 2006: 33). This allowed the Chickasaws to manage tribal programs (in housing or healthcare) instead of having the federal government do it (Morgan 2010: 122). The Carl Albert Indian Hospital was built in Ada in 1980 (127).

A new Chickasaw constitution was ratified in 1983 (Barbour 2006: 62, Morgan 2010: 127). With the passage of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) in 1988, the tribe opened several casinos and has strived economically since then (Gorman 2011: 10). This has allowed them to offer jobs to tribal and non-tribal members and to develop tribal programs such as healthcare, housing, and museums (Morgan 2010: 124). The

tribe's assertion of its sovereignty has also increased since the 1980's. This has taken the form of registering more citizens on the roll. People with Chickasaw ancestry have been attracted by the resources and programs available to tribal members. As a result, the total tribal population has increased dramatically since the IGRA in 1988. In 1987, the Chickasaw Nation had a total of 12,000 citizens and an annual budget of $700,000. In 2008, the total population was 44,000 citizens for an annual budget of $800,000,000 (Gorman 2011: 10), with an amazing diversity of businesses owned and managed by the tribe (Morgan 2010: 128).

A recent impact study from Oklahoma City University reports that through its presence in 13 counties in Oklahoma, the Chickasaw Nation is playing a significant role in the region's economy. It employed 10,015 people in Oklahoma alone in 2011, but through its economic activities sustained 15,958 jobs in the region (Agee 2012: 7). The Nation paid $318 million to state residents in payroll contributions, and that number rises to $525 million if we consider again the broader regional impacts of its activities. The revenues generated by its economy in 2011 were $1.39 billion (Agee 2012: 2). Its activities consist of business and government operations. 91.5% of its business revenues were coming from gaming in 2011, the rest being banking and other professional services provided by Chickasaw Nation Industries. Given such an economic impact in the region, the Nation has become much more publicly visible, which has increased the need to legitimize its presence to the broader American community. In his study of Chickasaw Nation museums, Joshua Gorman explains how these institutions have allowed to "demonstrate a legitimate Nation in the local historic space", and for the tribe to "center itself as heritage, economy, and law in southeastern Oklahoma"

(Gorman 2011: 163). In chapter four, I analyze some public discourses of Chickasaw Nationhood, especially as they relate to the language. These discourses are distributed to the public through Chickasaw.tv and commercial videos on local television stations. Overall, given the Nation's economic presence in the region, its public visibility, the fact that it employs a substantial number of non-tribal members who often take culture, history, and language classes through the Nation's Individual Development Program, I decided to include non-Chickasaws in the language survey that I am describing in more details in the next chapter. Indeed, since this study is concerned with people's perceptions of the Chickasaw language as it relates to its revitalization, it becomes important to also understand non-Chickasaws' views on this issue. If the language is successfully revitalized at some point in the future, how would the larger Oklahoman and American communities react, and how would this change people's perceptions of the Nation?

History of language shift and revitalization among the Chickasaws

Since this study focuses on the importance of the Chickasaw language to people today in the context of an organized effort to preserve it for future generations, I have deemed necessary to examine the history of the language. For this, I have compiled all the Chickasaw life stories that I could find in the literature, by looking specifically at what people had to say about the importance that the language had when they were growing up and throughout the rest of their life. This was also an opportunity to

reconstruct a timeline for the language shift, connecting it to the current efforts to revitalize *Chikashshanompa'*.

Prior to 1540 (first European contact)

A History of the Chickasaw language has to start with the time preceding the Chickasaws' separation from the Choctaws, which occurred before European contact in the sixteenth century. The contemporary Choctaws and Chickasaws were once living as one people and spoke the same language. After more than five centuries of separation, the two languages are still mutually intelligible by some people today, which can be explained in part by the fact that the two tribes continuously lived in geographical proximity from each others. However, many Choctaws report not understanding Chickasaw, while more Chickasaws report understanding Choctaw. This can be explained by the fact that there are and have always been substantially more speakers of Choctaw than there are speakers of Chickasaw, and as such, the need for Chickasaws to know Choctaw has always been greater than the other way around. Some of the remaining first language speakers today complain that the form of Chickasaw that people speak is too influenced by Choctaw. Additionally, Chickasaws have been singing Choctaw hymns and reading the Bible in Choctaw since their conversion to Christianity (Broadwell 2006: 13).

The eighteenth century

The Chickasaws' first continued exposure to a European language occurred in the late seventeenth century with the establishment of trade relationships with the

British. By the 1720's and 1730's, some English traders had married into the Chickasaws, becoming bilingual and raising bilingual mixed-blood children. This represented an early exposure and interest in the English language, which was necessary for trade. The mixed-blood families were important for negotiation between the two cultures and they were the ones who needed to know literacy and English (Cobb 2000: 24). Their power and influence in Chickasaw society grew progressively throughout the eighteenth century (Gibson 1971: 92). Despite this, the majority of the Chickasaw population throughout the eighteenth century did not learn to speak English. In the 1790's for instance, General Robertson provided Chief Piomingo and other full blood leaders with clerks and interpreters so that they could negotiate directly with the US Government, without having to rely on the mixed-bloods with whom they had dissensions (Gibson 1971: 92).

Situation at the turn of the nineteenth century

By the turn of the nineteenth century and up until the Removal of 1837, residents of the Chickasaw Nation who could speak English included mixed-bloods, African slaves, and the white residents (Gibson 1971: 141; Littlefield 1980: 5-6). The African slaves having been purchased from white settlers spoke English, and many learned to speak Chickasaw. Most of the slaves were bilingual (Littlefield 1980: 5; Gibson 1971: 141). Given that few Chickasaws acquired a formal education in English during that time period (Gibson 1971: 136), Chickasaws who learned English generally did so through their slaves (Littlefield 1980: 17). The literature also points to some interesting linguistic and cultural diversity within the African American population.

While the slaves generally spoke Chickasaw (Littlefield 1980: 9), not all of them did (17). By the time of the Removal, some of them had been acculturated to Chickasaw culture and language for several generations, especially those who lived with the full bloods, and some of them no longer spoke English (Littlefield 1980: 25). Finally, some of the bilingual African Americans spoke Chickasaw as their first language and English as their second language (Littlefield 1980: 8). Free African Americans also lived with the tribe, some of them having Chickasaw ancestry (Littlefield 1980: 15).

We can see that while in the first few decades of the eighteenth century the mixed-bloods were the most important members of the Chickasaw population acting as cultural brokers, a century later, the Chickasaw slaves were playing a prominent role in that regard. For this reason, the first missionaries to work among the Chickasaws at the turn of the nineteenth century were advised to work through the slaves. In the 1830's, missionaries at the Martyn church preached in English because it was a mixed-blood settlement and some of the members had become semi-literate through Bible study sessions. Otherwise, the norm was to hire interpreters (Gibson 1971: 116), and the missionaries hired a lot of slaves to serve in that capacity (Littlefield 1980: 5-8). Interpreters would translate sermons delivered in English, and hymns were sung in Chickasaw. Many of these interpreters were African Americans (Littlefield 1980: 8). The missionaries saw the slaves as a way to get to the Chickasaws, especially the monolingual full bloods (Littlefield 1980: 9). The reason for this was not only one of language but was due also to the fact that the slaves were much more receptive to Christianity at the time than were the Chickasaws (Gibson 1971: 133). By the 1830's,

some slaves were conducting services in the Chickasaw language (Littlefield 1980: 9) although the missionaries attempted to discourage this (Gibson 1971: 133).

First schooling experiences (1820's-1830's)

During this time period, some of the mixed-blood children received for the first time a formal Western education. The Federal Government was willing to sponsor churches in order to "civilize" the Indians, while the missionaries wanted to "Christianize" them (Cobb 2000: 26). The Chickasaws were not very interested in Christianity at the time but they saw this as an opportunity to acquire academic literacy training as well as learning English, which were seen as necessary for their economic success and negotiations with the U.S. government (Cobb 2000: 27, 30). In the 1820's, four boarding schools for mixed-blood students were built in the Chickasaw Nation (Gibson 1971: 112; Cobb 2000: 29). Children were taught religious, domestic (including agriculture, carpentry, or household management), and academic literacy (including English grammar, composition, and geography). Overall, the number of children who were educated in these boarding schools before removal was quite limited compared to the overall Chickasaw population. The Monroe School (named after President James Monroe) had a capacity of fifty to eighty students, the Tokshish School a capacity of twenty, and the Martyn School a capacity of thirty (Cobb 2000: 27-28). English was the language of instruction in the schools and children were expected to learn it, which proved to be a major difficulty at first (Gibson 1971: 112). The missionaries occasionally used slaves as interpreters (Cobb 2000: 29). Some children

were also placed in English speaking families outside the nation in order to accelerate their acquisition of the language (Gibson 1971: 113; Cobb 2000: 29).

Removal and up until the 1870's (1837-1879)

From their arrival in Indian Territory to the early 1850's, the Chickasaws no longer had their own schools as they were living within the Choctaw Nation. It is only by the early 1850's that schools were built again. The Chickasaw Manual Labor Academy was built in 1851 (Gibson 1971: 235). The Bloomfield Academy for women and four other boarding schools opened in 1852 (Cobb 2006: 34). The Academy was funded by both the missionaries and the Chickasaw Nation (Cobb 2000: 2). In terms of language, the policy was in continuity with the boarding schools of the 1820's and the 1830's in Mississippi. The idea was to "civilize" the Chickasaws by teaching them English (Cobb 2000: 5). Children were not allowed to speak Chickasaw at the school (Cobb 2000: 50; Cobb 2006: 35). The curriculum was in English and the teachers expected students to learn the language through the classes. They sometimes hired interpreters (Cobb 2000: 47). Literacy was seen as a way towards acculturation (Cobb 2000: 50).

From the creation of these schools and for the next three decades, we do not have too much information about language use in the Chickasaw Nation. In the 1850's the Chickasaws who were literate could read a bilingual English and Choctaw newspaper and a few years later a Choctaw/Chickasaw newspaper was created (Gibson 1971: 199). Besides the mixed-bloods, the Chickasaw slaves who became Freedmen in the 1860's continued to retain a high level of bilingualism during that time period. It is

unclear, however, for how long after Removal this remained true (Littlefield 1980: 93), but in 1894 they expressed in a statement before Congress their attachment to and understanding of the Chickasaw culture and language (Littlefield 1980: 105). Instances of them serving as interpreters were not as common as before Removal, but there were a few Freedmen working in that capacity at council meetings in the 1860's and 1870's, and no longer in religious settings as was the case before Removal (Littlefield 1980: 94). In the 1860's, many Freedman families were living like Chickasaws and spoke the language. Many were seen as Freedmen and were excluded from the tribal roll when in fact they had Chickasaw blood (Littlefield 1980: 217). The Freedmen were segregated from the Chickasaws, especially from the mixed-bloods. There were more instances of social mixing and intermarriages between African Americans and full-blood Chickasaws. One major reason for this is that most of the slave holders were mixed-bloods, and as such they carried the prejudices from their European families (Littlefield 1980: 94). In the late 1870's, it was reported that most of the 2,300 Chickasaw Freedmen would have been fluent English speakers (Littlefield 1980: 93), and many of them were bilingual (Littlefield 1980: 59).

The 1880's

In the history of the Chickasaw language, the 1880's represent a turning point of some sort. It appears that during this decade some Chickasaws only grew up speaking English. The proportion of these monolingual English speakers as opposed to the monolingual Chickasaw or bilingual speakers seems difficult to evaluate but they were probably a minority. Oscar White for instance, was one fourth Chickasaw; he was born

in 1883 and did not grow up speaking the language (Green 2009: 121). James Duncan was born in 1881. Despite being a full blood, he could only recall "a few Indian words" when interviewed in 1969 (Duncan 1969). Thomas Thompson was born in 1864 and was a leader of the Chickasaw Nation. Even though he spoke Chickasaw, he did not want to teach the language to his children (Green 2002: 15). Despite these examples, many Chickasaws continued to learn the language, such as Elizabeth Colley Hawley who was born in 1883, was half Chickasaw, and only spoke Chickasaw before going to school (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 4).

These stories show that at least by the 1880's, some Chickasaw parents made the decision to not transmit the Chickasaw language to their children. These parents had likely attended the first schools of the Chickasaw Nation in Indian Territory and internalized the ideology that their children had to assimilate into American society by learning to speak good English. Cobb explains that after the Civil War and in contrast with the missionary period, most students who attended the Bloomfield Academy were mixed bloods and had at least one parent in their household who spoke English (Cobb 2000: 57). The Chickasaw language and culture were not taught at the school (Cobb 2000: 64). There were, however, Chickasaws who were raised as monolingual English speakers even before the 1880's. Oscar White's mother for instance, understood Chickasaw but could not speak it (Green 2009: 121). From her son's year of birth, we can estimate that she was probably born in the 1860's. According to tribal historian Richard Green, some of the mixed-blood Chickasaws were raised as monolingual English speakers as early as the period immediately following the Relocation of the

tribe to Indian Territory in 1837.[1] In the 1880's, we also know that some of the non-Chickasaws living in the Chickasaw Nation and conducting business or trade spoke the language. Besides the Freedmen, some white residents spoke Chickasaw, such as 'George', a white man born in 1886 in Arkansas, who was conversationally fluent in Chickasaw and in Choctaw (Lambert 2007: 8).

1890's-1910's

The last decade of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century were a time when many people continued to acquire Chickasaw as a first language. We know, for instance, that in the 1900's many of the full bloods did not speak English (Littlefield 1980: 219). However, we also find more life stories in the literature (compared to the previous period) of people who grew up in households where transmission of the language stopped for ideological reasons.

Among those who acquired Chickasaw during that time period was the famous actress Te Ata Fisher, born in 1895, who learned Chickasaw from her father Thomas Benjamin Sr., by listening to him telling stories in both Chickasaw and English (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 41-42). Vinnie May Humes was born in 1903. She grew up speaking Chickasaw and learned English when she went to school. Her stepfather believed that she and her siblings had to learn English while her aunt strongly encouraged them to speak Chickasaw (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 168-169). Jonas Imotichey was born in 1904 (Green 2009: 181) and spoke Chickasaw as his first language (Green 2009: 183). Josie Lowry was born in 1912 and she was physically punished if she spoke Chickasaw at the Carter Seminary in Ardmore (Green 2009: 182),

[1] Personal conversation with Richard Green, 3/23/13

just as it was forbidden to speak Chickasaw at the Bloomfield Institute in the 1910's (Cobb 2000: 80).

Others grew up developing language abilities but without becoming fluent in the language. For instance, Juanita J. Keel Tate was born in 1910 (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 70). Her father was a fluent speaker of Chickasaw and her mother spoke some. She was exposed to a lot of Chickasaw language at home by listening to her dad and his friends speak, but she did not become a fluent speaker (Cobb 2000: 82). Amos Hays was born in 1919 (Green 2009: 24). His dad refused to teach him the Chickasaw language. The reasons could have been that Amos' mother was white or that the Chickasaw Nation had ceased to exist politically when Amos was born (Green 2009: 25). Amos was resentful about this later on in life. He still learned to understand Chickasaw through stories that his grandmother told him.

During that time period, others grew up only speaking English despite having one or two parents speaking Chickasaw. Euel "Monk" Moore was born in 1908. His father was Chickasaw and his mother was white. His dad spoke Chickasaw but he did not want his children to do so, so he did not teach them the language (Green 2009: 205). Aurelia Guy Mobley was born in 1906. Her full blood grandmother only spoke Chickasaw. Her mother spoke both English and Chickasaw but was discouraged in school from speaking Chickasaw so she did not teach it to her children (Morgan and Parker 2011: 93). Katherine McGuire was born in 1919. Her grandmother "could hardly speak English at all". Her father spoke Chickasaw but he did not want to teach it to her and her siblings (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 78-82). Lenora Hobbs was born in 1915. Her grandparents spoke Chickasaw but they did not want to teach the language to

their children because they thought that it would handicap them in their schooling (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 93). Jesse Barnard Renick was born in 1917. His mother was half Chickasaw and half Choctaw and she spoke both languages but she did not teach them to Jesse by fear of handicapping him in society (Green 2009: 134). Ida Bell Hughes Martin attended the Bloomfield Academy from 1920 to 1930 and was thus probably born in the 1910's. She did not learn Chickasaw because her father was white and did not want his children to speak it. Her mother was a Chickasaw speaker but she did not want her to learn the language either (Cobb 2000: 82).

The 1920's and 1930's

The Chickasaws born in the 1920's and 1930's are important to a historical analysis of the Chickasaw language because they are today in the 2010's the oldest remaining speakers of the language. During that time period, the Chickasaw language continued to be widely used by one segment of the population. We know for instance that in 1928 interpreters were hired by the government in order to explain the legal aspects of their land to the full bloods. Special agents were also selected on the basis of their fluency in the Chickasaw language, which shows that in the 1920's many full bloods still did not speak English (Lovegrove 2009: 165). Testimonies from alumni of the Bloomfield Academy point to the fact that some of the girls continued to speak Chickasaw at the school in the 1920's and 1930's (Cobb 2000: 80-83). Some of these children only spoke Chickasaw when they started school (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 142; Cobb 2000: 80-81), while a big part of the school curriculum was to teach proper English and literacy (Cobb 2000: 96). Speaking Chickasaw at the school was

very discouraged and children were punished if they did so (Cobb 2000: 80-81). However, some of the children spoke the language anyway, by doing it on the playground when they were sufficiently far away from the teachers (Cobb 2000: 80). Interestingly, some children who were discouraged from learning Chickasaw at home ended up learning more of it in school from other children (Cobb 1997: 233).

Among those who grew up speaking Chickasaw during that time period is Irene Digby, who was born in 1921, and was inducted in the Chickasaw Hall of Fame in 2014. Her parents spoke Chickasaw all the time and she remembers that it was discouraged when she attended school (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 55-58). Catherine Willmond is very well known today for her language work with linguist Pamela Munro at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). She was born in 1922 and despite having lived in Los Angeles most of her life due to the Relocation program, she is a fluent speaker of Chickasaw (Larsen and Larsen 2008). Geraldine Greenwood was also known for her work in documenting the Chickasaw language. She was born in 1928 and was a first language speaker of Chickasaw (Larsen and Larsen, 2008: 64). Robert Woolley was born in 1931. His mother taught him to speak Chickasaw. He remembers getting in trouble for speaking it at school (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 132-134). Juanita Holden Byars was born in 1926. Chickasaw was the language of the household in which she grew up. She did not know a lot of English when she started school. She remembers speaking Chickasaw sometimes at school with her cousins, despite the interdiction. She remembers a funeral service in 1938 that was conducted in Chickasaw with Choctaw hymns (Green 2009: 126-129)

As with the other historical periods, some Chickasaws born in the 1920's and in the 1930's were exposed to the language and may have come to understand or speak it, but with limited proficiency only. Siblings Geneva Ducote, Raymond Milligan, and Ruby McKinney grew up during that time period. Chickasaw was well spoken in their family when their grandmother was alive but after she passed away their mother did not speak too much of the language to them anymore (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 140-142). Hettie McCauley King attended the Bloomfield Institute from 1925 to 1930. She just learned very few Chickasaw words from her mother (Cobb 1997: 231). Frances Griffin Robinson attended the Bloomfield Institute from 1927 to 1929. She heard the Chickasaw language at home but could not understand what people were saying (Cobb 1997: 231-232). Kennedy Wilson Brown was born in 1939. He remembers his grandparents and how everyone spoke Chickasaw at the time (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 86). Claudine Williford King attended the Bloomfield from 1939 to 1948. Her parents did not want her and her siblings to learn Chickasaw at home so she ended up learning more of it at Bloomfield from the other children who spoke it (Cobb 1997: 233). Bernard Nelson Courtney was born in 1939. His father was born in 1897 and spoke Chickasaw to his children, but only when they were eating (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 161). At the language classes that I attended in Sulphur and Oklahoma City, I got the chance to interact with a few senior citizens who were born in the 1930's. Some of them had good notions of the language without speaking it fluently. They may also have used to speak the language but had forgotten a lot of it due to not being around fluent speakers often enough. One reason for them to come to the classes was often to be around speakers to remember and relearn it (Ozbolt 2013).

In the 1920's and 1930's, a number of Chickasaws did not learn to speak their language fluently because they were discouraged from doing so by their parents. In her study of the Bloomfield Institute, none of the women that Amanda Cobb interviewed actually learned to speak Chickasaw fluently (Cobb 2000: 83). They all regretted it later on in life (Cobb 2000: 117-118). They were often very discouraged by their parents and grandparents to learn Chickasaw, which these latter saw as a detriment to learning proper English and succeed in school. The Chickasaw language was especially discouraged in mixed blood families where the white parent did not know the language or did not want their children to learn it (Cobb 2000: 82). Ida Bell Hughes Martin is a mixed-blood and although her mother spoke Chickasaw, none of her parent approved of her learning it (Cobb 2000: 82). Jeanne Liddell Cochran attended the Bloomfield Institute from 1929 to 1933. In her family, children were curious about the Chickasaw language at home and even asked the adults to teach it to them but these latter did not want to. The adults would stop speaking Chickasaw whenever the children were in the same room. Jeanne's grandmother was completely opposed to them learning it, saying that "the way of the Indian was gone" (Cobb 2000: 82-83). Dorothy Wall Holt attended Bloomfield from 1940 to 1947. Her grandmother spoke the Chickasaw language but she does not and has regrets for not speaking it (Cobb 2000: 82). Mabel Edna Smith was born in 1924. Her mother spoke the language with her grandparents but did not teach it to her, which she later regretted (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 111). Pauline Williford Adkins attended Bloomfield from 1932 to 1941. Her mother could speak Chickasaw but she did not teach it to her children. Pauline can understand very few words and is not a speaker of the language (Cobb 1997: 232-233).

The Baby Boomers: last generation to learn the language (1940's, 1950's, 1960's)

Some Chickasaws who were born in the 1940's and in the early 1950's still learned to speak Chickasaw as their first language, with no knowledge of English before going to school. This last generation of first language Chickasaw speakers corresponds roughly to the Baby boomers.

It is reported that at the Bloomfield Institute in the 1940's, some of the girls continued to speak Chickasaw in private (Cobb 2000: 80; Cobb 1997: 230). Among the elders born during that time period who learned to speak Chickasaw is Luther John. Luther was born in 1944. He learned to speak Chickasaw from his grandmother who did not speak very much English. His family was bilingual. He remembers that when he went to school there was still a family where none of the children could speak English. He and they got in trouble for speaking Chickasaw (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 109). Weldon Fulsom was born in 1949. He spoke only Chickasaw before going to school and could not understand anything at first (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 148). Kennedy Brown was born in the early 1940's. His grandparents spoke Chickasaw and he knew little English before going to school (Green 2009: 54, 56). Claud Johnson was born in 1941. He got whipped for speaking Chickasaw in class (Green 2009: 161). Larry Hawkins was born in 1941. He grew up speaking the language (Larsen and Larsen, 2008). Yvonne Albertson remembers that Chickasaw was discouraged at the school that she attended. But her parents taught her the language at home as an important part of her Chickasaw identity (Green 2009: 185). Stanley Smith only knew Chickasaw before entering first grade in 1951 (Green 2010: 168). According to him, a

lot of his classmates were like him, only spoke Chickasaw and got in trouble for it. Again, there are also people born during that era who were exposed to the language but without acquiring fluency in it. John Atkins for instance was born in 1941. Her remembers traditional stories being told in his family and that his grandmother spoke Chickasaw fluently (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 64). At the language classes that I attended in Sulphur there were also some students who were in their seventies and knew some Chickasaw but without speaking it fluently (Ozbolt 2013).

Moving into the 1950's, it becomes much harder to find Chickasaws born during this decade who grew up speaking the language. In 2009, tribal historian Richard Green wrote that the youngest first language speaker of Chickasaw was 55 years old (Green 2010: 149). Richard Green was probably referring to Carlin Thompson, who may have been the last person to acquire Chickasaw as his first language and continued to speak it throughout his life. Carlin Thompson was born in 1953 (Green 2009: 47). He did not speak any English before he went to school, and he remembers that Chickasaw was spoken exclusively at home (Green 2009: 48-50). The conversations that I have had with other Chickasaws of this generation during my fieldwork suggest that other people learned or spoke Chickasaw during the first few years of their lives but shifted to speaking English, generally when they started school, and forgot a lot of the language (Ozbolt 2013). Carlin Thompson never ceased to speak Chickasaw since his mother, Emily Dickerson, was the last monolingual speaker of Chickasaw and never learned to speak English (Larsen and Larsen, 2008: 55); she passed away in December 2013 (Russon 2014). Other Chickasaws born in the 1950's were exposed to the language but did not learn to speak it fluently. Among these people is storyteller and curator Glenda

Galvan, who was born in 1954. Her grandparents on both sides of the family spoke Chickasaw (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 49-50). Her dad taught her and her siblings words and phrases. However she did not grow up speaking the language (Green 2009: 213). Today Glenda is trying to learn more of the language so she can teach it to her granddaughter (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 49-50). She also did some translation work. Donna Rausch was born in 1956 (Green 2009: 34). She grew up out-of-state. She remembers her great-grandmother who spoke Chickasaw, but who would always talk to her in English (Green 2009: 31).

Finally, if we move on into the 1960's, we find some people who were exposed to the language when they grew up but none of them developed or maintained fluency through time. LaDonna Brown was born in 1965 (Green 2009: 34). She grew up in the jurisdictional area of the Chickasaw Nation. Her parents both spoke Chickasaw but they did not teach it to her (Green 2009: 31). Haskell Alexander grew up in the 1960's (Green 2009: 220). He did not understand Chickasaw very well when he was growing up (222), but he remembers traditional stories that his grandfather told him. Darrell Walker was born in 1964 (Green 2009: 176). His grandparents spoke Chickasaw to one another. They spoke to him and his siblings in both Chickasaw and English but he answered back in English after he started going to school. Today he can understand the language pretty well but does not speak it (Green 2009: 178).

Conclusion on the History of the Language Shift

These historical narratives have shown a wide variety of language use across families and generations. The first Chickasaws who were raised as monolingual English

speakers may have been born in the 1880's, if not as soon as the tribe was relocated to Indian Territory in 1837. Despite this relatively very early language shift in some families, other Chickasaws continued to learn Chickasaw as their first language with no knowledge of English prior to attending school up until the early 1950's. This attests to the very heterogeneous nature of Chickasaw society. It is difficult also to estimate for each of the historical periods that I have delimitated what the proportion of speakers may have been in comparison to the non-speakers. In endangered language communities, a lot of this depends on the definition that people have of a speaker, and their motivations and ideologies to claim to be one. Throughout the History of the Chickasaw Language Shift, it seems more likely that many people knowing the language would have claimed not to be speakers.

The life stories that I have examined suggest that language transmission across generations may have been more challenging in mixed-blood families, considering that a non-Chickasaw parent was more likely to object to the language being spoken in the home (Cobb 2000: 82-83; Green 2009: 53). There are however examples of mixed-blood children who grew up learning the language (Green 2009: 47-48, 213). A number of people also reported having been raised by their grandparents, which may have been a factor in language retention. The life stories that I have consulted also suggest that a number of people who did not grow up speaking Chickasaw regretted it later in life. The reasons for not transmitting Chickasaw were multiple. They had to do with the prestige of English in American society, or the belief that speaking two languages well was not possible. Many parents only taught English to their children because they had struggled themselves in their early years by only speaking Chickasaw. Many people also wanted

to assimilate into American society and succeed economically. A bilingual Chickasaw who worked as an interpreter in the courts considered that not speaking English or not speaking it well was a disadvantage because one "would be saying one thing and officials would think they were saying something else" (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 118). This speaks to an ideology that viewed speaking Chickasaw as a handicap, and this ideology extended to other contexts of life, especially in the larger society.

1960's – 2010's: the Road to Language Revitalization

The Chickasaw life stories that were previously discussed show that the last person who may have acquired Chickasaw as his first language was born in the early 1950's, and that some Chickasaws who were born in the 1950's and 1960's continued to be exposed to the language but without becoming fluent in it. It is precisely in the 1960's that the uncertainty of the future of the Chickasaw language was first addressed in the community. This last section is a historical overview of the attempts to preserve the Chickasaw language, from the 1960's to the present day.

The life stories that I have discussed in the previous section point to the fact that the language was progressively less and less used in the community. For instance, although Irene Digby grew up in a household where Chickasaw was spoken exclusively, she forgot some of the language because she did not have anyone to speak it to for many years. Today, she goes to language classes in order to be around fluent speakers and remember it (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 60). Juanita Holden Byars is a fluent speaker of Chickasaw and she still speaks it sometimes with her husband and some of her friends but she did not teach it to her children which she now regrets

(Green 2009: 130). Luther John remembers that when he was a child, everybody would speak Chickasaw at the church that he attended, so the kids were exposed to the language. He also remembers how things slowly shifted towards English (Larsen, Larsen, Barbour, 2010: 109). Yvonne Albertson, who also grew up speaking Chickasaw, remembers that she progressively shifted to speaking more English, including with her younger siblings who could not speak Chickasaw. She feels like she cannot speak the language as well as her parents did and that the language was losing its importance because no new terms were being invented for items of the modern world (185). She remembers that when she was young, preachers at churches spoke in Chickasaw (Green 2009: 186). Stanley Smith grew up only speaking Chickasaw, but as he went on with his life he experienced periods where he did not speak the language for several years, for instance when he was in high school or when the served in the military (Green 2010: 172-173). He regrets not having taught the language to his children, but nobody in his generation did.

It seems that the issue of language shift was first addressed in the 1960's, in a context of growing political activism in the Chickasaw Nation. After becoming Governor in 1963, Overton James asked his mother Vinnie May Humes and her husband Reverend Jesse Humes, a Methodist minister, to write a dictionary of the language (Green 2010: 150). At this time, Governor James estimated that only a few hundred Chickasaws out of an enrolled population of more than 6,000 could speak the language (Green 2007: 169). Reverend Jess Humes had already been working on a dictionary project, and Governor James encouraged his mother Vinnie May Humes to join him (Green 2007: 169). They completed the dictionary in two and a half years

(Morgan and Parker 2011: 69), and it was ultimately published by the University of Oklahoma Press in 1972 (Green 2009: 172-173). The other major work of documentation of the Chickasaw language was completed in 1994 by linguist Dr. Pamela Munro of UCLA and Chickasaw speaker Catherine Willmond (Larsen and Larsen, 2008). It is a more comprehensive dictionary than the Humes dictionary and it comes with an essay on Chickasaw grammar (Green 2010: 150, 158).

While in the late 1960's a few hundred Chickasaws may have been fluent speakers of the language, recent estimates vary between twenty (Green 2009: 53), seventy-five (Green 2010: 173), and one hundred (Green 2010: 149). The Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program considers today that the number of first language speakers is sixty-five (Russon 2014). The remaining first language speakers of Chickasaw are not very optimistic about the future of the language, aware of the fact that they may be the last generation to speak it if no new fluent speakers can be produced (Green 2009: 52-53; 2010: 150). Determining who is a fluent speaker of an endangered language is always a controversial issue and, as was clear through the life stories presented in the previous section, people may have had exposure to the language throughout their life without becoming fluent in it. People who can understand the language without speaking it are commonly referred to as "passive bilinguals" (Green 2010: 152). Joshua Hinson, director of the Chickasaw Nation Department of Language, estimates their number to be at about 200[2].

Until recently, the main resources that people interested in learning Chickasaw could use were the two dictionaries previously mentioned: the 1972 Humes dictionary

[2] Joshua Hinson's presentation at the Oklahoma Workshop on Native American Languages, April 11, 2013, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah Oklahoma

and the 1994 Munro and Willmond dictionary (Green 2010: 157-158). Starting in the 1980's, a few individuals in the community created additional language teaching materials, such as JoAnn Ellis, Chickasaw Hall of Fame inductee Yvonne Alberson (Green 2010: 158), and Chickasaw Hall of Fame inductee Geraldine Greenwood (Larsen and Larsen, 2008: 66). Geraldine Greenwood created a language curriculum and a grammar. Of these language activists, JoAnn is the youngest, having grown up in a household where her parents and grandparents spoke it. Her fluency in Chickasaw is rather unusual for her generation (Green 2012: 94).

These individual language preservation efforts were not however coordinated under a single program. This finally became reality in 2007 with the creation of the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program, with Joshua Hinson as its director (Green 2010: 151). An essential part of the language program, which was concomitant to its creation, is the Master Apprentice Program. The Master Apprentice Program is a method of language learning that was developed by Leanne Hinton in the context of the highly endangered languages of Native California. It pairs a fluent speaker of the language with a learner. The two persons spend at least ten hours a week together going about their daily activities while conversing exclusively in the Native language. The apprentice acquires language through full immersion and with the help of the context of these activities. Conversational fluency can be attained by the apprentice after a few years of hard work (Hinton 2001b: 223).

The master apprentice program is a particularly useful approach for language communities that have an urgent need to create new second language speakers with conversational fluency, who will in turn be able to teach the language to a new

generation of learners. This applies well to the Chickasaw community, with only sixty-five remaining first language speakers, all of them being at least in their sixties. In comparison, the master apprentice program is not as central in communities with a large pool of fluent speakers such as the Navajos, the Cherokees, or the Maoris. These communities are investing in immersion schools in order to produce new fluent speakers on a larger scale, starting the process during childhood. This may be the ultimate goal of the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program but for now their priority is to create more conversationally fluent second language speakers (Green 2010: 156). As of now, only two graduates of the master apprentice program can be described as conversationally fluent: language program director Joshua Hinson and legislator and attorney Scott Colbert (Green 2010: 153).

With the formal creation of the language program in 2007, the opportunities to learn the Chickasaw language have considerably increased. These resources can be categorized as academic, community based, and self help (Green 2010: 160). Academic resources include the teaching of Chickasaw at a high school in Byng, a community close to Ada Oklahoma. Program director Joshua Hinson has been teaching the language there with Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS), a method of language teaching through immersion that uses physical actions and stories, and which resembles to a certain extent the master apprentice approach (Green 2010: 162). The language is also offered for credit at East Central University in Ada. The ultimate goal is to have four levels and a capstone course in Chickasaw. If some of the students who took Chickasaw in high school go on to college and take all the Chickasaw level courses, and then do the master apprentice program, they will be qualified enough to teach the

language, even if they would still not be as fluent as the first language speakers (Green 2010: 165-166).

Community-based resources available to learn the language today include community classes throughout the jurisdictional area, Individual Development Program (IDP) classes for employees of the Chickasaw Nation, the Children Speaking Chickasaw Language Club, and summer immersion camps where children and adults are learning the language through various activities, including sports (Green 2010: 160-163).

Finally, "self help" resources are now available to learn the Chickasaw language. These are essentially multimedia resources which have been developed in part to make the language attractive to the youth, but also for the Chickasaws who live outside of the jurisdictional area and cannot use the learning opportunities that are only available locally. These resources include a number of videos available at Chickasaw.tv, a Chickasaw language app for Apple devices, a "word of the day", a "word of the week", and the use of social Medias such as Facebook and Twitter. Finally, printed resources in the Chickasaw language are now regularly produced through the Chickasaw Press. The creation of all these new resources for the language has involved the need to create a number of new words which did not previously exist in the Chickasaw language (for instance words for computer, laptop, or cell phone). A committee of 25 first language speakers of Chickasaw gets together on a regular basis to discuss the creation of new vocabulary terms (Green 2010: 155). Program director Joshua Hinson has a very tolerant approach to the language, acknowledging that there is

variation in the way people speak and write Chickasaw but that it is acceptable that way (Green 2010: 155).

As this study focuses on Chickasaw language ideologies, with a particular interest for people's motivation to learn the language, I have reviewed the literature to see if previous authors have tackled these questions. Tribal historian Richard Green wrote a life story of Tracey Hicks, a mixed-blood Chickasaw who grew up outside of the jurisdictional area of the Nation and did not get interested in her Chickasaw heritage until adulthood. She moved to Ada in her forties to pursue a degree at East Central University (ECU), and that is where she heard the Chickasaw language for the first time. The language captivated her attention and she decided to attend the IDP classes for employees (Green 2012: 97). She furthered her learning by taking classes at ECU, and ultimately got involved in the Chickasaw master apprentice program. Confronted to incredible familial and professional constraints, she ultimately had to move back to Houston (Green 2012: 101). Her motivation to learn Chickasaw is definitely integrative, in that she has been driven by her desire to reconnect to a part of her heritage that she did not grow up around. She is also motivated by the memory of her great-grandfather who was a fluent speaker of the language (Green 2012: 101). Her learning of the language also allowed her to develop new social ties in the community.

Another study was recently conducted about the motivation of people involved in Chickasaw language revitalization. Kari Lewis (2011), a Chickasaw student at the University of Arizona, interviewed fifteen Chickasaw citizens currently involved in language revitalization efforts.

She interviewed elders currently teaching the language in the Master-Apprentice Program, adults learning the language or working for the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program, and teenagers and young adults currently learning the language.

One important motivation that she found out adult learners have in learning the language is striving to reinforce their sense of identity as Chickasaw individuals. This includes a reinforced sense of pride in being Chickasaw (Lewis 2011: 22). This is definitely an example of integrative motivation. Language Program director Joshua Hinson for instance, explains that for him, a mixed-blood who grew up in Texas, learning the language has allowed him to transform his status from an outsider to an insider (Lewis 2011: 22), or from "a white person who is part Chickasaw" to "a Chickasaw who is part white" (Green 2010: 152).

Another motivator that she uncovered is the urgency of decline. The language learners that she interviewed discussed being motivated by the fear that the Chickasaw language will disappear in the near future if nothing is done to preserve it. This feeling particularly applies to adult language activists who are aware of their intermediary generational position between the remaining fluent elders and their own children whom they may try to raise as speakers of Chickasaw (Lewis 2011: 25). Having children is definitely a factor that some language learners cite as having increased their motivation to learn Chickasaw (Lewis 2011: 27).

Finally, the adult language learners that she interviewed are for most of them working for the Chickasaw Nation. They all see speaking Chickasaw as an asset to their career. This appears to be a form of instrumental motivation, in that people see a connection between learning the language and their economic well-being (Lewis 2011:

28). Kari Lewis concludes by writing that "for language revitalization to be successful on a large scale, language learners will likely need both integrative and instrumental motivation." Based on her interviews with language activists working for the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program, Kari Lewis is making an important point here. However, how can instrumental motivation be created on a large scale, knowing that the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program can only offer so many jobs? We will come back to the issue of instrumental motivation in this study, given that the question of the monetary compensation of the students and teachers involved in the Master-Apprentice Program has been in debate.

Overall, Kari Lewis' study reveals some important insights about the motivations of current Chickasaw language learners. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that she interviewed the people who are the most actively involved in language revitalization in the Chickasaw community. My goal in this study, especially through the Chickasaw language survey that I conducted, has been to include as many people as possible in my investigation of language attitudes and ideologies, including non-Chickasaws and people who are not learning the Chickasaw language.

Chapter Three: Methodology

To address my research questions, I have used three main research methods. The first one was the use of a language survey that investigated people's attitudes towards the Chickasaw language and current attempts to revitalize it, including their motivation to learn it. The survey was an important way for me to address the main research questions of this project, especially factors that influence motivation. The fact that the survey was conducted online in addition to having printed copies allowed me to reach out a number of tribal members who do not live within the jurisdictional area of the Chickasaw Nation. The language survey was also an important way for me to establish contacts in the community by working on a project that benefited the Chickasaw Nation. This "point of entry" into the community facilitated the more classical ethnographic approach that I also used as part of my research methods.

As such, I conducted ethnographic observations in the community. I attended various community events, which I listed in chapter one, some of them focusing specifically on language while others did not. Language related events included community language classes and a summer language camp for youth and adults. Attending these events allowed me to investigate my main research questions regarding the meaning that the language has for people, but also to get a better sense as to why these sites and initiatives matter for the community, regardless of how much language is actually learned. This experience also allowed me to get a better understanding of the strategies used by the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program in creating spaces to

motivate people to learn Chickasaw. Finally, attending these events allowed me to get more involved with the community and to make friends.

My third methodology in this study was to conduct thirteen ethnographic interviews, following the administration of the Chickasaw language survey. I interviewed individuals that I had formerly met through my participation in community events and a few others who were recommended to me by people I already knew. I interviewed language learners, teachers, a language program administrator, and even a Chickasaw who is not currently involved in any language-related activities. These interviews allowed me to get more in-depth information relating to the major aims of my study, especially aspects that were not sufficiently well answered by the survey.

The Chickasaw Language Survey

Language surveys are a very important aspect of language revitalization work as they can allow finding out important information pertaining to a language situation, various language resources, as well as attitudes toward the ancestral language in a community. Language surveys can be critical for raising community awareness and involvement in language revitalization, creating short term and long term goals, and more generally to understand the complexities of language shift and preservation (Indigenous Language Institute, 2009). This section describes my involvement in the creation and administration of an attitudinal language survey in the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma between 2012 and 2014, in collaboration with the tribe's language program director and my academic advisor at the time.

The idea for the Chickasaw Language Survey germinated from discussions with my PhD dissertation committee members during the spring of 2012 regarding an effective way for me to develop a collaborative research project pertaining to language revitalization with a Native American community in Oklahoma. Dr. Mary S. Linn suggested that language surveys would be an effective way for me to collect data for my dissertation, while giving back something useful to these communities. My interest in language attitudes and ideologies also promised to be a good fit with the format of the language survey, as it can be a very effective way to collect information about language attitudes at a community-level.

A few weeks later, I contacted Joshua Hinson, the director of the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program. I was upfront about my research interests, including the idea of a language survey, and my desire to collaborate with a community. Joshua responded by telling me that he would be interested in developing an attitudinal survey with me. At the time of its creation in 2007, the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program had administered a survey with a few attitudinal questions (Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program 2007). As a result, the prospect for Joshua Hinson to work with me on a new survey was to get a sense of changes in language attitudes during this time period, including how these may have been due to the efforts of the language program. The survey could be an opportunity to gauge how people had responded to the initiatives of the language program. Had these initiatives increased people's motivation to learn the Chickasaw language, and were people aware of and using the resources available to learn it?

After contacting Joshua, I attended in June 2012 the Co-Lang Institute at the University of Kansas where I took a workshop on how to develop, administer, and analyze language surveys. The survey was taught by Dr. Mary S. Linn from the University of Oklahoma, who would later become my advisor, and by Dr. Keren Rice, from the University of Toronto. The workshop proved itself to be very useful as it allowed me to start writing down questions that interested me, and the instructors and fellow students in the class provided me with useful feedback.

I finally met Joshua in September 2012 along with Dr. Sean O'Neill and Dr. Mary Linn and we talked in length about what the main goals for the survey would be. Of course, as is the case with any survey, we discussed the importance of having demographic questions. Demographic questions are critical in any language survey in order to finding out trends in a population regarding particular attitudes towards the language. For this reason, we decided to include questions about gender, age, place of residence, profession, income, and participation in Chickasaw cultural activities. We also decided to include questions about current efforts to revitalize the Chickasaw language, to see if people were aware of them. General language attitude questions were also deemed important in order to estimate if attitudes and ideologies had been affected by the recent language revitalization campaign launched by the language program. Finally, we decided that it would be important to ask questions to people about what they would like to do with the Chickasaw language, and what materials and initiatives they would like to see available.

After the initial meeting, I produced a first draft of the survey. Between September 2012 and May 2013, we produced a total of eight different drafts for the

Chickasaw Language Survey. Another challenge was to get approval from both the University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Chickasaw Nation IRB, which explains why the survey was only opened in August 2013.

Looking back on it, there are several conclusions that I draw from the experience of designing and administering the Chickasaw language survey. The first is that we overestimated the number of participants we could reasonably expect to have. Originally, I thought that it would be possible to get a few thousand responses. Then our objective changed to a few hundred. In the end, we obtained 483 responses, which was in fact an excellent result given the length of the survey and the fact that people were not financially compensated to take it.

Secondly, some questions were simplified as we went along, and after realizing that they were overly complicated and asked for details that were not absolutely necessary. In some instances, we also combined a few questions into one, for purpose of clarity and to make it easier for the respondents.

Thirdly, we came to the understanding that the survey should not be too long. One of the worse mistakes for a survey would be to be too long to the point of discouraging people to take it, or to lower the quality of the responses because it is asking participants for too much of their time and energy. One choice made in this regard was to limit the number of open-ended questions, given that they take time to respond to, and time for the researcher to analyze. The best alternative we found for this was to add an option at the end of multiple-choice questions where we offered respondents the possibility of telling us more about a specific issue in their own words. This was worded as “Explain why (optional)” or “Other (please explain)”. This way, we

were able to collect original comments on eighteen of the thirty-three survey questions, while only two of these eighteen questions were strictly open-ended. Concerned about the easiness of taking the survey, I also decided to use a lot of "check all that apply" questions instead of ranking questions, or instead of questions asking respondents to only pick a few answers out of a larger possible number.

Finally, as time went by and as we received feedback from a number of professors and students in my academic network we were able to narrow down the questions, and worked more on the wording. We also arranged the questions by themes and I came up with a design on surveymonkey using a picture I had taken at the traditional village of the Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur, Oklahoma.

Given all these tests, revisions, and challenges in getting approval from two Institutional Review Boards, the first person to fill out the survey did not do so until August 30, 2013. The survey was finally closed on February 4, 2014, reaching a total of 483 responses.

The survey was posted online using surveymonkey.com. In terms of its promotion, I started off by e-mailing the web address to the Chickasaw citizens I know. I also attended the Chickasaw Nation Annual Meeting in Tishomingo on October 5 2013 where I gave out a number of flyers that included a brief description of my project along with the link to the online survey. While attending two language classes taught in October 2013 at *Chokka' Kilimpi'* Family Resource Center in Norman, Oklahoma, I introduced myself to the instructor and the students and told them about the language survey. I handed out several flyers containing the web address as well as a few printed surveys with self-addressed envelopes. Finally, I advertised the survey at two

community language classes in the Chickasaw Nation that I had been attending on a regular basis and where I knew the instructors and most of the students: one in the city of Sulphur and the other in Purcell.

This was my contribution to the promotion of the survey, but most of the work came from Joshua Hinson who advertised the survey through his personal and professional networks. The Chickasaw Language Survey was advertised through an interview with Joshua Hinson and myself on KCNP 89.5 FM Chickasaw Community Radio in early October of 2013, in the Chikasha Holisso of October 11, on Facebook on October 28, in a Press Release on Chickasaw.net on November 5, in the Ardmoreite on November 6, on the Indigenous Languages and Technology discussion list of November 7, and in the Chickasaw Times of November 2013.

Despite all these consequent efforts, by the time I closed the online survey on November 30, 2013 because my IRB approval had come to expiration, we had only collected ninety responses. Only two of these responses were printed surveys, which confirm that collecting printed surveys can be a real challenge, especially when respondents are expected to return them in the mail (Indigenous Language Institute, 2009). The University of Oklahoma IRB allowed me to re-open the survey on December 13, and an unexpected turn of events occurred on December 17 when the survey was finally advertised through a mass e-mail sent to all the employees of the Chickasaw Nation. While we had been stuck at ninety responses despite three months of advertisement, this number suddenly rose up to 250 two hours after the mass e-mail was sent. At the time we finally closed the survey on February 4, 2014, we had collected a total of 483 responses. The two main reasons that can explain the success of the mass e-

mail is the high number of people who work for the Chickasaw Nation and consequently received it, and the fact that since the survey was advertised by the Nation, employees were given the opportunity to fill it out during their work hours, a good alternative to giving them money to take it.

The mass e-mail changed the demographic characteristics of the population sample in significant ways. Before the mass e-mail, 51.69% of the respondents declared that they worked for the Chickasaw Nation. This proportion rose to 84.28% after the mass e-mail. Getting so many responses was undoubtedly an important achievement, but it also made the sample not very representative of the overall Chickasaw population. We were able to capture the opinions of a number of non-Chickasaw individuals, which is very valuable, but even for them the sample was highly skewed towards employees of the Chickasaw Nation. The proportion of Chickasaw respondents dropped from 74.44% to 61.76% after the mass e-mail, reflecting the high proportion of non-Chickasaws working for the tribe. However the overall number of Chickasaw respondents was still very satisfying - 294 - and they were often considered in isolation from non-Chickasaw respondents during data analysis. The proportion of respondents who live within the jurisdictional area of the Chickasaw Nation also went from 50% to 71.78% after the mass e-mail, reflecting the fact that many employees of the Chickasaw Nation live in the service area (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents, it is worth noticing that 71.91% of them were women, while 28.09% were men. This ratio was almost identical before the mass e-mail was sent, which means that it cannot be explained by the way the survey was advertised or by the demographics of the

Chickasaw Nation employees. In terms of age, the balance between age groups was pretty good, except for the fact that people over the age of 80 are under-represented, most likely due to the fact that the survey was by and large advertised and administered online.

Perhaps in an ideal world, the survey would have been advertised through a mass e-mail to all Chickasaw citizens, while offering a financial incentive to take it. This way the proportions of out-of-state Chickasaws and of Chickasaws who do not work for the Nation would not have been so low. The Chickasaw Language Survey proved overall that using an online media, both in terms of collecting the responses and advertising the survey can be very effective. The total number of responses must be viewed once again in light of the fact that people were not financially compensated to take it, and that it was a fairly long survey.

Analyzing the results

My first level of analysis of the Chickasaw Language Survey was simply to go over the question results and look at the percentage for each answer. A large part of my analysis was also to look at how a specific group, such as “Chickasaws”, or “Chickasaw women”, or “Chickasaw men living in the service area”, answered the survey or specific questions, in order to find some demographic trends in the population of respondents. Another form of comparison was to define a group as all the people who answered one question a certain way, and to look at how they answered the rest of the survey or some specific questions, in comparison to others. This level of analysis is very

easy to perform by using the tools on surveymonkey.com. Finally, for the most advanced form of statistical analysis, I sought the help of a friend and colleague in my department who conducted a few binary logistic regression analyses and multivariable binary logistic regression analyses in order to test several correlations. Finally, the last method of examination for the survey was text analysis. I coded the open-ended questions and looked for emerging themes.

Ethnographic Observations

As I explained in chapter one, I attended a number of community events in the Chickasaw Nation over the span of two years, with language classes being the ones I went to on the most regular basis. Not only did it allow me to better understand the Chickasaw Nation as a whole, but I paid close attention to discourses and performances of tribal identity, more specifically as it relates to language.

I was also able to analyze a lot of these discourses by looking at multimedia resources produced by the Chickasaw Nation, especially videos, commercials, and the website Chickasaw.tv. Another aspect of my observations was to focus on language use. In which instances could the Chickasaw language be heard, by whom, and how much of it was being spoken? This gave me a chance to evaluate the opportunities that language learners and other people have to hear, learn, and speak Chickasaw today. I also paid attention to the social contexts of language use. This level of analysis did not require a very high level of fluency in the Chickasaw language, as opposed to other types of linguistic analyses. By attending language classes for about two years, I got the

opportunity to develop basic skills in Chickasaw, but nothing approaching conversational fluency. I also paid attention to comfort and emotional connection between the participants. In a general sense, what seemed to encourage people to try to speak the language, what was their level of engagement and motivation during learning activities, and more generally during events where the language was present? More generally, attending language classes allowed me to get a general idea of who these learners of the Chickasaw language are in terms of demographics (mainly age and gender). In general terms, what do people get out of attending these events aside from learning some language skills? I paid attention to whether participants seemed to enjoy themselves, who they came and interacted with (e.g. family members, friends), and what they talked about. I tried to see if there was a noticeable profile of learners who persevered through the classes as opposed to others who may not come back. I also paid attention to other aspects of Chickasaw culture and heritage - besides the language – that were taught and discussed during the classes. I coded my observation notes, and mostly used the themes that I also found in the language survey and the ethnographic interviews.

Ethnographic Interviews

In addition to attending language classes and various other events in the community and to having conducted a language survey, the last phase of my data collection consisted of follow-up interviews. I interviewed for the most part people that I had met earlier in my fieldwork. I tried to get a good balance between men and

women, and to talk to people of different ages. My interviewees ranged in age from eighteen to seventy-three. I also tried to have a good balance between Chickasaws who have lived around the culture and the language throughout their lives, and others who did not grow up knowing too much about their Chickasaw heritage, but renewed with it later in life. All my interviewees except for one were Chickasaws. The people I interviewed can be described as involved in language revitalization efforts except for one. Finally, I only interviewed people who live in the jurisdictional area of the Chickasaw Nation or elsewhere in Oklahoma. There is of course a significant proportion of the tribal population that lives out-of-state.

I started my interviews by asking a few questions about motivation, since it is a major theme in this study and was a major theme in the survey. While the survey asked one specific multiple choice question about motivation, I deemed useful to use open-ended questions about it in the interviews. Then I asked questions based on themes that emerged from the survey, such as feelings of shame, prestige, and responsibility that people may have towards the language. I also asked questions about the new words that are created in the Chickasaw language, how people envision language revitalization, and then questions about the respective role of schools and families in the enterprise. Finally, I asked a question about the respective roles of men and women in Chickasaw culture and society, since it emerged as an important theme from the survey. I transcribed and coded all my interviews, as I did for the language survey and the observation notes.

Chapter Four: the Multimedia program

This chapter analyzes the use of digital technology and more traditional media in Chickasaw language revitalization. In contrast to chapters five, six, and seven, I analyze discourses about language shift and revitalization from the perspective of the leadership of the Chickasaw Nation, mainly the Department of Language. I examine views on the usefulness, appropriateness, outcomes, and benefits of language revitalization, as well as measures and perceptions of success –looking at how these discourses are produced and distributed from the top down. Results from the language survey are also discussed in this chapter as they provide insights into people's views on the role that multimedia resources should play in language revitalization. In this chapter, I am using the concept of multimedia to discuss in a broad sense the new technologies that are used today to promote discourses relating to the issues of Chickasaw language loss and revitalization.

The multimedia resources I am examining in this chapter include Gabriella Coleman's definition of "Digital Media", which comprise cell phones, computers, and the internet (Coleman 2010: 488). It also corresponds to what Patrick Eisenlohr defines as "New Technologies", which consist of radio and television broadcasting, computers, and the internet (Eisenlohr 2004). Since I am interested in the discourses about language shift and language revitalization, the specific type of media being used is not a significant variable under consideration. I have found a clear continuity in discourses and ideologies regardless of the media being used. Most of the sources that I have used in this chapter consist of videos from the website Chickasaw.tv. I have also used Chickasaw commercials found on youtube.com; these commercials can be seen on local

television channels. Finally, in the first part of this chapter, I discuss printed resources from the Chickasaw Press and other media produced by the Chickasaw Nation to discuss ideologies of nationalism that do not pertain specifically to language.

This chapter is focused on the essential role of language in the multiple discourses produced by the Chickasaw Nation regarding its existence as a sovereign Nation. These discourses are promoted through the use of multimedia resources for both Chickasaw and non-Chickasaw audiences. In this chapter, I first analyze discourses about nationalism and their underlying ideologies and then examine how language is presented as a fundamental and primordial aspect of Chickasaw national identity. Finally, I explain how multimedia resources are today used to promote these discourses, and as such, contribute to create the Chickasaw Nation as an "imagined community" (Anderson 1991).

Chickasaw Nationalism

From those that walked before us
Many tears shed
In spite of all the trials

Before our nation strength
The spirit of our people has stood the test of time
And bounds all together
While continuing our climb

Because this is the spirit of a Nation
Strong, proud, and free
From where we came to where we are
This passed to you and me

Stand up and be counted
Lift your head into the sky

Let the spirits guide your actions
United we will thrive

Our path is laid before us
Uncertainty it may bring
But with faith and love and courage
We will let this spirit ring

This is the spirit of a Nation
Strong, proud, and free
From where we came to where we are
This passed to you and me
The spirit of a Nation
A collective generation
From where we came to where we are
The spirit of a Nation

SOLO: violin, guitar, trumpet

Because we're the spirit of a Nation
Strong, proud, and free
From where we came to where we are
This passed to you and me

We're the spirit of a Nation [Elders singing in the background: Chikasha poya, "We are Chickasaws"]
The spirit of a Nation [Elders singing in the background: Chikasha poya, "We are Chickasaws"]
From where we came to where we are
It's the spirit of a Nation

The spirit of a Nation [Elders singing in the background: Chikasha poya, "We are Chickasaws"]
Unified generation [Elders singing in the background: Chikasha poya, "We are Chickasaws"]
From where we came to where we are
It's the spirit of a Nation

The spirit of a Nation [Elders singing in the background: Chikasha poya, "We are Chickasaws"]
Unified generation [Elders singing in the background: Chikasha poya, "We are Chickasaws"]
From where we came to where we are

The Chickasaw people have a unique identity and spirit

This song, written and performed by the Chickasaw band *Injunuity* in 2012, embodies in many ways contemporary discourses of nationhood produced by the Chickasaw Nation[3]. Fundamentally, the song is an expression of the unique identity of the Chickasaw Nation; this unique identity is the "spirit of a Nation". The Chickasaw Nation has three slogans that apply to itself: "Spirit of a Nation", "United we Strive", and "Unconquered and Unconquerable". "Spirit of a Nation" was the theme of the 2012 Chickasaw Annual Festival; it is also the title of a Creative Writing Contest initiated in January 2013 by the Division of Arts and Humanities of the Chickasaw Nation. "United we Strive" is the official slogan of the Nation and can be found at the end of many video clips on Chickasaw.tv. "Unconquered and Unconquerable" finally, is the title of a 2006 edited volume about Chickasaw History published by the Chickasaw Press (Barbour 2006; Cobb 2006; Anoatubby 2006). While each of these slogans has a specific origin, they are today intertextually woven into various discourses about the Chickasaw Nation. This resembles Spitulnik's study of Zambian media, which shows that slogans created and circulated through the media can later become part of Zambian popular culture and discourse (Spitulnik 2001: 95). These three Chickasaw slogans can be said to have become "public words", in the sense that they are now commonly used outside of their context of origin. The first two slogans are present in the song that I discussed above. The idea that the Chickasaw Nation has a unique "Spirit" is perhaps the most central of the three slogans, since being "United" and "Unconquered and Unconquerable" can be seen as part of this Spirit. The song also discusses the qualities of strength, pride, freedom, resiliency, and courage.

[3] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyaJzeUSiYE

In “The Nation in History”, Anthony D. Smith (2000: 5) discusses some of the main arguments about nationalism that have historically been debated among social scientists. These arguments are relevant to a discussion of emic discourses about Chickasaw nationalism as they give an opportunity to situate and characterize these discourses in a broader context, both academic and community-based. Smith’s book (2000) is organized around three main academic debates regarding the nature and origin of nations. Each debate consists in two competing arguments, one representing an emic and the other an etic perspective. The first debate regards the “Voluntarist” versus the “Organic” nature of Nations. The Voluntarist approach sees nationalism in instrumental terms and as created by the elites. The Organic approach on the other hand, views cultural attributes and values as the driving force in the ultimate creation of Nations, rather than political calculation. The Chickasaws appear to define themselves “organically”. Contemporary discourses of “Chickasaw-ness” emphasize the attachment to a common heritage and a common bound through “kinship and descent, language, religion, and customs, as well as historical territory” (Smith 2000: 5). “The nation is conceived of as a spiritual principal […] transcending the individual members” (Smith 2000: 6).

An essentialist discourse about ethnic identity hardly comes as a surprise for a tribal community asserting its existence and sovereignty as a nation within the United States. For Indigenous people in North America, cultural authenticity is often understood as intimately connected to self-determination and sovereignty (Clifford 1988: 277-346). An analysis of the discourses of Governor Bill Anoatubby confirms that the Chickasaw Nation is seen as possessing a unique identity and spirit, along the

qualities of strength, perseverance, and unity: "there is a unique quality about Chickasaws that distinguishes them from all other people on Earth. It is an intangible element that marks us as great […]. The world has defined it as 'unconquered and unconquerable'" (Anoatubby 2006: 14). In 2012 at the State of the Nation Address in Tishomingo, Governor Anoatubby talked about "the Chickasaw spirit, the indomitable spirit of the Chickasaw Nation and its people."[4]

This unique spirit and identity, according to the Governor, is one of strength and perseverance, which characterizes both contemporary Chickasaws and their ancestors:

> The story of the Chickasaw Nation is one of survival, persistence, triumph, achievement, and beauty. It is the story of a people determined to not only survive, but to prosper and live well […] we are a proud people […] who have overcome every obstacle placed between themselves and success" (Anoatubby 2006: 11-14). In the annual State of the Nation Addresses, the ideas of strength and perseverance are also recurring themes: "I am proud to report to you that the state of the Chickasaw Nation is strong and getting stronger."[5] "We are a STRONG nation…Let's celebrate that strength today.[6]

Another facet of this discourse regarding the unique identity of the Chickasaw Nation is centered on the unity of its people. As Governor Anoatubby explains:

> The state of the nation is still strong. This is because we all pull together, and we make it happen together. We are family. We have a common bond that connects us, a heritage that binds us and a culture that keeps us thriving […].We all are Chickasaw, and we stand together and together we are strong.[7]

[4] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2012-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx
[5] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2012-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx
[6] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2011-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx
[7] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2011-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx

In other words, the Chickasaw people are unique because of their strength and perseverance, but that strength and perseverance only exist because people are united toward a common goal and united in the face of adversity.

The website Chickasaw.tv is another prominent venue for the distribution of discourses about the Chickasaw Nation. In line with the idea of an identity and character unique to the Chickasaws, a common contemporary discourse builds from the slogan "unconquered and unconquerable". The statement is predicated on the notion that Chickasaws have historically been, and continue to be to this day, warriors. A relevant category of videos on Chickasaw.tv is entitled "Native Patriots"[8]. Several Chickasaw scholars discuss the traditional figure of the warrior in Chickasaw society, as well as leaders such as Piomingo and Tishomingo. They also describe the various times in history when the Chickasaws distinguished themselves in battle despite the relative small size of their tribe, from their encounter with De Soto in 1540 to the Battle of Ackia against the French in 1736, or the service of Chickasaw citizens in the United States military in more contemporary times. Another video discusses how the idea of the warrior can be transposed today to every form of contribution to the welfare of the community or to the continuation of Chickasaw culture, from politics to economic development, where strategy, analysis, and entrepreneurship matter.[9]

Chickasaw history is an ongoing story of achievements and makes the nation everlasting

[8] http://www.chickasaw.tv/native-patriots
[9] http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/our-warrior-identity-is-timeless/list/renaissance

Besides the concept of a unique spirit and identity, the second main theme that emerges from an analysis of contemporary discourses of Chickasaw-ness is the idea that Chickasaw history is an ongoing story of achievements, connecting past, present, and future in a feeling of everlastingness. The song "Spirit of a Nation" expresses the idea of temporal continuity between past, present, and future. Chickasaw History is seen as an ongoing story, continuously unfolding. The ancestors are honored ("For those that walked before us") for allowing the Nation to endure today ("From where we came to where we are, this passed to you and me"), while the future is envisioned as a destiny ("our path is laid before us"; "while continuing our climb"). According to member of the Oklahoma House of Representatives Lisa Billy "the people of the Chickasaw Nation are a never-ending story of accomplishment."[10] In this section, I argue that contemporary discourses of Chickasaw nationalism reveal two main conceptions of time: the first is linear where the perseverance of the ancestors and the current accomplishments of the Nation are seen along a continuum; the second is more cyclical and acknowledges periods of rupture and rebirth throughout Chickasaw history.

The first aspect of discourses about Chickasaw nationalism is a presentation of history where the past, present, and future are seen along a continuum. In other words, the Nation is seen as having always existed and presumably will always exist, which is a strong legitimacy to its existence. According to Benedict Anderson, the nation is made to "loom out of an immemorial past" and "glide into a limitless future" (Anderson 1991: 11-12). The nation is also perceived to "possess a special character and […] can be

[10] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/the-unconquerable-chickasaw-language/list/speaking-and-sharing

termed primordial, existing […] before history, in nature's first order of time" (Smith 2000: 5).

Even if the beginning of national history started in an "immemorial past", a narrative of origin needs to be told (Smith 2000: 38). While Western historians typically take the encounter between De Soto and the Chickasaws in 1540 as the starting point, the Chickasaws rely on oral history. In the words of Governor Anoatubby (2006: 11), the Chickasaws were created when Crawfish built the first landmass. Other important beginnings for Chickasaw history sometimes correspond to the separation between the Choctaws and the Chickasaws (or between brothers Chikasah and Chatah) as they were migrating east. Regardless of that exact point of origin, these narratives are based on a primordial view of the past.

The past also needs to be glorified to validate the legitimacy of the Nation in the present and give it prestige. For this, the ancestors need to be acknowledged. "Of all cults, that of the ancestors is the most legitimate, for the ancestors have made us what we are" (Smith 2000: 11). For this, nations need a "heroic past" with "great men". The Chickasaws today definitely acknowledge the suffering, sacrifice, and perseverance of their ancestors, qualities that they consider an inherited attribute of Chickasaw descent. In the words of Governor Anoatubby "we celebrate our ability to steadily move forward as we pay tribute to our past and learn from our history."[11]

Other contemporary discourses about Chickasaw history reveal a vision of time where past, present, and future are connected into a glorious story of persistence, achievement, and even progress. As was discussed in the introduction of this

[11] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2011-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx

dissertation, the economic growth of the Chickasaw Nation over the last twenty-five years is unprecedented in its history, which explains contemporary discourses about progress as they apply to this recent history. According to Governor Anoatubby, "each milestone we have is worthy of celebrating."[12] "The Chickasaw Nation has accomplished much, but we still have a lot to do, a lot ahead of us that we need to take on […]. Our future is exciting."[13] On the idea of progress, Governor Anoatubby states: "the Chickasaw Nation has made unprecedented progress over the years […] Our story continues to be one of progress and of growth."[14]

Other discourses about Chickasaw History represent a more cyclical view of time, with each passage between two cycles representing a period of rupture and change. Chickasaw scholar, artist, and language activist Joshua Hinson, describes Chickasaw history as divided into four seasons. The summer corresponds to the pre-contact period when the culture and language were strong. The fall corresponds to the eighteenth century, marked by warfare and diseases. The winter corresponds to the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, marked by the Removal to Indian Territory, the Allotment of Chickasaw land and the Termination of the Chickasaw Nation government. The spring finally, corresponds to the cultural and political renaissance of the Nation, starting with the election of Overton James in 1970.[15]

[12] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2011-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx
[13] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2012-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx
[14] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2011-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx
[15] http://www.linguisticsociety.org/chickasaw

In the book “Chickasaw Renaissance”, Chickasaw scholar Phillip Morgan looks at modern Chickasaw History as divided into five periods, or seasons (Morgan 2010). In the period preceding statehood, Morgan considers that the Chickasaw government was still strong, but Allotment and Statehood put an end to this “Chickasaw summer”. The “Chickasaw fall” corresponds to the period of social and cultural turmoil following statehood, where people faced the challenges of the First World War, the outbreak of the Spanish flu, and economic hardship. Things got even worse during the “Chickasaw winter”, marked by the Great Depression and World War II. The “Chickasaw early spring” corresponds to the 1950’s and 1960’s, marked by the Relocation program but also by the first discussions to plan the reestablishment of the tribal government. Finally, the “Chickasaw spring” corresponds to the 1970’s to the present day with the restoration of the government, a new tribal constitution, and a period of economic and cultural revival.

Morgan (2010) and Hinson both present a “seasonal” metaphor for Chickasaw history, which obviously differ since they are covering different periods of time. However, both agree on the fact that the last four decades of Chickasaw history constitute a period of revival, or renaissance, since this is the term Morgan employs. Most historians (Atkinson 2004, Gibson, 1971, Littlefield 1980) also agree on the fact that the Removal of 1837, Allotment and Statehood (1887-1907), and the election of Overton James in 1970 represent decisive moments in Chickasaw History, with dramatic long-term consequences.

This view of time as cyclical and moving from rupture and rebirth strongly resonates with the work of Valerie Lambert on Choctaw nationalism (2009). Lambert

explains that the two main types of historical narratives used by nations are "the myth of seamless historical continuity" and "the rupture and rebirth narrative" (Lambert 2009: 8). She goes on to explain that depending on their political motives at the time, Choctaw leaders have sometimes promoted a narrative of rupture and rebirth and at other times a narrative of historical continuity (Lambert 2009: 10, 130). Lambert sees three critical periods of rupture and rebirth throughout Choctaw history: the emergence of the Choctaws as a distinct tribal society in the 1500's following the collapse of the Mound Builder chiefdoms; the Relocation of the Choctaws to Indian Territory in 1830; and the rebirth of the modern Choctaw Nation in the 1970's (Lambert 2009: 4-12). The last two periods of rupture obviously have strong parallels with Chickasaw history.

Overall, it seems difficult to categorize discourses of Chickasaw nationalism as falling either into the historical continuity or the rupture and rebirth narrative. Most discourses of Chickasaw nationalism point to the historical legacy of the Chickasaw Nation, falling along the lines of historical continuity by presenting the Nation as eternal. At the same time, these discourses also point to the considerable changes that have affected the Chickasaws since their first contact with Europeans.

The Chickasaw Nation is both "modern" and "traditional"

Along the idea that the Chickasaw Nation has a unique identity and spirit and that their history connects the past, present, and future into a glorious story of perseverance and achievements, an analysis of contemporary discourses of nationhood also reinforce the idea that the Nation is today both "modern" and "traditional". This

concept is critical because Native American cultures have for a long time been represented and perceived by the Western world as vanishing cultures, frozen in the past. This stems from the idea that "modernity" and "traditions" are incompatible. It is very revealing that photographer Edward Curtis did not include the Chickasaws and the other four "Civilized Tribes" in his documentary project about the lives of North American Indians in the early part of the twentieth century. He perceived these five tribes as already too assimilated into American society (Gidley 1998: 153).

The idea that the Chickasaw Nation is today both "modern" while remaining "traditional" relates to the previously discussed and concomitant idea of everlastingness. It is a testimony of historical continuity and a proof that the past continues, to some extent, to exist in the present. This idea is obvious in the visual rhetoric of the video accompanying the song "Spirit of a Nation" as well as other videos produced by the Nation today. The musical instruments used in the song are both "modern" (the electrical guitar, bass, drums, violin, and the trumpet) and "traditional" (the Native American flute, hand drum, and the shells). The outfits wore by Chickasaw people in the video are both "traditional" and "modern". Another contrast in the video can be seen between the traditional dwellings at the Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur Oklahoma, or the Chickasaw White House in Emet Oklahoma, and the modern facilities where musicians can be seen performing. Another dichotomy is in the snapshot scenes where Chickasaw ancestors can be seen on the Trail of Tears; they stand in contrast to contemporary Chickasaws seen in the rest of the video. Finally, there is the dichotomy portrayed at the end of the film in which elders sing in the

Chickasaw language while young Chickasaw people play "modern" musical instruments.

The musical video *Chickasha Alhiha'*[16], also performed by the band Injunuity, is largely instrumental and only has these two sung words in Chickasaw which can be translated as "a group of Chickasaws."[17] This video is similar to *Spirit of a Nation* in the mix of modern and traditional musical instruments and outfits. Contemporary Chickasaws stand in contrast to scenes where the ancestors are hunting or walking along the Trail of Tears. A young musician playing an electric guitar solo at the Riverwind Casino in Norman Oklahoma is seen in contrast to elders singing and dancing at a traditional Stomp Dance. Chickasaws who conform to "phenotypical" conceptions of Native Americans stand with "non-phenotypical" Chickasaw citizens, in an attempt to challenge definitions of citizenship and community predicated on strictly biological criteria.

This rhetoric of the traditional and the modern can be seen in many of the videos produced by the Nation. The markers of traditionalism are typically the same as the ones that have been discussed in *Spirit of a Nation* and *Chickasha Alhiha*. Markers of modernity may include videos of cutting edge technology companies owned by the consortium Chickasaw Nation Industry. They represent various technological and industrial innovations in the domains of steel fabrication, aviation, robotics, or information technology. In one video, a rocket is seen being launched in the air, which stands for John Herrington, the first Chickasaw and Native American to have been in

[16] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nK0hZryFpVQ
[17] Thank you very much to Hannah Pitman and Joshua Hinson for helping me with this translation

space.[18] John Herrington is also featured in another video promoting tourism in Chickasaw Country.[19] These markers are a clear statement to the world that the Chickasaw Nation can maintain its traditions while being at the forefront of technological innovations.

Chickasaw people are diverse, accomplished, and united

Finally, along the idea that the Chickasaw Nation has a unique identity and spirit, that its history is marked by continuity between past, present, and future, and that its culture is today both "modern" and "traditional", a fourth and final theme that emerges from an analysis of contemporary discourses of "Chickasaw-ness" is the idea that Chickasaw individuals are accomplished in a variety of domains. They are a diverse group of people and yet are united, which is seen as making the Nation strong. The diversity of the Chickasaw population has already been mentioned previously, with the videos showing young adults alongside elders, or "phenotypical" along with "non-phenotypical" Chickasaws. In the 2011 State of the Nation Address, Governor Anoatubby said: "Our people have connected, reconnected, have laughed and have celebrated. It is truly a great day to be Chickasaw!"[20]

Today the Nation places considerable emphasis on the accomplishments of Chickasaw individuals. The four volumes series "Chickasaw Lives" (Green 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012) published by the Chickasaw Press, introduces a number of notable

[18] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/the-unconquerable-chickasaw-language/list/speaking-and-sharing
[19] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R29B0Y7sLB8
[20] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2011-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx

Chickasaws throughout History. The People Channel on Chickasaw.tv has videos about distinguished contemporary Chickasaw citizens. The two volumes series of oral histories with paintings produced by Chickasaw artist Mike Larsen and his wife Martha present the lives of twenty-six distinguished tribal elders (Larsen and Larsen 2008; Larsen, Larsen, and Barbour 2010). The annual State of the Nation Address at the Chickasaw Festival always acknowledges the accomplishments of specific individuals in addition to, and as part of, the accomplishments of the Nation as a whole. Finally, the idea of praising the deeds of Chickasaw individuals is perhaps best exemplified through the Chickasaw Hall of Fame. Established in 1987, the Chickasaw Hall of Fame "has honored distinguished Chickasaws who […] have made outstanding contributions […] [to] the Chickasaw Nation […]. Each member of the Chickasaw Nation Hall of Fame […] has embodied the unconquered and unconquerable spirit of the Chickasaw people."[21] Every year, one to four Chickasaw citizens is inducted into the Hall of Fame through a formal ceremony. Citizens can be inducted during their lifetime or posthumously (Chief Tishomingo, born in the early part of the eighteenth century was inducted in 2011). As of 2014, the seventy-four inductees were political leaders, artists, intellectuals, jurists, entrepreneurs, veterans, athletes, scientists, and elders.

At the 2012 State of the Nation Address, Governor Anoatubby said: "You know, there are Chickasaws living all across Oklahoma, in every state in the nation and in twelve countries on four continents around the world."[22] In her study of Choctaw Nationalism, Lambert asks fundamental questions that apply to all nations, whether they are nation-states or nations within larger ones like Native American tribes in the United

[21] Governor Anoatubby, Hall of Fame Honor Garden, the Chickasaw Nation, 2013
[22] https://www.chickasaw.net/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Speeches/2012-State-of-the-Nation-Address.aspx

States: how does one construct national unity out of a heterogeneous and dispersed population? Do efforts at nation building have homogenizing effects (Lambert 2009: 12)? The most appropriate analytical concept to apply here is without a doubt Anderson's idea of "imagined communities", which he originally applied to modern Nation states. Anderson saw the Nation as an imagined community "because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion". The Nation "is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1991: 5-7).

To create this feeling of communion and comradeship, Smith (2000: 73) explains that the Nation is celebrated and made visible through symbols, stories, festivals, ceremonies, paintings, but also through "music, drama, novels, films, and television" that commemorate and celebrate (among other things) "its fallen soldiers". Smith is touching here upon the concept of "invented traditions" which was coined by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983). The concept of "invented traditions" simply means that many rituals and traditions that are often perceived as ancient have in fact been created relatively recently by nations in order to (re)create feelings of unity and communion. The term "invented" may be hard to reconcile with an emic perspective on nationalism, and it may come across as judgmental and pejorative (Smith 2000: 57). However, many of the rituals and traditions that today create and celebrate the Chickasaw Nation can be traced back in relatively recent history. The tribal flag was created in 1856 (Green 2007: 87). The Chickasaw Hall of Fame was created in 1987. The Christian churches have served as important sites of cultural and social continuity after the Nation lost its

political sovereignty in the early twentieth century (Morgan 2010: 63-64). Discourses of Chickasaw nationalism recognize that the Chickasaws have experienced tremendous change since their first contact with Europeans and that while their society may bear little resemblance on the surface with the Chickasaws that De Soto encountered in 1540, the "Spirit of a Nation" and their sovereignty are unchanged. Now that we have introduced discourses of nationalism produced by the Chickasaw Nation today in general terms, we will review the role that the Chickasaw language in the creation of the Nation and the maintenance of its unique identity.

Nationhood and Language

The Chickasaw language is unique and makes the Chickasaw people unique

Language as the most important aspect of Chickasaw identity

The first theme that comes out of an analysis of discourses about the Chickasaw language is the idea that the language is the most important aspect of Chickasaw identity. In the words of the director of the language program Joshua Hinson, "the key to your culture is through that spoken language."[23] He goes on to say that the Chickasaws believe that their language was given to them by God, *Chihoowa*, and that the mission of the language program is to make sure that people have access to this gift.[24]

[23] http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/chikasha-saya
[24] Mission statement of the Chickasaw Department of Language: https://www.chickasaw.net/Services/Chickasaw-Language-Revitalization-Program.aspx

One strong reason that makes language such a central part of Chickasaw identity is that it distinguishes the Chickasaws from all other people in the world and also gives them historical primacy over other American citizens, as well as highlight their unique contributions to American history. "The language is ancient; it belongs to us; we spoke it before any other nationality came here to America; it brings in people their identity of who they are."[25] This ideology resembles Spivak's (Spivak, Landry, and MacLean 1996), concept of strategic essentialism in the sense that Chickasaw identity is simplified through its equation to the Chickasaw language, just as cultural diversity within the tribal population is de-emphasized.

The Chickasaw language makes the Chickasaw people unique, and this valuation even goes to the point of equating people to the language: "we are our language and our language is us" says Joshua Hinson.[26] Lisa Billy explains how her family sometimes uses Chickasaw as a "code language" when they are in public, so that other people cannot understand what they are saying. In one video promoting the diversity of the Nation today, children, adults, and elders can be seen introducing themselves in Chickasaw: *Chokma* (hello) and *Chikasha saya* (I am Chickasaw).[27] The slogan regarding the unconquerable spirit of the Chickasaw people is also applied to the language in a video entitled "the unconquerable Chickasaw language"[28]; Lisa Billy explains that when one understands the language, they understand who they are as a Native person. A strong parallel is also made between the dynamic and evolving nature

[25] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/pauline-brown-chickasaw-fluent-speaker/list/speaking-and-sharing
[26] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/josh-hinson-profiles-of-a-nation/list/speaking-and-sharing
[27] http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/chikasha-saya
[28] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/the-unconquerable-chickasaw-language/list/speaking-and-sharing

of the Chickasaw Nation and the dynamic and evolving nature of the language. Lisa Billy explains, "We're living people; we're not a people that live in a museum […] we're still growing and evolving, and becoming who we're destined to be; and the language is the same way."[29]

Thus, the idea that the Chickasaws are both a "traditional" and a "modern" Nation, continuously evolving, and that they possess a living culture can be seen as a mirror of the state of the language. The Language Program has a Language Committee consisting of twenty-six first language speakers.[30] This committee creates new words every month to "keep the language current" in a changing world.[31] According to Joshua Hinson, Chickasaws have created new words in the past but this process stopped in the 1950's-1960's as use of the language declined. The role of the Language Committee today is to reinitiate that process. Examples of new words created by the language committee include computer, *tali' lopi'*, cell phone, *talaanompa' ishtaa'*, and Blackberry, *bissa' losa'* (Green 2007: 155). The language then, reflects both the traditional culture and the modern world.

The equation between people and language is so strong in these discourses that when the possibility of language loss is brought up, people do not hesitate to say that they will "disappear" if the language is no longer spoken. Martial Arts program director Matt Clark states "if people lose their language they will no longer be the Chickasaw people; they will just be another group of humans walking around; if the language dies,

[29] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/chickasaw-as-a-living-language/list/speaking-and-sharing
[30] http://www.chickasaw.tv/arts/video/the-chickasaw-language-committee/list/joshua-hinson-videos
[31] http://www.chickasaw.tv/chickasaw-creativity/video/keeping-the-chickasaw-language-current/list/modernizing-the-chickasaw-language

its people will die with it."[32] Catherine Willmond adds: "if the Chickasaw people lose the language, everything will be gone. That's what they used to say. Meaning that Judgment Day will come."[33] Chickasaw scholar Michelle Cook adds: "the language is a continuity from the past […]. It's part of your heritage, without the language, that doesn't distinguish us. We are no longer the Chickasaw people."[34] The possibility that "people will cease to exist" if their language disappears is perhaps surprising coming from a Nation that puts so much emphasis on promoting the fact that they are a vibrant and dynamic culture. Joshua Hinson (2014) adds some nuances to this view by explaining that the loss of the remaining first language speakers would be a tragedy but that they [the Chickasaw] wouldn't cease to exist as a people.

Language and culture

In addition to its importance in Chickasaw identity, the language is also described as a key aspect of the culture. Joshua Hinson explains that "language is culture and culture is language; when we are talking about one, we are really talking about the other."[35] Chickasaw scholar Amanda Cobb explains that the language is "a window into understanding the worldview of the Chickasaw people"[36] while Joshua Hinson emphasizes that the language provides access to the way the ancestors thought: "there is a Chickasaw brain and an English brain; they see the world differently."[37] The etymology of Chickasaw words is indeed an interesting window into Chickasaw history.

[32] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/the-unconquerable-chickasaw-language/list/speaking-and-sharing
[33] http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/chickasaw-as-a-primary-language/list/language-keepers
[34] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/chickasaw-language-immersion-family-camp/list/culture
[35] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/language-is-culture/list/joshua-hinson-videos
[36] http://www.chickasaw.tv/health/video/the-chickasaw-language-a-bilingual-campus/list/martial-arts-videos
[37] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/language-is-culture/list/joshua-hinson-videos

"Green" and "blue" are the same word and translate as "life force", the word for clan translates as "brothering", and the word for "horse" translates as "looks like a deer."[38]

The Chickasaw language is God-given, and is powerful for hymns, prayers, and the Bible

Finally, an idea that validates the central claim that the Chickasaw language is unique and contributes to the identity of the Chickasaw people is the conception of the language as God-given. Lisa Billy explains that Chickasaw is a holy language, a spiritual language, given to them by God at the time of Creation.[39] Stanley Smith explains that the language is God-given.[40] Ellen Chapman, an apprentice in the Master-Apprentice program explains that she believes the Chickasaws got their language during the Babel Tower episode.[41] This ideology is reflected in the use of the language in religious contexts today. Lisa Billy explains that she feels "a passion in herself when praying in Chickasaw", something she cannot explain but that she does not find when praying in English.[42] Other members of the community report prayers recited in Chickasaw at the dinner table.[43] Lisa Billy also explains that she loves reading the Bible in Choctaw and that she truly gets to understand its meaning by reading it in Choctaw, as it was directly translated from Hebrew and Greek.[44] The Bible has not been

[38] http://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/our-language-speaks-to-who-we-are/list/language
[39] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/sharing-our-language-connects-us/list/speaking-and-sharing
http://www.chickasaw.tv/health/video/fortunate-to-have-the-chickasaw-language-today/list/traditional-chickasaw-recipes-videos
http://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/our-language-speaks-to-who-we-are/list/language
[40] https://www.chickasaw.tv/health/video/a-new-generation-of-speakers/list/what-is-diabetes-videos
[41] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/preserving-the-language-as-a-master-apprentice/list/culture
[42] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/the-unconquerable-chickasaw-language/list/speaking-and-sharing
[43] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/language-camps-for-families/list/camps-and-clubs
[44] http://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/our-language-speaks-to-who-we-are/list/language

translated in Chickasaw, so the Chickasaws read the Choctaw Bible instead. We can see that these individuals often express their emotional attachment to the Chickasaw language with a sense of awe. Language is not only seen as a gift, but as a divine gift. Because of this, the mission of the Language Program is once again to allow people to access that gift, as a way to correct the historical legacy that lead to language loss, since the vast majority of Chickasaw people today were not born speaking the language.

Revaluing the Chickasaw language

An ancillary theme in the contemporary discourse on the Chickasaw language is those that support the revaluation of the language to support a range of objectives. An important theme in the discourse regarding the revaluation of the language is to tell people about the history of language shift and how attitudes towards the language have changed through time. A historical timeline of language shift was presented in the introduction of this dissertation. Lisa Billy explains that her grandparents were not allowed to speak Chickasaw in boarding schools and that her parents' generation could not talk openly about the language.[45] In contrast, the language is now celebrated at the Chickasaw Cultural Center and people are proud and interested in it. This represents an important historical shift in language ideologies that is a part of the Chickasaw Renaissance. This discourse is intended to promote positive attitudes about the language.

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https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/hearing-elders-speaking-chickasaw/list/speaking-and-sharing

[45] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/place-names-at-the-chickasaw-cultural-center-keeping-our-language-alive/list/place-names-at-the-cultural-center
https://www.chickasaw.tv/chickasaw-creativity/video/grandpa-and-boarding-school/list/brian-campbell
http://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/losing-a-native-language/list/language

Aside from presenting the history of language shift, another discourse associated with the revaluing of the Chickasaw language are efforts to reinforce the perception that language revival is relevant to many activities and domains of modern life. The language committee is an example of this as they regularly create new words for items from the modern world and popular culture.[46] Chickasaw.tv is itself another example of the use of modern technology in revaluing the language along with other devices such as the Chickasaw iPhone app.[47] Eisenlohr (2004) explains that on a symbolic level, association with modern digital technology can "revalue" and increase the prestige of the endangered language, countering the view that this latter is necessarily backward and associated with the past. Modern digital technology will hopefully make the language attractive to encourage people, especially youngsters, to learn it. The language is also made relevant to the modern world through its use in Chickasaw art. Classical composer Jerod Tate wrote a poem in Chickasaw to accompany one of his musical pieces.[48] Three storybooks for children have been published (2011-2013) in both the English and the Chickasaw languages.[49] Finally, Chickasaw artist Joshua Hinson often entitles his art with Chickasaw words, especially for animals.[50] Another important idea that supports revaluing Chickasaw is that the language is presented as bounding people together and changing people's lives in positive ways. Lisa Billy explains that the language keeps her family connected, pulls Chickasaw people together in a way that

[46] http://www.chickasaw.tv/arts/video/the-chickasaw-language-committee/list/joshua-hinson-videos
[47] https://www.chickasaw.tv/chickasaw-creativity/video/the-chickasaw-language-app/list/respect-the-spark-education-language-videos
[48] http://www.chickasaw.tv/arts/video/composing-in-the-chickasaw-language/list/jerod-tate-videos
[49] http://www.chickasaw.tv/native-patriots/video/two-children-s-books-chickasaw-language-and-legends/list/removal-videos
[50] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/artwork-experience-possum-stories-and-book-covers/list/joshua-hinson-videos
https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/josh-hinson-profiles-of-a-nation/list/speaking-and-sharing

nothing else could[51], and that it can allow Chickasaws who do not know their traditions very well to truly engage themselves in their community.[52] The language can keep families connected as in the example of the Billy family who sometimes speak Chickasaw as a code language in public[53] or in the example of JoAnn Ellis' family where interest in the language brings together three generations of women.[54] The language program also has an annual summer immersion camp at the Tatanka Ranch near Stroud Oklahoma where parents and children learn the language throughout daily activities.[55] Chickasaw scholar and archivist Michelle Cook describes it as a "fantastic bounding time."[56]

Language activists also explain the various ways through which the Chickasaw language has changed their lives: "it has transformed my life in ways that are hard to describe; for people who choose to learn the language it can do the same to them."[57] Teacher JoAnn Ellis explains that she loves to speak and teach the language[58]; so does Stanley Smith who "gets joy" from it[59] and Ellen Chapman who really likes the

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[51] http://www.chickasaw.tv/chickasaw-creativity/video/keeping-the-chickasaw-language-current/list/modernizing-the-chickasaw-language

[52] http://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/the-chickasaw-nation-expanding-our-humanities-and-language-classes/list/chickasaw-language-resources

[53] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/language-camps-for-families/list/camps-and-clubs

[54] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/three-generations-speaking-chickasaw/list/matriarchs-videos

[55] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/language-camps-for-families/list/camps-and-clubs
https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/language-immersion-family-camp-at-tatanka-ranch/list/camps-and-clubs

[56] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/chickasaw-language-immersion-family-camp/list/culture

[57] http://www.chickasaw.tv/profiles-of-a-nation/video/josh-hinson-profiles-of-a-nation/list/joshua-hinson-videos

[58] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/joann-ellis-teacher-of-the-chickasaw-language/list/language-education
http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/master-apprentice-joann-and-jeremy-ellis/list/master-apprentice-program

[59] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/teaching-the-chickasaw-language/list/language-education
http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/master-apprentice-stanley-smith-and-clovis-hamilton/list/master-apprentice-program
https://www.chickasaw.tv/health/video/a-new-generation-of-speakers/list/what-is-diabetes-videos

language and is very proud to be one of the masters.[60] Teacher Hannah Pitman is emotional about the Chickasaw language, and feels blessed by the opportunity that she has to teach it.[61]

Finally, a last idea that falls under the theme of revaluing the Chickasaw language is to make people feel good about it. The goal behind the language channel at Chickasaw.tv is to encourage people to learn the language by telling them about why it is important to their identity as Chickasaws, but also by making them feel good about themselves: "Explore the language channel to find inspiration for your own language goals-whether you wish to learn a few words and phrases or find the resources to become conversational."[62] This lays on the realistic assumption that not all Chickasaw citizens will ever be involved in the Master-Apprentice program. The ultimate goal of the Chickasaw Department of Language is to create a small community of conversational second language speakers who will be the Chickasaw speech community of the future and will teach the language to their children as they grow up. For the rest of the Chickasaw Nation (the "other 99 %"), the goal is to promote advocacy and support for language revitalization and attainment of a limited level of fluency.

"Making people feel good about the language" is an essential aspect of planning in language revitalization efforts. A common issue in attempting to revitalize an endangered language is for people to lack the motivation to learn it. Commons barriers include the low prestige of the language and the lack of economic opportunities that

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[60] http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/master-apprentice-emma-mcleod-and-ellen-chapman/list/master-apprentice-program
http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/preserving-the-language-as-a-master-apprentice/list/culture
[61] http://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/hannah-corsello-chickasaw-fluent-speaker/list/fluent-chickasaw-speakers
[62] https://www.chickasaw.tv/chickasaw-creativity/video/chikasha-saya/list/linda-english-weeks-videos

would result from learning it. Additionally, people may have internalized anxieties or negative attitudes toward the language, and language revitalization efforts may also be challenged by ideologies of purism regarding "the correct way" to speak, teach, or write it (Dorian 1994; Neely and Palmer 2009). Language purism can be defined as a conservative language ideology that considers that there is only one correct form to speak a language. Language purists are typically opposed to linguistic innovation such as new words or the use of more than one language in a social context (Kroskrity 2001).

Catherine Willmond, one of the oldest remaining speakers of the Chickasaw language, comments on the fact that "younger and older speakers use the language differently"[63] and that this is partly due to the fact that the younger ones learn from writing materials.[64] While this comment is not necessarily judgmental in itself, ideologies of purism in endangered language communities are more often held by first language speakers (Field 2009: 42-43). Language Program director Joshua Hinson insists on the fact that while there is slight dialectic variation in Chickasaw, this slightness in itself is not a bad thing because regardless of where they come from, speakers still understand each other. He adds that people should feel good about the way their families speak, and that there is not as much dialectic variation in Chickasaw as there is in many other languages.[65] Additionally, the language program does not endorse one writing system over another. What is "most important is to speak the language; how you decide to write it is secondary."[66] This approach is different from

[63] http://www.chickasaw.tv/health/video/catherine-willmond-and-pamela-munro-admiration-for-speaking-chickasaw/list/wellness-programs-and-services-videos
[64] http://www.chickasaw.tv/chickasaw-creativity/video/catherine-willmond-and-pamela-munro-a-partnership-is-created/list/respect-the-spark-education-language-videos
[65] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/the-chickasaw-language-less-variation-in-dialect/list/joshua-hinson-videos
[66] https://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/variations-in-chickasaw-spelling/list/speaking-and-sharing

other language programs that tend to be more prescriptive in the way they teach people to speak and write their ancestral language. The assumption here seems to be that a more inclusive and pluralistic approach will benefit language revitalization by avoiding potential conflicts and divisions among people.

Agenda behind these ideologies and discourses

In my discussion of nationhood and language, we have discussed discourses that present the Chickasaws and their language as unique, and discourses aimed at revaluing the language. In the last section of this chapter, I examine the agendas behind these discourses and ideologies.

Strategic essentialism

As I have discussed through my analysis of the videos on chickasaw.tv, the Chickasaw Nation places great emphasis on presenting the uniqueness of its heritage, culture, and history, and discussing how these elements unite the Chickasaw people and make them different from everybody else on earth. This is again a good example of strategic essentialism (Spivak, Landry, and MacLean 1996), in the sense that the Chickasaw are intentionally emphasizing their unity and what its citizens are considered as having in common. In this context and due to its sociopolitical implications, this representation is important for both members and non-members of the community. It becomes important to produce and express one's linguistic difference to the outside world. As was discussed previously, a distinct ancestral language can be a very

important aspect of a community's self-definition and understanding of its identity, even if most people do not speak it fluently.

The idea of fulfilling a sense of identity through language extends to the political arena as Heller, Duchene (2007: 5, 7), and Jaffe (2007: 58, 59) explain that the ideological equation between a language and a people goes back to the emergence of European nationalism and has been used to legitimate political boundaries. The "language-culture-nation ideological nexus" (Heller and Duchene 2007: 7) has now been appropriated by minority and indigenous groups (2007: 5) in order to legitimize their nations and their political boundaries (2007: 58). In her analysis of essentialist discourses about language in Corsica, Alexandra Jaffe (2007: 59) explains that Corsicans had internalized for decades the idea that Corsican was not really a language but a patois. However, through the growth of the Corsican nationalist movement, language came to be seen as central to Corsican identity. As I previously discussed, this essentialist discourse also characterizes the Chickasaws' association between their identity and their language. A distinct cultural identity is indeed often seen as justifying the distinct political status, or sovereignty, that Native American tribes possess in the United States (Clifford 1988: 277-346).

I have suggested previously that the fact that the Chickasaw Nation has an enrollment of about 57,000 tribal members scattered across the United States and abroad, the concept of "speech community" seems difficult to reconcile with such a numerous and heterogeneous population. John Gumpertz (1971: 114) defines a speech community as "any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by

significant differences in language usage". Since the 57,000 enrolled tribal citizens do not constitute a speech community as such but rather belong to multiple ones, they fit better under Benedict Anderson's (1991) definition of an "imagined community", and the language definitely helps in constructing this. The 57,000 enrolled tribal citizens are seen in an abstract sense as having the Chickasaw language as their heritage language, regardless of how much of it they actually know or are trying to learn. This is well demonstrated in the video *Chickasha saya*, where Chickasaws of various age and phenotype say with much pride and enthusiasm: *chokma* (hello) and *Chickasha saya* (I am Chickasaw)![67] This is definitely an example of strategic essentialism because the language provides the entire tribal population a distinct sense of identity and the very large pool of potential learners legitimizes the efforts that are invested in language revitalization.

Language is unique and makes the people unique

Presenting Chickasaw heritage, including the Chickasaw language, as unique and highly valuable, is also a way for the Chickasaw leadership to align themselves with current dominant discourses of endangerment (academic and institutional), and as such, to garner as much credibility and as many allies as possible to support the revitalization of the language. Spitulnik (2001: 105) explains how mass media often recycles pre-existing discourses and genres as opposed to other situations where words, discourses, and ideologies are produced at the media level and make it into the public domain (2001:99).

[67] http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/chikasha-saya

One powerful organization advocating the preservation of the world's cultural and linguistic diversity today is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). As analyzed by Jaffe (2007: 60), UNESCO's discourses of endangerment emphasize the equation between language and culture ("a lost language is a lost culture"), language and worldview ("each language reflects […] the manner in which a speech community has resolved its problems in […] understanding […] the world around it"), and the importance of language diversity for humanity. These discourses establish a strong iconic relationship between language, culture, and identity (Jaffe 2007: 61), and resonate with the previously discussed discourses of Chickasaw leaders such as Joshua Hinson, Lisa Billy, and Amanda Cobb.

Chickasaw discourses of language loss and revitalization emphasizing the uniqueness of the language and its people also align themselves with mainstream scholarly discourses, which Jane Hill (2002: 120) has called "expert rhetoric". Hill reviewed contemporary discourses of language preservation that tended to dominate the academic community at the time. Among these ideologies is the idea of universal ownership, or that endangered languages belong to all mankind. A second theme is hyperbolic valorization, which characterizes endangered languages as "priceless treasures" (Hill 2002: 120). Finally, a third theme is the idea of enumeration, or compiling alarming statistics about language loss.

Hyperbolic valorization characterizes an attempt by linguists and other scholars to "revalue" endangered languages by emphasizing their unique characteristics and how important it is to preserve linguistic diversity in order to better understand the world's languages as a whole (Hill 2002: 123-125). The main linguist working on Chickasaw

today is Dr. Pamela Munro from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), who describes Chickasaw as "the World's Best Language"[68]. She emphasizes that English and Chickasaw are very different languages in terms of structure and word order.[69] She also explains in several of the videos that the Chickasaw language has "wonderful sounds, a wonderful sound system"[70]; "some sounds are not present in English."[71] In terms of grammar, "words mean things interesting; sentences are great; Chickasaw verbs are the world's best."[72] "Many sentences consist of a single verb word."[73] She then goes on to explain that at the end of her linguistic classes at UCLA, students often pertain in the "longest word contest" by trying to construct the longest possible sentence in Chickasaw using a single word. This is definitely an instance of hyperbolic valorization as a renowned scholar from a prestigious university not only revalues the Chickasaw language after decades of having been considered inferior to English, but even places it above all other languages in the world. The Chickasaw Nation uses Dr. Munro as a spokeswoman on issues of language, as she is featured in several videos on Chickasaw.tv and other tribal public venues. The choice to include a renowned linguistic from UCLA in programming for an audience that largely has no knowledge of linguistics is highly strategic. It gives validity to the language, to the value of its preservation, and to the efforts of the language program. It also reinforces the idea that the language is unique, and so are the Chickasaws and their culture.

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[68] public lecture at the Chickasaw Cultural Center, August 2013
[69] http://www.chickasaw.tv/arts/video/how-to-become-proficient-in-chickasaw/list/joshua-hinson-videos
[70] http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/a-linguist-s-appreciation-of-the-chickasaw-language/list/language-education
[71] https://www.chickasaw.tv/profiles-of-a-nation/video/chickasaw-a-unique-language/list/canoe-kayak-team-videos
[72] http://www.chickasaw.tv/history/video/a-linguist-s-appreciation-of-the-chickasaw-language/list/language-education
[73] https://www.chickasaw.tv/profiles-of-a-nation/video/chickasaw-a-unique-language/list/canoe-kayak-team-videos

The second theme, universal ownership, relates strongly to hyperbolic valorization. It is the idea that endangered languages constitute the richness of the world's linguistic diversity and that consequently, this cultural patrimony belongs to humanity at large, rather than to their speakers only. This theme, just like the previous one, is often used to mobilize the general public in support of endangered languages. Jane Hill (2002: 122) discusses how the concept of universal ownership is problematic for many indigenous communities, as it can often be interpreted as a form of cultural expropriation. Hill discusses the example of the Hopi Dictionary Project, which was experienced as an act of cultural theft by a part of the Hopi population. Chickasaws' attitudes towards outsiders interested in their language tend to be very different from the Hopis. In Question 16 of the Chickasaw Language Survey, "Should non-Chickasaws learn the language, if they are interested in it?" 85.71% of the respondents indicated that non-Chickasaws should be able to do so (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). While this does not mean that Chickasaws do not consider their ancestral language as their cultural property, however defined, it confirms their tendency to want to share their heritage with the rest of the world. This attitude can be seen through their Cultural Center or the website Chickasaw.tv which archives numerous videos about their culture, language, and history, made accessible to a global audience. In addition, a number of these videos emphasize the unique contribution that Chickasaws have made to the history of the United States, such as their role in defeating the French in the Mississippi Valley in the eighteenth century.[74] Given that the Chickasaw, as well as their language and culture, are a part of American history, and considering the significant impact that they have on

[74] http://www.chickasaw.tv/native-patriots/video/french-ambition-native-patriots/document/french-ambition-native-patriots

the economy of Oklahoma, then everyone should defend their cause to preserve their language. The loss of the Chickasaw language would mean the loss of a part of American History, and the loss of irreplaceable knowledge (Jaffe 2007: 61).

Finally, the Chickasaws also adopt the rhetoric of enumeration, defined by Hill (2002: 127) as the compilation of alarming statistics about endangered languages. Hill (2002: 128) discusses how enumeration is potentially problematic for endangered language communities, as it reduces them to numbers and overlooks attempts by some community members to learn their ancestral language as a second language. In the videos discussed in this section, the urgency of language loss is discussed in the context of raising awareness about it in the Chickasaw community and to encourage citizens to learn the language. The rhetoric in these videos definitely fits with the one of alarming discourses. However, it is also noticeable that Joshua Hinson, from the Chickasaw Department of Language, is compiling statistics on the number of language learners, including those who have attained conversational fluency after completing the master-apprentice program. This shows that while some Chickasaw discourses about language shift may fit well with the concept of enumeration, as they emphasize the decreasing number of remaining first language speakers, the Department of Language is also realistic about the fact that language revitalization ultimately depends on the successful creation of a cohort of second language speakers. Counting these learners and speakers is a way of challenging the rhetoric of enumeration, which often reduces these languages to the remaining number of first language speakers (Norris 2007).

Overall, contemporary Chickasaw discourses of endangerment definitely represent a form of strategic essentialism. This can be seen on Chickasaw.tv and

through other public venues for the expression of these discourses. These latter are aimed at the general public and at the Chickasaw population, in order to gain support for language preservation.

Revaluing the Chickasaw language

As was discussed previously, these discourses about language shift and revitalization are in part aimed at revaluing the Chickasaw language. As Jaffe (2007: 63) shows in the case of Corsican, essentialist discourses can work because they can really change people's attitudes and ideologies over time. While people may have historically internalized negative attitudes and ideologies towards the language these may change within a few decades with people now finding the "language worth speaking" (Jaffe 2007: 59, 63).

This is critically important in order to promote support for language revitalization in any community. Changing people's attitudes towards the language is often seen as a pre-requisite to teaching it to them. If only a minority of the population can realistically be expected to learn to speak it conversationally, then it is still important to obtain wide support from the general tribal population, which include the non-speakers.

While students often may not learn a great amount of language in the classroom, the experience of attending can still be very positive in terms of their cultural identity (Jaffe 2007: 71). Other potential positive impacts of language revitalization may include bonding with other people or increasing one's self-esteem, which are two factors that this study addresses in later sections.

In the process of revaluing the Chickasaw language, it is worth noticing that while these discourses of revitalization may be labeled as essentialist, they do not fall into ideologies of language purism. In a context of language shift, essentialist discourses related to an endangered language are often accompanied by ideologies of language purism, language homogeneism, or negative views towards code-switching, as Jaffe explains in the case of Corsican (Jaffe 2007: 63). In several videos on the language channel, Language Program director Joshua Hinson emphasizes that there is not one right way of speaking or writing Chickasaw. This is part of the discourse that I mentioned previously that intends to make people feel good about the form of the language that they speak, as language purism can sometimes discourage potential learners to get involved, since these ideologies define one exclusive and correct way to speak a language (Dorian 1994; Field 2009: 41-43).

Use of Multimedia in Promoting these Discourses

As we have previously discussed, discourses of Chickasaw nationalism and discourses placing the language at the heart of Chickasaw identity need to be considered in a broader context of the nation asserting its political existence within the United States. In this last section, I explore the use of multimedia in promoting these discourses, asking in the first place why they are used, how they are being used, and finally, the implications of doing so. Until recently, a common assumption had been that modern technologies are inherently detrimental to traditional local cultures, accelerating the process of their assimilation into dominant societies and depriving individuals of

their agency (Eisenlohr 2004: 23). Recent studies have nuanced this view by highlighting the uses of digital technology in the preservation of endangered languages (Eisenlohr 2004).

Why using multimedia?

A first reason for using multimedia in the promotion of discourses about Chickasaw nationalism and the importance of the language is that the Chickasaw people, as discussed previously, are today geographically dispersed throughout the United States and the World. Given this geographical dispersal, it becomes necessary to (re)create a sense of community through discourses (Spitulnik 2001: 96), and mass media are the way to go about this in the twenty-first century (Coleman 2010: 491), just as print capitalism accomplished that historically for the modern Nation-State in Europe (Eisenlohr 2004: 23). Modern technologies can allow people to network around a common interest in language revitalization (Eisenlohr 2004: 36), or it can allow them to perpetuate their social relations and kinship ties in new spaces (Peterson 2006: 245, 247).

Another important reason for using multimedia in the promotion of the Chickasaw language, or discourses about the importance of the Chickasaw language, is that these technologies may hopefully revalue the status of an endangered language (Eisenlohr 2004: 24). Broadcasting practices and genres commonly associated with the dominant language can enhance the prestige of local languages if they are borrowed to promote these latter (Eisenlohr 2004: 29). This adoption can also serve to counteract the

view that the endangered language is inherently backward and associated with the past (Eisenlohr 2004: 32). Multimedia can also provide a powerful means to make the language attractive enough for more people, especially youngsters, to learn it (Eisenlohr 2004: 33). The same applies to the adoption of technological objects to promote the endangered language, which can definitely enhance its prestige (Eisenlohr 2004: 35).

A third reason for using multimedia in promoting the Chickasaw language is that it allows the community to represent itself (Coleman 2010: 491) and as such is an incredible opportunity to display and perform a sense of Chickasaw identity to an audience that is both Chickasaw and non-Chickasaw. The Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur, Oklahoma as well as the Chickasaw TV commercials, whether they include some Chickasaw language or not, are intended for both a Chickasaw and a non-Chickasaw audience (Eisenlohr 2004: 34). In a video celebrating the accomplishments of Oklahoma City in terms of economic development, scientific research, culture, and entertainment, State Representative Lisa Billy explains that "Oklahoma is an amazing place, and we are an amazing people - *Hattak i̲la hoochokma*! […] I am so proud - *Kanihka ishtasayokpa* – of the Oklahomans who have made this city a shining example of what America does best."[75] This video is interesting on several levels. Along with many others on Chickasaw.tv, an essential message is that the Chickasaws occupy an important and very legitimate place in American history and in Oklahoma today. This legacy legitimates their culture and consequently the current attempts at revitalizing their language. Their culture and language do not make the Chickasaws any less

[75] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyK9NA5MsyA
Thank you very much to Joshua Hinson for double-checking my spelling of these words.

American; in fact, they are very American and very patriot.[76] Their unique identity and heritage do not pose a threat to America but on the contrary, constitute a great asset. Speaking again about Oklahoma City, Lisa Billy sees cultural pluralism positively: "an urban capital carved from a great collision of cultures a little more than a century ago."[77] Several videos suggest that the possession of a different culture and language provides opportunities for economic development, including the Cultural Center.[78]

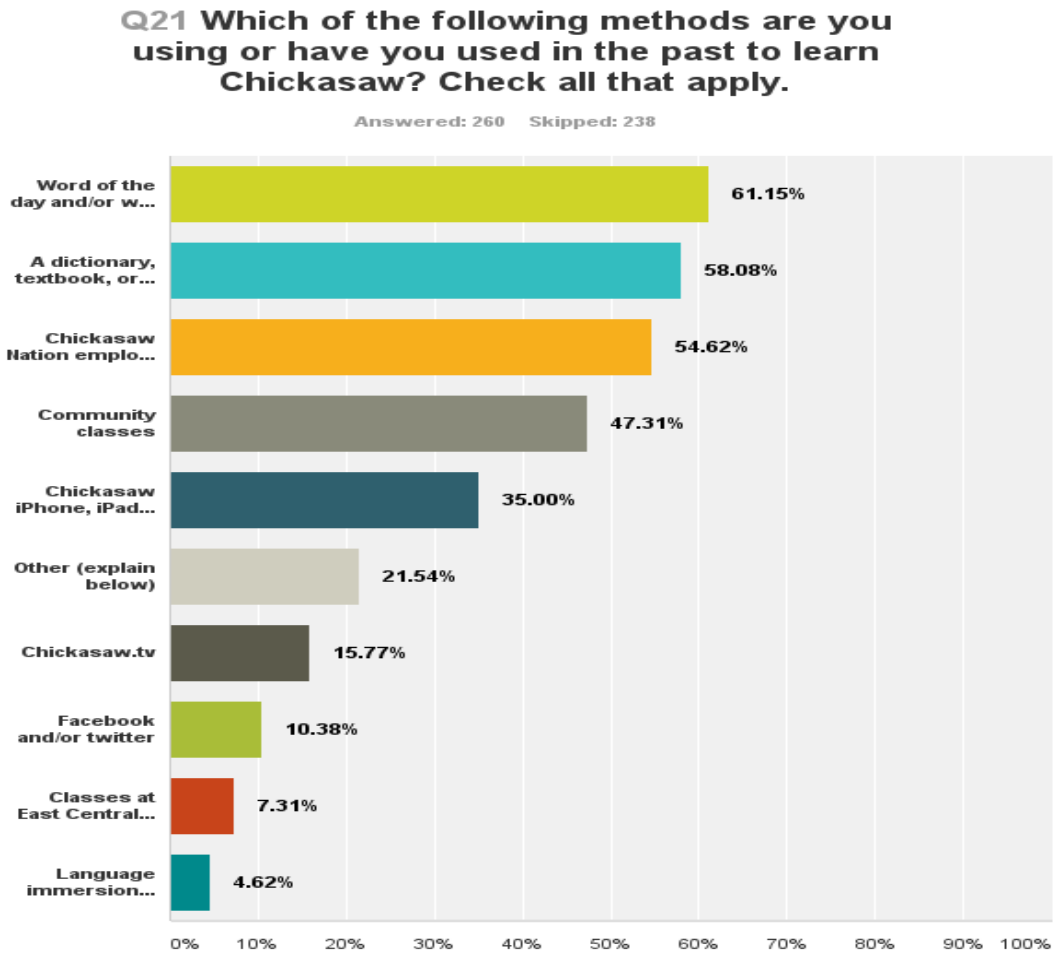
Finally, on a practical level, multimedia offers a number of advantages. These resources facilitate a more complete documentation of linguistic practices through high quality audio and video recordings, capturing these practices in their cultural contexts. These recordings are more easily duplicated and distributed at a lower cost to a larger number of people (Eisenlohr 2004: 35), while retaining control of that distribution. They can also allow the development of self-learning methods for the language (Eisenlohr 2004: 24).

How it is done

Along the lines of practicality, given that the mission of the Chickasaw Department of Language is to make the language accessible to all Chickasaws, and considering the geographical dispersion of the Chickasaw community today, using the internet and multimedia is a realistic means to accomplish this goal. All Chickasaws, regardless of where they live, should be able to access the gift of their language. This top-down ideology is confirmed by the language survey. Question 21 inquired about

[76] http://www.chickasaw.tv/native-patriots
[77] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyK9NA5MsyA
[78] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03sxCTYb8jc

methods of language learning, and online and digital methods appear to be important ways for many people to get access to and learn the language.



(Fig. 01 - Frequency of responses to Q21: Which of the following methods are you using or have you used in the past to learn Chickasaw? Check all that apply)

However, it was in question 33, "What other initiatives do you think could benefit the revitalization of the Chickasaw Language?", where the respondents expressed their desire for online and multimedia resources the most, with a good number of people mentioning a Chickasaw version of Rosetta Stone, online learning methods, and

generally more self-learning methods for people who do not have access to the community language classes. This is discussed in more detail in chapter five.

While multimedia can allow communities to represent and *imagine* themselves to the outside world, some mediums of communication like e-mails, Instant Messaging or social networking also *create* these communities through new practices, beyond the simple act of imagination. New technologies can recreate community ties in new places, especially given the geographical dispersion of most tribal nations today. These new practices and genres generally emerge and empower people locally (Peterson 2006). Several studies suggest that these new and hybrid communication practices and literacies offer a relatively safe context for the use of the ancestral language by people who do not speak it fluently (Peterson 2006, Leonard 2011). Question 30 of the survey inquires about the places and contexts in which Chickasaw should take precedence over English if it was revived as a language of daily use. In the responses, online and multimedia domains, corresponding to "TV, radio, and internet" and "letters, e-mails, and text messages" are not envisioned as the most important ones for the Chickasaw language. It is of course impossible to predict in which directions Chickasaw has more chances of growing in the future, but from the language survey, it seems that at this point in time, internet and multimedia forms are imagined primarily as medium for language learning rather than as contexts for language use (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

	All in Chickasaw	Mostly Chickasaw	About 50/50	Mostly English	All in English	Total
Chickasaw owned businesses	**3.37%** 14.00	**15.14%** 63.00	**56.97%** 237.00	**18.99%** 79.00	**5.53%** 23.00	416
Tribal government	**9.76%** 41.00	**22.86%** 96.00	**49.52%** 208.00	**13.81%** 58.00	**4.05%** 17.00	420
Health care	**2.64%** 11.00	**8.15%** 34.00	**57.31%** 239.00	**24.94%** 104.00	**6.95%** 29.00	417
TV, radio, and internet	**4.14%** 17.00	**11.19%** 46.00	**56.69%** 233.00	**22.87%** 94.00	**5.11%** 21.00	411
Letters, e-mails, and text messages	**4.85%** 20.00	**10.19%** 42.00	**56.55%** 233.00	**21.60%** 89.00	**6.80%** 28.00	412
Homes	**15.11%** 63.00	**28.30%** 118.00	**48.68%** 203.00	**5.52%** 23.00	**2.40%** 10.00	417
Indian churches	**22.49%** 94.00	**36.60%** 153.00	**34.69%** 145.00	**4.31%** 18.00	**1.91%** 8.00	418
Social gatherings	**12.80%** 53.00	**29.23%** 121.00	**50.00%** 207.00	**5.80%** 24.00	**2.17%** 9.00	414
Ceremonies	**31.82%** 133.00	**32.06%** 134.00	**29.90%** 125.00	**4.07%** 17.00	**2.15%** 9.00	418
Chickasaw public places	**8.89%** 37.00	**25.72%** 107.00	**53.13%** 221.00	**9.13%** 38.00	**3.13%** 13.00	416
Other public places	**2.27%** 9.00	**6.05%** 24.00	**61.71%** 245.00	**24.18%** 96.00	**5.79%** 23.00	397

(Fig. 02 - Frequency of responses to Q30: If Chickasaw could be revived as a language of daily use, which language(s) do you think should be spoken in the following contexts? Check ONE (1) box per row)

Implications of using multimedia

Finally, in terms of the implications of using multimedia in promoting the Chickasaw language, studies have shown that multimedia can give individuals from endangered language communities a renewed sense of pride and identity, even if these people only speak a few words in the language (Eisenlohr 2004: 36). Promoting the language on the internet for instance, may not necessarily revitalize it per say but can be

a form of exchange with the rest of the community and the rest of the world, as well as enhance its prestige (Eisenlohr 2004: 37). It is completely possible to participate in this promotion without speaking much of the language (Eisenlohr 2004: 38).

Using multimedia to promote and distribute the Chickasaw language also has political implications. Until relatively recently, Native American societies had little control over their own representation in the media. Chickasaw media is today an opportunity for the Nation to gain back control of representing their history, culture, and ongoing economic accomplishments. By doing so, they are able to reaffirm the cultural boundaries of their community, and consequently their existence as a political entity within the United States. Chickasaw media is an opportunity for expressing linguistic difference, and there are important political implications behind these discourses and representations (Eisenlohr 2004: 33-34).

Chapter Five: People's Responses to Language Revitalization Efforts

Encouraging trends

The results of the Language Survey, my attendance at various events in the community, and my interviews with Chickasaw citizens have all revealed a clear shift towards positive language attitudes in recent years in the Chickasaw Nation. A number of encouraging trends towards the survival of the Chickasaw language have emerged over the past ten years, or at least since the creation of the Chickasaw Department of Language in 2007. These trends have included more public visibility and use for the language, more discourses about the importance of its preservation, more support and access to instructional resources, more learning opportunities for the youth, and a positive shift in first language speakers' attitudes. In that sense, these changes reflect very much the discourses about Chickasaw language and identity discussed in chapter four.

A few people I interviewed told me how pleased they are with the support that Governor Anoatubby has dedicated to language preservation (Hatcher Travis 2014; Johnson 2014; Pitman 2014). They also expressed their concern that this support could fade away with a different political leader. Matt Clark, director of the Chickasaw Martial Arts program, explained to me that Governor Anoatubby released a proclamation several years ago calling for all tribal programs to integrate cultural elements and to be named in the language. His program is called *Chikasha Itibi*, "Chickasaw Fighters". Mr. Clark, who is not Chickasaw but has been an avid learner of the language for the last seven years, explained to me that he has been working for the

Nation for almost fifteen years and that he has noticed a real change in attitudes towards the language. It is now perceived positively to be a language learner and to speak Chickasaw in public (Clark 2014). Of course these changes in attitudes from the previous generations who were discouraged to speak Chickasaw did not happen overnight, and various language activists were present before 2007. However, the creation of this program, which became the Chickasaw Nation Department of Language in 2009, marked a turning-point towards a more global and centralized approach to language preservation at the tribal level.[79]

Keith Shackleford lives in Purcell Oklahoma and he shared with me that he started to really be interested in the language after the birth of his first child, 23 years ago. He has since been teaching his four children and has been facilitating a community class with first language speaker Leerene Frazier (Shackleford 2014b). His daughter Brooke explains to me that when her dad started to be interested in the language, it was hard for him at first to get help from the fluent speakers:

> The non-speakers would go to a senior site and the speakers would talk to each other if they knew that each other could talk, but as soon as someone came in that couldn't, they stopped and went back to English. And they'd say, if someone asked them, "oh I forgot, I used to speak but I forgot" (Shackleford 2014a).

Mr. Clark (2014) confirms that most speakers today are much more receptive to language learners than they used to be: "most of the fluent speakers I've run into […] really want people to learn it. It wasn't like that 10 years ago. You would have to pry it

[79] https://www.chickasaw.net/Services/Chickasaw-Language-Revitalization-Program.aspx

out of them. Now they've realized people honestly want to learn it, so they're willing to teach it."

Joshua Hinson, director of the Department of Language, corroborates this shift towards positive attitudes in recent years, adding that many people used to have negative feelings towards the language, or were simply indifferent to it since it had not been spoken in their families for several generations. Mr. Hinson explains this change as the result of increased exposure to the language and the enrichment material in the language that have been published through the Chickasaw Press (Hinson 2014). As was explained in chapter three, one of the goals for the Chickasaw Language Survey was to gauge changes in attitudes since the creation of the language program in 2007, at which time a first Language Survey was conducted (Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program 2007). However, I found that these changes in attitudes were not immediately discernible between the two surveys alone, which may partly be due to the fact that the 2007 and the 2014 surveys were constructed differently. In 2007, out of 1,631 respondents, 85% agreed with the statement that "the Chickasaw language is vital in securing our identity and existence", which already conveyed a strong sense of positive attitudes towards the language (Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program 2007).

What the two surveys show however, is a general increase in self-evaluated language skills. In 2007, 43% of the respondents indicated that they did not understand the Chickasaw language at all (Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program 2007). In Question 19 of the 2014 Language Survey, "How well do you understand and speak Chickasaw?", 18.36% of the respondents indicated not understanding or speaking at all (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). In 2007, 39% of the respondents indicated understanding

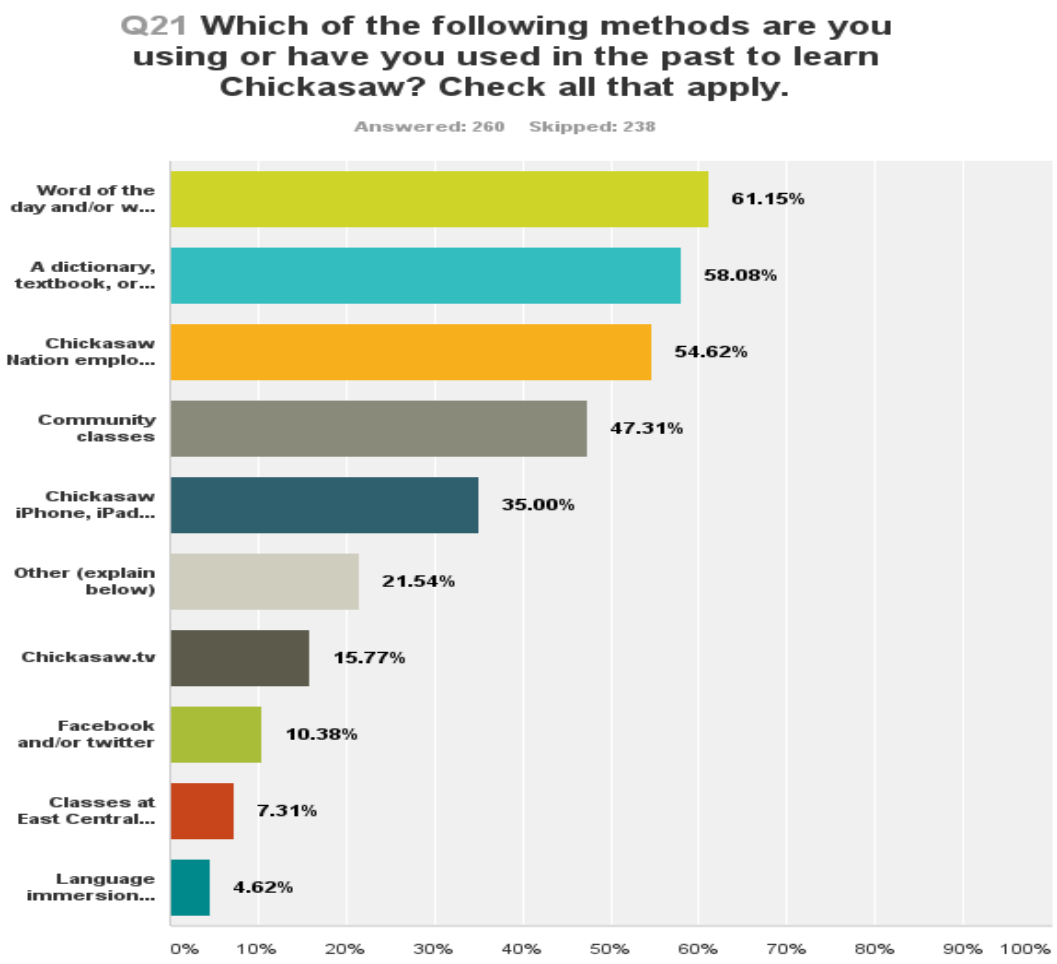
a few words. In 2014, 58.85% reported being able to understand or say a few words. For higher levels of fluency, the differences are not as noticeable, and the two surveys used different terminologies, making a comparison more difficult. An obvious interpretation of these results is that over the last few years, many more employees of the Chickasaw Nation have been exposed to the language at a minimal level through Individual Development Program (IDP) classes, raising their language ability from zero to being able to understand and say a few words. The way the Individual Development Program (IDP) works is that people earn points by attending classes for employees in different categories, and "culture" is a category. Once they have reached the amount of points required, they earn an extra half paycheck at the end of the year (Ozbolt 2013). Additionally, the proportion of Chickasaw Nation employees was 42% in the 2007 survey, compared to 84.28% in the 2014 survey.

An IDP event unrelated to the language that I attended in the spring of 2013 tends to confirm that employees of the Chickasaw Nation have a good awareness of the language revitalization issue. I talked to three middle-age women working for the environmental department. All had taken language classes in the past and while they all seemed to consider the preservation of the Chickasaw language an important issue for the Nation, they shared their concern that the language is not easy to learn and that the time it takes is difficult to balance with family obligations (Ozbolt 2013).

The language survey confirms that employees of the Nation tend to have a better awareness of the resources available to learn the language compared to non-employees. This is particularly true for Question 32, which asked respondents whether they had heard about various venues to learn the language, and whether or not they approve of

them. The employees showed a higher awareness for thirteen of the fourteen resources listed. In Question 25, they showed a slightly better awareness of the master-apprentice program, although the difference was not as noticeable. Overall, the few questions on the survey designed to measure people's awareness of the language programs yielded rather encouraging results. More than half of the respondents indicated that they had either learned or were currently learning the language (Question 20).

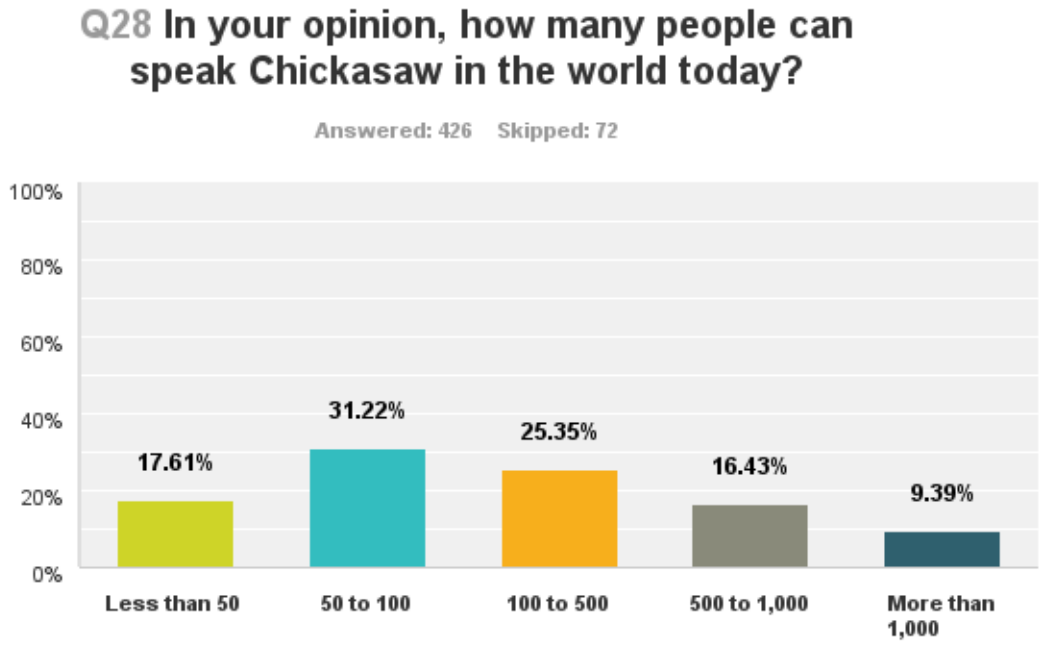
Question 21 provides indications of the resources that people are using to learn Chickasaw. The Word of the Day appears as the most commonly used method of language learning (61.15%), which is perhaps not too surprising given that people can read it on the Chickasaw Nation website homepage. While the Word of the Day may be helpful in learning the language, in the long term, it does not suffice to develop conversational fluency. 54.62% of respondents reported learning the language through IDP classes, which reflects the high proportion of people working for the Chickasaw Nation. Again, taking IDP classes may be something that people only do a few times a year, and it does not necessarily signify a very intense level of commitment to language learning. People reporting that they are using a dictionary, textbook, or other printed material (58.08%) are probably learning the language more intensively, as getting printed materials in Chickasaw reveals a higher commitment to learning it. The same is true for community classes (47.31%), which indicate a greater level of dedication to learning the language. What is also noticeable is that multimedia resources have not been ranked very high.



(Fig. 03 - Frequency of responses to Q21: Which of the following methods are you using or have you used in the past to learn Chickasaw?)

In Question 28, the respondents provided a good estimate of the number of remaining speakers of the language. The correct answer was 50-100, which is the answer that respondents picked the most. Overall, while the interpretation of these questions' results is open to discussion given that they were not asked in the 2007 survey, a majority of the respondents are aware of most of the resources that are

currently available to learn the language as well as about the state of the language, and this awareness is definitely higher among tribal employees.



(Fig. 04 - Frequency of responses to Q28: In your opinion, how many people can speak Chickasaw in the world today?)

Another positive trend for the Chickasaw language is its current use in various public settings. The tribal event where I have noticed by far the most use of Chickasaw language is the Annual *Chikasha Ittifama*, which is an annual reunion at the traditional site of Kullihoma, near Ada Oklahoma. This reunion emphasizes cultural activities, in contrast to the Annual Festival in Tishomingo, which is more about the current state of the Nation from a political and economical perspective. At the *Ittifama*, some Chickasaw words can be heard during the stomp dance, such as *minti, minti* ! ("Come

here, come here!"), "*Sinti ishkanosi*" ("old snake", for the snake dance), or "*chokmashki, chokmashki* !" ("This is good", at the end of a dance) (Ozbolt 2014).

This public use of an endangered language in a context of language shift and revitalization seems widespread in Native North America today, and perhaps common throughout the world. Ahlers (2006) has researched the context of language loss in Native California, and how the indexical function of language has replaced its referential function during public speaking events. Indexicality, as defined by Hanks (1999), refers to the dependency of language utterances on context in order to interpret meaning. In this case, a specific language is used to help create an ethnic identity. Use of the dominant language by an endangered language community may be problematic because of its connection to the dominant society. The ancestral language can serve as an important index of tribal identity (Ahlers 2006), even by people who speak it with limited competency. The language can serve as a marker of historical continuity, solidarity between members of the community, and as a marker of ethnic distinctiveness (Goodfellow 2003). As such, this is also an example of iconicity, in that a language is equated to a particular ethnic identity, through a process of felt resemblance (Irvine and Gal 2000). Much of what Ahlers calls 'Native Language as Identity Marker,' or NLIM, is in fact memorized speech, or speech that has been written in advance and is being read to a mostly non-comprehending audience (Ahlers 2006: 66-67, 70). The Native Language is typically used at the beginning and at the end of the address while the core is in English, to frame the event as being Native American. Furthermore, these speeches typically start and end with greetings, introductions, thanks, or prayers. Mastery of specific formulas used for one speech genre is thus more achievable than becoming

fluent in the language as a whole. NLIM is thus emerging as a new genre that signifies a speech event as being Native American. While the referential function of language requires all parties involved to speak or comprehend it at a certain level of fluency, use of the Native language for its iconic and indexical function does not even require audience members to understand it. In the context of revitalization of the Myaamia language of Oklahoma for instance, speaking Myaamia is part of a broader movement to reclaim Miami identity, heritage, and sovereignty. 'Language reclamation', as Miami scholar Leonard defines it, includes deconstructing ideologies from the dominant society viewing the language as extinct. The act of speaking Myaamia, even if it just involves a few words, is a proclamation of survival and revival for the Miami people and their language (Leonard 2011).

While the use of Chickasaw by second language learners has become more common and more accepted today, a lot of NLIM speech events are enacted by first language speakers. At the beginning of the two Hall of Fame ceremonies that I have attended in 2013 and 2014, an elder delivered a prayer in Chickasaw. An elder inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2014 included sentences in Chickasaw in her speech, and provided an English translation immediately after (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). In this context, use of the Chickasaw language appeared to serve as an indexical marker of her cultural knowledge, since she was recognized for her traditional upbringing. At the *Chikasha Ittifama* in 2014, another renowned elder of the Nation who was recognized for her accomplishments with the Chickasaw Historical Society delivered her thank you speech entirely in Chickasaw. One explanation for this could be that the *Chikasha Ittifama* is a celebration of Chickasaw culture at a traditional site (Ozbolt 2014). The

elder may have considered that there was no reason to compromise her use of the language, whereas this would have more likely been the case at a "less traditional" event attended by more non-Chickasaws. I have also witnessed the use of the language by fluent elders before meals, and I was told that this is also very common at funerals, both in the form of speech and prayer (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). In all of these instances, the use of the Chickasaw language is meaningful, even if the participants do not understand, or do not understand everything that is being said. This is not to say that the referential function of the language has disappeared, since there are still about sixty-five first language speakers, in addition to people who understand the language without speaking it, and people currently attempting to learn it as a second language. In a context of endangerment however, NLIM can definitely revalue the language by associating it with a specific cultural heritage and ethnic distinctiveness, and hopefully encourage non-speakers to learn it.

As such, I have also seen the language being used by second language learners, be it a single word, short sentences, or even the singing of church hymns, during both public speech events and in conversational settings (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). This is encouraging for language revitalization because use of the language by second language learners is not always easily accepted in endangered language communities, which can often inhibit potential speakers from trying to use it (Field 2009; Goodfellow 2003). This does not mean that language revitalization in the Chickasaw community does not go without controversy or disapproval, but it shows that people who are interested have opportunities for learning and speaking the language, which contrasts with what older Chickasaws have experienced earlier during their lives.

Another encouraging aspect of the use of the language by second language learners is the increased use of the language among Chickasaw youth. By attending a Language Immersion Family Camp and a language class at the Family Resource Center in Norman, I have seen children and teenagers showing clear signs of interest and engagement towards the language, which could be seen through their enthusiasm and level of participation. They were engaged because learning was taking place through engaging activities and games. Children and teenagers can be seen regularly giving performances in Chickasaw at various tribal and non-tribal venues. At the *Chikasha Ittifama*, they could be heard singing a few popular songs in Chickasaw, such as "America the Beautiful" (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). At the Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair, that takes place every spring at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History in Norman, Native American children from all over the state come to the museum for two days of various performances in their heritage languages. The purpose of the event is to celebrate Oklahoma's linguistic diversity and acknowledge the ongoing efforts of Native American communities in preserving their heritage. The event is organized through several contest categories, including spoken language, song with language, or film and video. This is another instance of Native Language as identity marker because in an intertribal context, many people in the audience hear a language that they do not understand and yet still feel a sense of common identity as members of endangered language communities (Ahlers 2006: 60). Chickasaw youth have won several awards at the Fair in the past, and this is definitely an example of an ideological site which is designed to give back to the language its prestige and perceived value. Through public performances, awards, and

recognitions, Chickasaw youth are to be proud of their heritage and feel good about their efforts to learn the language (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014).

The data obtained through my research definitively demonstrates that there has been a positive trend towards using more Chickasaw language in public over the last few years, in addition to first language speakers being more receptive to teaching the language and the general tribal population being more aware of it. Through the events I attended in the community, I was also pleasantly surprised by the number of people who told me that they were currently learning the language, or that someone they know is doing that. On a few rare occasions, I also heard discourses reinforcing the perceived importance of preserving the language, and its relation to tribal identity. I heard this at the Nation Festival from the Governor (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). I also heard these discourses at language classes, for instance the idea that the Chickasaws would no longer be distinct from other people on earth if they lost their language, or that the language is a gift from God (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). But overall, while a number of sites, resources, and venues are available today in the Chickasaw Nation to promote positive language ideologies, it remains to be seen what level(s) of fluency the learners will be able to reach on the long term. In particular, some IDP language classes only consist of one or a few meetings and are then adjourned. While they may represent for people a good experience that will reinforce or develop their positive feelings towards the language, the extent of language they acquire may be limited to a few words for animals, numbers, colors, and greetings.

Importance of the Language

After having discussed how the current ideologies regarding language revitalization have changed in a positive manner in the Chickasaw Nation over the last decade, I will now analyze in more details the perceived importance that this endeavor has for people. By importance, I am interested in the perceived benefits of language revitalization for the Nation, aside from people moving towards more fluency in the language, as well as the perceived consequences that losing the language would have, and finally, whether people think a revitalized language would unite or divide them.

On this latter issue, most respondents shared their opinion that if the Chickasaw language was revitalized and spoken by at least one part of the tribal population, it would unite people. Keith Shackleford sees the language as having a special significance for the Nation: "that brings people together. That brings a sense of community back, in a more special way than saying, 'yeah, we got blood', we have the language" (Shackleford 2014b). His view seems to parallel the nationalist ideologies discussed in the previous chapter, in that what matters is the sense of community, belonging, and shared heritage. His daughter Brooke sees the unifying force of language on more psychological and emotional levels. Language automatically connects people, because speakers of Chickasaw share something that no one else in the world has but them. As such, people would feel better connected and the community would feel stronger (Shackleford 2014a). Another interviewee also articulated the idea that the language represents the unique heritage of the Nation, in contrast to people he described as "living off the system" (Johnson 2014). This corroborates the previously discussed opinions that being Chickasaw is not about the blood or having a Certificate of Degree

of Indian Blood, but is about the language, or other key aspects of Chickasaw heritage. A few people talked to me highly about Mr. Clark, who despite not being Chickasaw, has developed a good command of the language through his involvement in the Master-Apprentice Program (Ozbolt 2014). It is important to recall here that these are the views that were shared with me by a handful of people who are currently learning the language. A few of my interviews and language survey questions have also revealed that other people do not share the idea that they need to speak the language in order "to feel Chickasaw" (Taylor 2014; Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Others also share the view that speaking the language would unite people, but they are somewhat concerned that the non-speakers could feel excluded. For this not to happen, a majority of the tribal population would have to maintain positive ideologies towards the language, even if they are not speakers themselves (Hinson 2014). Teaching the language to children early would be a step in that direction (Holden 2014). One respondent mentioned Cherokee as an example of a language that unites its people, given its long written tradition and unique syllabary: "until something like that happens [for Chickasaw], the unity is not gonna be there because it's not gonna be there for everybody" (Shackleford 2014b).

It is interesting to notice here that the respondents do not see language diversity as a fundamental cause of division. Even though there are regional and dialectal differences in the language today, the people I interviewed see the gap between speakers and non-speakers or between Chickasaws and non-Chickasaws as a potentially

more significant factor of division than "saying things differently", or using different words to refer to the same thing (Clark 2014; Wallace 2014).

Finally, a few people have indicated that they could potentially see some resentment from outsiders if the Chickasaws revitalized their language (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014b; Hatcher Travis 2014). This resentment already exists towards the Chickasaw Nation today as one of my interviewees tells me, and is intensified when the Nation purchases new land in its own jurisdictional area. A publically more visible language in a geographical area where the Nation keeps expanding economically could produce resentment from non-Chickasaws who could see "Chickasaw-ness" as un-American and working against the greater good (Clark 2014). However, we have discussed in chapter four how the Chickasaw Nation is trying to promote the exact opposite idea, especially through its videos, and it is interesting that they are using the language as a part of this, as they could choose to go about it without.[80] It may show that ideologies towards language diversity and endangered languages may indeed be changing, even in mainstream society.[81] Responses from non-Native Americans in the Language Survey have globally shown that even if they are not overall as enthusiastic and supportive of the language as the other respondents, there was not a whole lot of direct opposition to it either. It is of course important to remember that most of these non-Native Americans are working for the Chickasaw Nation (eighty-five out of eighty-eight respondents) and are probably not representative of the whole non-Native American population living in Chickasaw Country (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

[80] See this video, discussed in chapter 4: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyK9NA5MsyA
[81] Personal communication with Dr. Mary S. Linn, 3/5/14

On a tribal level, and in addition to being more united, people have indicated among other possible benefits to the Nation the fact that with more speakers, the elders could be better served (Anonymous 2014b; Gantt 2014), or that the Chickasaws would strive even better as a Nation (Johnson 2014). In addition, one interviewee tells me that the fact that the tribe still has speakers and is trying so hard to preserve its language is inspirational and testifies to the resilience of the Chickasaws (Taylor 2014).

Overall, many people I talked to believe that the disappearance of the language would have devastating consequences for the tribe and its culture (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014b; Hatcher Travis 2014; Johnson 2014; Holden 2014). Several of my interviewees seemed to echo the Nation's campaign promulgated on Chickasaw.tv. In fact, several of the people I interviewed have been featured in these videos. Hannah Pitman (2014), who is a language instructor in Tishomingo and Sulphur, tells me that:

> If we don't know our language […] then so many years from now we're just gonna be a tribe of Indians walking around […] without our own language at all. We'll be picking some other language and say that's who we are, but that's not gonna work either. We need to have our own language and keep it going as much as we can.

Again, this view is very much in line with the discourses that were discussed in chapter four. Many people are concerned that nothing would distinguish them anymore from the rest of American society if they don't have their language: "We would only be Chickasaw by name, not by spirit, not by heritage or culture, nothing unique about being Chickasaw, just the name, Chickasaw" (Johnson 2014). "To not have their language, they won't be Chickasaw. They will just have history books of what they were, but not be able to keep it going" (Clark 2014).

The strong argument that the Chickasaws would lose their unique identity without their language is reinforced by several of my discussions with community members regarding the unique characteristics of the language and the fact that it reflects a unique identity with each tribe or culture in the world having their own (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014a; Johnson 2014). Interestingly, three of my interviewees used the word "fluent" or "fluently" to describe being Chickasaw or knowing the culture, whereas this term, in a strictly semantic sense, should be associated with language only: "we have so few elders left, so few that really have a sense of what growing up Chickasaw means, from a fluent sense" (Shackleford 2014b). "You know they learn it as babies, and if we teach them as much as we can now, they'll be fluent in both worlds, the Chickasaw world and the non-Chickasaw world" (Wallace 2014). "To be able to keep the traditions of your ancestors alive and fluent within your heart, your spirit and your mind, that's what makes the tribe unique" (Johnson 2014). In all of these contexts, the overall discussion was about the language, but it is interesting to notice that some people are using the term fluency to refer to something other than the language, which perhaps reveals that they equate it with a certain culture and worldview. Given the young age of two of these individuals and their current involvement with the language, it seems that they could have internalized some of the ideologies equating language and culture discussed in chapter four.

As previously mentioned, other people gave me more nuanced opinions on language loss, stressing the fact that the Chickasaws have shown too much resilience throughout their history to let the language disappear completely (Taylor 2014). Even then, as April Taylor (2014) tells me, there are other things besides the language that

make the Chickasaws Chickasaw, and other ways for them to be accomplished, in the way they do today for instance. Even Joshua Hinson (2014), who stresses the close relationship between language and culture, and between language and the Chickasaw people, also hold more nuanced views: “there are plenty of communities that show that despite what we think, you don’t cease to exist as Indians just because you don’t have a language anymore. Significant aspects of your culture can continue. But we sure wouldn’t want to if we didn’t have to”.

Overall, we can see that on one hand, some of the most active language learners in the Chickasaw Nation envision the loss of the last first language speakers as a disaster for the tribe. But they can also be more nuanced in their views, since they know that this day will come eventually. They know that this will not mean the end of the language, but the beginning of a new era where the language is likely to continue changing, at an even more rapid pace, through what Joshua Hinson calls “mediated language change” (Hinson 2014). Of course stressing the disastrous consequences that language loss would entail for the tribe is also a form of strategic essentialism (Spivak, Landry, and MacLean 1996), which was discussed in chapter four, and justifies the endeavor of language revitalization to both tribal members and to the rest of the World. While we cannot know for sure where people get their language ideologies, it is undeniable that the Chickasaw Nation Department of Language campaign has increased awareness about the plight of the language in recent years, for at least some people. I have found from the language survey and the follow-up interviews however, that not all ideologies discussed in chapter four are necessarily echoed in people’s discourses today. For instance, the idea promoted on the Department of Language website and a few

videos on chickasaw.tv that the language is a gift from God and that people have a sacred obligation to learn it and teach it to their children does not come out as a very prevalent theme through my field research. I have only heard one language instructor talk about it along these lines, and read one or two comments in the Chickasaw Language Survey that address this topic (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014; Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). This may be due to the fact that while associating language and tribal identity may resonate in people's minds as an appealing possibility to rediscover a missing part of their heritage, the idea of the language as being God-given is taking things to a different level and may be harder for people to reconcile with their current religious ideologies.

Extent to which the language could be revived

The "mediated language change" that Joshua Hinson talks about brings up another interesting issue, which is the perceived feasibility of language revitalization, or the extent to which people believe the language could be revived. Through my conversations with people and also through the language survey, my impression is that people who are not involved in learning the language, or people who are involved at a minimum level, tend to have more optimistic, if not over-optimistic, views on the feasibility to revive Chickasaw. People who are more involved in language revitalization tend to be more cautious about the extent to which the language could be revitalized, and their views on this issue tend to be more detailed and articulated.

In my follow-up interviews, a majority of people I talked to said that they believe it would be possible to revitalize Chickasaw as a language of daily use. In the Language Survey, while this question was not asked directly, one open-ended question at the end inquired about what people think would enhance language revitalization efforts (Q33: What other initiatives do you think could benefit the revitalization of the Chickasaw language?). Some people indicated that they did not really know, given that they think the tribe is already doing a lot (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). Of course, the fact that some people may not have clear opinions on a question like this is not so surprising if they did not have any prior experience with learning another language, or no prior exposure to discussions about language revitalization. Of course, this would also depend on the definition that people have of a speaker, and whether they see the glass as being "half full" or "half empty". When asked if the whole tribal population could learn to speak Chickasaw again, several of my interviewees responded that they did not think that it could ever be possible, their estimations ranging from "a low percentage" (Hatcher Travis 2014), "some people" (Taylor 2014), "some families" (Anonymous 2014b), "a good number of people" (Shackleford 2014a), or "a good portion of them" (Holden 2014). When asked what would make this possible, one respondent emphasized motivation (Clark 2014), another the role that schools should play (Holden 2014), while another said that given that people have to work, "becoming a new speaker" should almost be a full-time job (Gantt 2014). Another respondent said that since some Chickasaws today are already bilingual, it should be possible for more of them to do that as well (Johnson 2014). Other people think that it is unrealistic to

expect the entire population to be interested in it (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014b), and that it should not be forced on others (Hinson 2014).

As mentioned previously, people who are more actively involved in language revitalization generally hold more detailed views on the extent to which the language could be revived. One of them for instance, does not think that the whole population could re-learn the language because nothing requires people to do so and that it represents a massive investment of time. He is hoping however to be able to hold conversations during family reunions, some years from now, especially with younger members of his family (Clark 2014). Another interviewee and language activist talks about "a small group doing that" (Shackleford 2014b). Joshua Hinson hopes that in a few decades from now, 1% of the tribal population would be multi-generational speakers using the language daily at a conversationally proficient level. 1% of the Chickasaw population a few decades from now would represent several hundred people, which is still in itself an ambitious goal. An alternative would be, according to Joshua, to have a small group of language carriers who would transmit the language to another small group at each generation. These people would be called upon during social events, such as ceremonies or funerals, to speak, pray, or sing in Chickasaw, and while the majority of the tribal population would not be "speakers", they would have maintained positive attitudes towards the language and would support the carriers (Hinson 2014). As such, the language could become more ritualized and less about conversing, very much in line with the Native language as identity marker discussed by Ahlers (2006), where the indexical function of language replaces its referential function. Of course, these are only scenarios that Joshua Hinson is hypothesizing upon, and he

would still prefer the 1% of conversational speakers over the small group of language carriers (Hinson 2014).

Overall, it may be difficult to answer the question of the extent to which the Chickasaws believe their language could be revived, simply because a lot of people are not involved in language revitalization enough to even have opinions on this question. However, many of the language learners/activists do believe that it can be preserved, at least to some extent, which is a very good asset for the endeavor. Some people however, do not believe that the language will continue, or do not think that the language is presently being revitalized with the current efforts (Hinson 2014). Joshua Hinson (2014) tells me that some of the remaining first language speakers think that way and disapprove of the Department of Language, while still providing their expertise as fluent speakers. In the Chickasaw Language Survey, a Chickasaw woman who reported being between 45 and 49 years old, having lived in the service area throughout her life, and describing herself as being able to understand many words and to formulate simple sentences in Chickasaw, shared the following thought:

> Since I have been around the Chickasaw language all my life, it is NOT revitalized. For those who have never been around the language and haven't heard it, I guess revitalization is a way for it to be termed. To me, it has always been here and unfortunately is slowly dwindling away. Maybe for me, I see it as going in the opposite direction even though there is more opportunity for people to learn now, it just seems as though they don't try to incorporate it in everyday use. ONLY a very few have done this, while it is refreshing to see that happen, the majority who have attended language classes and learned by Master apprentice seem to be at a standstill. I don't know what a solution would be. I hope this research can help us to get over the hurdle… (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Where English and Chickasaw should be spoken

Aside from the extent to which people believe the language could be revitalized, another issue relevant to how people envision language revitalization is to examine in which social contexts they think Chickasaw and English should be spoken. In the Language Survey, Question 30 asked respondents which languages, between English and Chickasaw, should be spoken in a variety of social contexts, provided the language could be successfully revitalized in the future. Respondents picked ceremonies, Indian churches, homes, and social gatherings as the environments where Chickasaw should be spoken the most. They chose non-Chickasaw public places, health care, letters, e-mails, TV, the radio and the internet as contexts where English should be most spoken. While Chickasaws, Natives from other tribes and non-Natives agreed overall on the contexts where Chickasaw would be more important and which ones are more appropriate for English, Chickasaw women wanted more Chickasaw language in most environments compared to Chickasaw men.

ALL RESPONDENTS	CHICKASAW RESPONDENTS
> Chickasaw	**> Chickasaw**
1. Ceremonies	1. Ceremonies
2. Indian churches	2. Indian churches
3. Homes	3. Homes
4. Social gatherings	4. Social gatherings
5. Chickasaw public places	5. Chickasaw public places
6. Tribal government	6. Tribal government
7. Chickasaw owned businesses	7. Chickasaw owned businesses
8. TV, radio, and internet	8. TV, radio, and internet
9. Letters, e-mails, and text messages	9. Letters, e-mails, and text messages
10. Health care / other public places	10. Health care
	11. Other public places
> English	**> English**

(Fig. 05 - Responses to Q30: "If Chickasaw could be revived as a language of daily use, which language(s) do you think should be spoken in the following contexts? Check ONE (1) box per row: All in Chickasaw – Mostly Chickasaw – About 50/50 – Mostly English – All in English". Answers were ranked, based on their weighted average)

My follow-up interviews confirmed that people see the Chickasaw language as most appropriate for ceremonial gatherings and the private sphere, while English should be more for the economy and mainstream places, since they involve more interactions with non-Chickasaws (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014a; Hinson 2014; Johnson 2014). One

interviewee who works for the Chickasaw Nation told me that she believes the workplace could be a great site for both language learning and language use since people spend most of their day at work (Gantt 2014), an idea that resonates with using schooling as an opportunity to teach additional languages to children, since that is where they spend most of their day.

In terms of using Chickasaw or English in some contexts more than in others, the challenge is to develop a balance between promoting the language without making non-speakers feel excluded, or discouraged to participate in an event because they would feel handicapped. Joshua Hinson shares this concern with me by saying that the goal of the language program is for Chickasaws to become healthy bilinguals, not monolingual Chickasaw speakers, and that it would not be fair to impose the language on other people (Hinson 2014). On the other hand, it would still be important for non-speakers to be exposed to it, in order for them to maintain their positive ideologies towards it, as we discussed previously.

Another example of incorporating the language into a Chickasaw program and activity is the Chickasaw Nation Martial Arts Program, *Chikasha Itibi*. Mr. Matt Clark was hired as the Director fifteen years ago and progressively incorporated more Chickasaw language into the program. The program has been particularly successful and popular among youth, and Mr. Clark stresses that the core values of his program are to promote health, self-control, and community service. The Chickasaw language vocabulary that is currently incorporated and taught as part of the program includes numbers, colors, greetings, technical terms for the discipline (“sit down”, “stand up”,

"kick", "punch", "block"), and belt requirements (Ozbolt 2014). The Martial Arts Program offers an interesting example of language promotion, in that while it targets mostly Chickasaw citizens and employees, it is still open to anybody. Given some of the main challenges to language revitalization discussed in this research, such as time commitment and motivation, the Martial Arts Program seems to have the potential of providing exposure to the language and motivation to learn it, through a recreational activity. The underlying question then, is to which extent the language could and should be incorporated in the practice of martial arts.

Ezra Johnson, an 18 year-old student of the program who is very motivated in both martial arts and the Chickasaw language, shared his dream of taking over the program in a few years from now. When asked about the extent to which the program should integrate the Chickasaw language, he admits that it would have to be limited (Johnson 2014):

> I would definitely encourage, especially the Chickasaws, because we accept other tribes, and I really wouldn't expect a non-Chickasaw to learn the language, except what is needed to punch, block and kick. That's just requirement for the program, you've got to learn it. However, if they want to, you don't have to be Chickasaw in order to learn. I would encourage them going and trying to learn the language but I would especially encourage other Chickasaws to go out and learn the language.

We can see that the Martial Arts program represents an interesting opportunity for people, especially youth, to be exposed to the language, and hopefully develop positive attitudes towards it. However, it does not seem very realistic for the program to only use the Chickasaw language as it would exclude non-Chickasaw.

Two questions in the Language Survey addressed policy related to the revitalization of the language, asking who could and should learn Chickasaw. Although

a majority of respondents indicated in question 30 that they see the homes and ceremonial contexts (including church and social events) as the most appropriate settings for the use of the Chickasaw language, question 31 asked them whether they thought it should be required of employees of the Nation to learn the language.

	All respondents	**Chickasaws**	**Natives from other tribes**	**Non-Natives**
Yes	23.73%	27.11%	22.47%	14.86%
No	7.83%	7.69%	5.62%	12.16%
They should be encouraged but not required	68.43%	65.20%	71.91%	72.97%

(Fig. 06 - Frequency of responses to Q30: Should tribal employees be required to learn Chickasaw?)

As we can see, a majority of respondents do not think that learning the language should be required for employees of the Chickasaw Nation. Not surprisingly, non-Natives are more likely to think that learning the language should not be required of all employees, while Chickasaws are more likely to believe that this should be the case. The main arguments in favor of requiring the employees to learn the language is that the Chickasaw Nation is a sovereign entity and that anybody working for them should

understand and respect their heritage. In the comment box for Question 30, a 50-54 year old woman who works for the Nation, is not Chickasaw but whose husband is, wrote (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014):

> We work for the Chickasaw Nation and their Citizens.....they are the stockholders.....we should honor and respect their language and be able to explain what we do for them in Chickasaw.

A 55-59 year old Chickasaw woman who works for the Nation echoes the same idea (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014):

> The Chickasaw Nation is a sovereign entity. It enjoys that status because it is a culture unto itself--separate and apart. That culture is maintained through its language. Tribal employees should participate in the process of preserving the language that is the foundation of this tribe's culture.

Other respondents took a more moderate stance by saying that learning the language should be encouraged for employees, or that if it were a requirement, it should be limited to greetings, and a few basic words and expressions. The most common arguments against requiring the employees to learn the language is that many of them are not Chickasaws and that it would be rough to require them to learn a completely different language during their adulthood, especially if they are not interested in doing so (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Another policy question that was asked earlier in the survey is Question 16, asking if non-Chickasaws should learn the language or not.

	All respondents	Chickasaws	Other Natives	Non-Natives
Yes	88.50%	85.71%	89.47%	94.94%
Yes but only if they are Native American	3.32%	2.50%	7.37%	0%
Yes but only if they are married to a Chickasaw	3.76%	6.07%	2.11%	0%
No	4.42%	5.71%	1.05%	5.06%

(Fig. 07 - Frequency of responses to Q16: Should non-Chickasaws learn the language, if they are interested in it?)

Overall, we can see that there is not a very strong opposition to having non-Chickasaws learn the language. In the comment box for this question, many people discussed the fact that someone who has an interest and the motivation to learn should be allowed to do so, especially since they could contribute to the vitality of the language. Other people indicated that non-Chickasaws learning the language would be able to develop a better understanding and respect for the Chickasaw people and their heritage. The people who answered "no" to this question took issue with the fact that they consider the language as the cultural property of the tribe. By looking at the demographics of people who articulated these views, it seems that they tend to be older citizens, generally in their fifties or sixties. However, younger people have also expressed similar opinions. An 18-

24 Chickasaw woman who does not live in Oklahoma explained the following (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014):

> I think passing on the language to Chickasaw children is important. However, the language is tied into culture and history and not something that just anyone should have access to. In a sense, it's not theirs to reclaim or revitalize and something that should be kept for the tribe.

The other concern that was expressed is that non-Chickasaws would be unable to speak the language correctly, which would be detrimental to its preservation. A 60-64 year old Chickasaw man who lives in the service area and who reports understanding the language and being able to converse fairly well (Question 19) wrote: “Non speakers don’t pronounce the words right. If you cant speak, leave it alone” (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). Joshua Hinson (2014) also shared with me that some of the first language speakers do not like the fact that the program is meant to teach the language to non-speakers, especially to non-Chickasaws. However, if we look at overall percentages, a clear majority of respondents, including Chickasaw respondents only, have indicated that any person interested should be allowed to learn the language. In that regard, the Chickasaw Nation differs from other Native communities in Oklahoma and beyond that make a stronger claim that the language is their exclusive cultural property, which leads us to the question of language purism.

Language purism

It is Saturday May 17, 2014, and the *Chikashsha Ittifama*, the annual traditional reunion at the Kullihoma Grounds near Ada is going on for its second day. The

traditional lunch has been prepared during the morning. The pashofa was cooked for several hours over firewood, and is accompanied by grape dumplings and salt pork. Lunch is close to ending, and students from the *Chipota Chikashshanompoli* club (Children Speaking Chickasaw) gather near the podium and start singing a few modern songs whose lyrics have been translated into Chickasaw. I am sitting in close proximity to a fluent speaker in his early sixties, who makes a few very interesting comments aloud, which I believe were directed to a nearby elder. While he obviously has strong feelings and opinions about the language, his tone is neither negative nor accusatory. "We didn't have a word for computer back then" […]. In addition to a few comments about the new Chickasaw words, he goes on to speak about the fact that most of the remaining first language speakers today talk a form of Chickasaw that is mixed with Choctaw too much, and which he calls "Chockasaw". According to him, only a handful of the remaining speakers know the proper Chickasaw, and not "Chockasaw". He says, "I know enough Choctaw to be able to say that". As the children just finished singing *America the beautiful* in Chickasaw, he adds: "it's pretty though" (Ozbolt 2014).

This episode summarizes well a number of issues and challenges currently surrounding the Chickasaw language, and that are very common in endangered language communities. Regional, dialectal, generational, and other variations are inherent to any language, but the context of language shift can often exacerbate these tensions, since the remaining speakers are roughly of the same generation and were discouraged from speaking their Native language earlier in life, if not physically reprimanded for doing so. In this context, the questions of who is speaking the language correctly, what should be done or not to preserve it, or who should be teaching it to

whom, take on an even more emotional and political dimension. In this section I am analyzing some common views that people in the Chickasaw Nation have towards these issues today.

One group of key actors in Chickasaw language revitalization is of course the remaining first language speakers, estimated at sixty-five (Russon 2014). Among them, a distinction can be made between those who are actively engaged in language revitalization work, and those who are not. While I did not have a chance to meet and talk to members of the latter group, I was told by other people that their reasons for not being involved can range from not liking to speak in front of other people, being bashful, disapproving what the Department of Language is doing, or distrusting non-Native people who come around and ask questions about the language (Ozbolt 2013). Another reason can be that since they were discouraged to speak it when they were younger, they don't want to help preserve it today. I was also told by one language teacher (Pitman 2014) that some people were very opposed to language revitalization efforts in the beginning, but that they became involved once they found out that they could get paid for doing it.

Joshua Hinson (2014) also tells me that some of the speakers are not happy that the language is being taught, especially to non-Indians, or that the Department of Language is playing the role of mediator of language change, and that they do not think the language will continue anyway. Yet some of them still help the Department as language consultants, including participation in the creation of new words. While I did not attend a meeting of the language committee, I was told that when the speakers get together, they often disagree on how to say words and certain things, which seem in

large part due to the fact that they come from different areas of the Nation (Ozbolt 2013). Given this situation, the official position of the Department of Language is to acknowledge these differences, and to promote the idea that regional and familial differences in language use are perfectly fine and should be respected.[82]

Regional variations do not seem to cause the most controversy when it comes to language politics. Disagreements are more intense when ideologies of purism come into play, or the idea that there is a right form of speaking Chickasaw, the others being incorrect or "bastardized". At the language classes that I have attended, I heard from time to time the idea that Chickasaw is "an old language" (Ozbolt 2013). Since Joshua Hinson declared in one video[83] on Chickasaw.tv that the language stopped evolving (in the sense of creating new words) in the 1950's, and given the age of the remaining speakers, the reasons for viewing Chickasaw as an "old language" appear obvious. However, such views can often lead to ideologies unwelcoming new or alternative ways of speaking the language.

As mentioned previously, one concern prevalent today is that speakers use a form of the language that is too close to Choctaw; they speak *Chockasaw*. I have heard a number of people state that some words are mistakenly considered to be Chickasaw, when in fact they are Choctaw. One night at the end of a language class, an older gentleman stopped by and explained that he was making a list of all the remaining fluent Chickasaw speakers. He said that his intent was to document the "pure Chickasaw", which he contrasted with "that Chickasaw/Choctaw slang" (Ozbolt 2013). As explained previously, the Choctaws and Chickasaws only became separate tribes a

[82] http://www.chickasaw.tv/language/video/the-chickasaw-language-less-variation-in-dialect/list/language
[83] http://www.chickasaw.tv/chickasaw-creativity/video/new-words-the-language-evolves/list/respect-the-spark-education-language-videos

few centuries ago, and they have continued to live in geographical proximity to each other ever since. There have always been much larger numbers of Choctaw speakers than Chickasaws, and many people I met during my research told me that they are of both Chickasaw and Choctaw descent, or that their spouse or other family members are Choctaw (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014).

Another form of language purism that comes out of the Language Survey and in my interviews is the view that some of the people currently trying to learn the language are not legitimate in doing so, for different reasons. First is the concern that "non-speakers" cannot pronounce the words correctly, which came out in the answers to Question 16, "Should non-Chickasaws learn the language, if they are interested in it?" This view is shared by a small number of respondents who also expressed their concerns about "Non-Indians", "wannabee" and "card holder" Chickasaws. Here are a few of their comments:

> Non indians shouldn't speak it. Can''t pronounce the words right or use dialect to express certain feelings and phrases. You cant learn it out of books or school. You have to be raised up to speak it right (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).
>
> Not to many people speak chickasaw right. No feeling or slang or dialect. Not right for non indians trying to speak. If you cant speak it, leave it alone. Dont mess it up. Already messed up by non speaking people (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).
>
> If you will notice, most employees are non indian. Got CDIB cards stating they are American indian. Yet they cant speak the language. My belief is you have to be able to speak the language to be Indian. A card doesnt make you an indian. Language and culture (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

In response to Question 17, "how do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken?" a respondent wrote in the comment box: "Depends on who is speaking. A wanna be

Chickasaw or a fluent speaker of the Chickasaw language" (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

These comments corroborate discussions that I have heard or participated in about the politics of tribal identity and language revitalization in the Chickasaw Nation; they also resonate with studies on identity conducted in other Native American communities in Oklahoma (Sturm 2002, Lambert 2009). Language Revitalization is inherently political, as it brings up heated controversies over cultural knowledge and its distribution, as well as tribal identity, which includes blood quantum. Even in my follow-up interviews, two elders expressed the view that it would be better and more logical for some Chickasaws to learn the language rather than others:

> There are too many things going on outside that people participate in and more so-called identifiable Indians are getting fewer and fewer. I think the more degree would be more apt to try to learn, if they had not been around it and I think they would probably want to learn the language more (Anonymous 2014b).

> So now the fluent speakers are stepping up and teaching others, I think there are more younger people who are picking it up but they're not the "identifiable ones". It's not the others. The ones who should know are not even learning it (Pitman 2014).

While people holding restrictive ideologies regarding who speaks Chickasaw correctly and who should be speaking it may represent a minority of respondents in the Language Survey, their overall proportion in the tribe should not be underestimated. From what I was told, a consequent number of the first language speakers hold similar exclusive ideologies, but very few of them actually took the survey (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). In the Chickasaw Language Survey, only five out of 483 respondents identified as fluent speakers of the language. The oldest respondent was in their early eighties (80-

84) but was the only person in this age category. Overall, this means that elders were underrepresented in the survey. Additionally, it is reasonable to assume that some people holding purist language ideologies may have chosen not to take the survey since it was designed by outside researchers in collaboration with the Department of Language. While 483 people clicked on "I agree to participate" on the first page (the information sheet for the study), fifteen clicked on "I decline" (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

In addition to ideologies regarding who should and should not be learning Chickasaw, another trend that comes out of my research is the concern that a number of people seem to have about the way the language is changing. They come from people who are involved in language revitalization, but are concerned that in the process, the language is becoming "incorrect". "I'm just afraid that they will be using the wrong words for different things because that goes on now", Hannah Pitman (2014), a language instructor in Sulphur and Tishomingo told me. She goes on to say that children learning words through classes today are not always learning them the right way, and when they repeat them at home their family might tell them that they do not pronounce them the right way, but once they have learned it a certain way, they do not want to change their pronunciation. "They need to really learn it in the right way, and not off of somebody who just look[ed] in the book or look[ed] in the paper and say, "oh this is what it is", because sometimes it is not always that" (Pitman 2014). Another elder shares with me his concern that each book and dictionary of Chickasaw gives a different spelling for the same word, and as such the language is being changed (Anonymous 2014a):

> But the words, the way we've been taught. And the way they try to change the words and all that stuff, I don't think it's right […]. If we all get together […] and write the word down, and not try to make the words, because it ain't the way we were raised up with the words. The words we've been hearing, the way our ancestors way back then I guess, the way they used, and our parents, that's what they used.

Some of the language learners that I have interviewed and who have thought about the future of the language acknowledge that it is going to change, and they are already anticipating what will happen once the first language speakers are gone. "We're not gonna keep it the way they speak it now. There is going to be a break, unfortunately", says Keith Shackleford. He adds that they (the learners) are limited to the books and dictionaries. He also believes that the curriculum and teaching methods will become more standardized once the speakers are gone, as there won't be a variety of elders expressing differing opinions (Shackleford 2014b). Matt Clark thinks the same way: without the elders, there won't be anybody to challenge with as much credibility what is written in the books, and the language will change (Ozbolt 2014). As mentioned previously, Joshua Hinson also anticipates the language to change in important ways (Hinson 2014).

In this context, an interesting aspect of Language Revitalization work in the Chickasaw Nation today is the creation of new words by the language committee. As was previously explained, the Chickasaw Nation today has a language committee of twenty-six first language speakers who get together to discuss and determine the creation of new words in the language. This contributes to revaluing the language to make it relevant to the present day, as was discussed in chapter four. The creation of these new words is also interesting in that while some elders may lament about the new

directions the language is taking, they are playing in this particular instance an active role as mediators of language change. Two language learners whom I interviewed about the new words told me that they think it is important for the elders to be the ones creating them (Johnson 2014; Gantt 2014).

Overall, the majority of people I talked to expressed favorable opinions towards the new words. They see change as necessary for the language to survive, and they believe these new words will help the children to be interested and to find the language relevant to their interests, which in turn will help them to learn it. As such, my interviewees also told me that the language should reflect both the past and the present, or the modern and the traditional (Clark 2014; Hatcher Travis 2014; Johnson 2014; Wallace 2014; Holden 2014). This resonates with the discourse discussed in chapter four that views the Chickasaw Nation as both modern and traditional, and its language as a reflection of this. Other interviewees pointed out that the language already changed a lot throughout Chickasaw history, reflecting a changing society, and that it is important for the language to also reflect the present and the future (Holden 2014; Taylor 2014).

A few of the people I interviewed also expressed more mixed or negative feelings towards the new words. For instance, one interviewee pointed out that historically, Chickasaws have borrowed words from other languages when a new item or object entered into their world. This is of course true for many cultures and languages coming into contact. As such, he believes the systematic creation of these new words is somewhat overdone, since the word for a new item could just be borrowed or adapted from English (Shackleford 2014b). An elder I interviewed grew up around the language

but did not learn to speak it fluently. Her disapproval of the new words is even more systematic (Anonymous 2014b):

> To me, it's not real. A lot of those things, we didn't have a long time ago […]. I just don't think there is really any need in having words for the things that they're doing now: "computers" and "cell phones". I just don't see any need in it. It's not important I think. Just talking with someone is fine, but trying to say all these other words or make up words, I don't agree with it myself.

Overall, we can see that most people in the Chickasaw Nation today acknowledge that the language is changing. Speakers, elders, and people living in the core of the Nation seem to be more likely to have strong feelings on these issues, to regret this trend, and to have more restricted views on what is the correct way to speak Chickasaw. However, the elders are playing a key role in the creation of new words that are to be spoken by the younger generations. This is a quite unique situation, as younger speakers of a language are generally the ones who come up with new ways of speaking, to express who they are in a changing world.

How can language learning become more successful?

After having discussed where people envision the Chickasaw language to be in the future and their views on the fact that the language is changing, another critical question is how they analyze their current level of commitment to learning it, including the challenges they encounter, or the fact that they may not be learning it at all.

From the Language Survey and the interviews that I conducted, it is clear that one of the main obstacles that people are encountering with learning the language is

their lack of time to learn it. Question 22, "If you are not currently learning Chickasaw, why not?" was a question that only people who indicated in question 20 that they are not learning the language had to answer: 36.86% of the respondents picked "I do not have time to learn it". In the comment box for this question, some of the respondents wrote that between their jobs and being a parent, which often includes taking their children to extra-curricular activities after the school day, it is very difficult to find time to learn the language. A good number of people who reported time as an issue still acknowledged the responsibility that they have in finding the time to learn (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

In Question 27, "What would prevent or currently prevents you from participating in the Master Apprentice program?" 61.81% of the respondents indicated that they are not involved in the Master-Apprentice program because they do not have time to do it, and 28.14% reported that they would consider doing it if it did not involve such a big commitment of time (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). Several people I talked to in my follow-up interviews confirmed that time is a major issue. "Language leaves the flow of everyday life and ceases to be that communicative thing, then it just bumps up against all the other stuff […], it's really another extracurricular activity at this point", says Joshua Hinson (2014). Of course, this has implications when it comes to the possibility of bringing the language to the workplace, to school, and to extracurricular activities such as the Martial Arts Program, as I discuss throughout this study.

Another major obstacle that people have reported is their lack of access, or difficulty in accessing resources to learn the language, including speakers. In Question 22, "If you are not currently learning Chickasaw, why not?", scheduling of classes is

reported as the most common issue (37.50%), and living too far from where the classes are offered (28.85%) is listed third. In some ways, the issue of access to resources may be easier to fix than the lack of time, because more classes at more locations could be created in the future, while it seems very likely that people will continue to have busy lives. In the comment box for this question, several people reported that they live out-of-state and that it is very difficult for them to create an immersive environment in the Chickasaw language where they live. Other people indicated that they do not have any fluent speaker to talk to in their everyday life, and that even if they work for the Chickasaw Nation they do not have any opportunity to use it during their work day. Finally, some respondents wrote that they used to have fluent speakers in their family but that they have now passed away (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Answer Choices	Responses	
The language classes are scheduled at a time when I am not available	**37.50%**	117
I do not have time to learn it	**36.86%**	115
I live too far from where the classes are offered	**28.85%**	90
Other (explain below)	**22.12%**	69
It is too difficult to learn	**11.86%**	37
I am afraid to make mistakes and to be judged by fluent speakers	**11.22%**	35
I was not aware that there were resources available to learn it	**10.26%**	32
I am not interested in learning languages	**5.13%**	16
The learning materials are not good enough	**5.13%**	16
There is no use for Chickasaw language in today's world	**3.85%**	12
Total Respondents: 312		

(Fig. 08 - Frequency of responses to Q22: If you are not currently learning Chickasaw, why not?)

In Question 27, "What would prevent or currently prevents you from participating in the Master Apprentice program?", 14.57% of the respondents indicated that they are not considering the Master-Apprentice Program because they do not know any fluent Chickasaw speaker in their area, and a good proportion of comments were again from people living out-of-state, or too far from where the classes and fluent speakers are located (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). Even Amy Gantt (2014), an employee of the Chickasaw Nation who is a learner in the Master-Apprentice Program reports that she finds it difficult to get enough exposure to the language throughout the day: "if it was Italian I could go to Italy, and just be there and be immersed but here it's like I meet with Hannah for two hours a day and then I go home, and it's all in English and my husband doesn't speak Chickasaw". Joshua Hinson (2014) confirms this by explaining how hard it is to always find the will to talk in Chickasaw when he is not sure how to say something, adding to the fact that all the Chickasaw speakers also speak English.

Both Amy Gantt and Joshua Hinson tell me that it would obviously be very difficult for someone living out-of-state to be able to learn the language. One way this could, to some extent, work, would be a highly-motivated learner with an appropriate audio-lingual method, and talent as an autodidact. For all these reasons, providing adequate, quality material and motivation to current and potential out-of-state learners remains a major challenge of the Language Department today. While the Master-Apprentice Program is at the core of language revitalization efforts, Joshua explains that

they still feel a responsibility to help everyone they can to the best extent possible (Hinson 2014). In addition to finding it difficult to access resources to learn the language, a small group of people reported that they were either not aware that resources were available to learn the language (10.26% of respondents to Question 22), or that they do not find these materials to be sufficient (5.13% of respondents to the same question). In the comment box, they pointed out that even by taking classes they do not feel like they are getting enough exposure to the language, that the language should be more incorporated to everyday life, or that the classes and learning materials should be improved. Additionally, two out-of-state respondents indicated that they would very much like to take part in an online course if one was developed (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Aside from the issues of time and being able to access adequate resources to learn the language, the third major obstacle to learning that comes out of my research are psychological factors. They include various inhibitions towards the language, such as people finding it too difficult to learn, or their simple lack of motivation to do it. In that sense, psychological factors strongly relate to chapter six, which examines motivation. In Question 22, "If you are not currently learning Chickasaw, why not?" 11.86% of the respondents selected "it is too difficult to learn" as their answer and several wrote in the comment box that Chickasaw is a hard language to learn and that they are just not very good at learning languages in general, or that they have a hard time remembering or pronouncing the words. Similarly, 11.06% of the respondents to Question 27, "What would prevent or currently prevents you from participating in the Master Apprentice program?" reported their concern that the Master-Apprentice

Program sounds too difficult to them. Two respondents brought up their age (one woman in her early thirties, and another woman in her early fifties) to imply that it probably is too late for them to come back and learn another language, one of them adding that the emphasis should be placed on the younger generation (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

In Question 22, another important psychological factor to take into consideration is the 11.22% of respondents who picked, "I am afraid to make mistakes and to be judged by fluent speakers", which I consider is comparable to the 7.04% of people who chose "I would be too intimidated to work with a fluent speaker" in Question 27. These feelings of inadequate capabilities in learning the language are problematic because they can strongly inhibit people from trying to learn and speak. In a context of language shift, the fact that people are dealing with their ancestral language can take this issue to an even deeper level, as it can make them feel like they are "culturally deficient" by not speaking the language (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998: 65), or bring back memories of having been teased by older fluent relatives for "speaking imperfectly" (Lee 2007: 20-22, 2009: 313-314). In the context of Chickasaw Language Revitalization efforts however, I believe that these results are rather positive because 11.22% and 7.04% are relatively low percentages. Of course there is always the risk that people underreported their feelings, but these results are overall encouraging because these potentially detrimental ideologies are only held by a minority of respondents and do not seem as prevalent as what they are in other endangered language communities discussed in the literature.

Finally, a last aspect of psychological factors is people not feeling motivated to learn the language. 5.13% of respondents in Question 22 reported that they are not interested in learning languages, and 3.85% picked "there is no use for Chickasaw language in today's world". In Question 27, 10.05% of respondents indicated that they are not interested in the language enough to undertake something like this, and 3.02% chose "the incentives are not high enough compared to my current job". Again, the positive aspect of this is that these percentages are relatively low and ranked at the bottom of the choices list. For some people, the language is simply not worth the time and effort. A few other respondents, both in the survey and in the interviews, talked about the fact that their lives as Chickasaws has never been about the language and that it is not something that has ever been encouraged or considered important in their families (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014; Taylor 2014). The next chapter is devoted to what motivates people to learn the language.

What could help make language learning more successful?

After discussing how people explain the fact that they are not learning the language, a last critical aspect of people's perceptions of current language revitalization efforts are their views on what could be done to improve their learning and their current engagement with the language. I asked these questions during my follow-up interviews. Additionally, in the Chickasaw Language Survey, Questions 33 and 34 were written for this purpose, respectively asking "what other initiatives do you think could benefit the revitalization of the Chickasaw Language?" and "what other initiatives would make you

want to learn Chickasaw or would make you even more enthusiastic?" These two questions were the only two fully open-ended questions in the survey, and as such did not have pre-defined response choices. I coded all the answers individually and came up with fifteen categories for Question 33 and fourteen for Question 34. The categories, from most important to least important, are presented below.

1. Online/multimedia
2. Language classes
3. Learn through activities
4. Access to language and speakers
5. Encouragements
6. Don't know
7. Policy

   Schooling

   Uncategorized

10. Family
11. Public visibility of language
12. Recognition
13. Out-of-state Chickasaws
14. Money
15. Time

(Fig. 09 - Coded categories for responses to Q33: What other initiatives do you think could benefit the revitalization of the Chickasaw Language?)

1. Language classes
2. Access to language and speakers
3. Learn through activities
4. Don’t know
5. Public visibility of language
6. Online/multimedia
7. Money

Policy

9. Recognition
10. Family
11. Encouragement

Uncategorized

13. Time
14. Schooling

(Fig. 10 - Coded categories for responses to Q34: What other initiatives would make you want to learn Chickasaw or would make you even more enthusiastic?)

The coded category with the most responses for Question 33 is “online and multimedia resources”. 23.63% of respondents in Question 33 asked for more materials in the

language, from CD books, songs in Chickasaw, Rosetta Stone™, Language App for Android™ devices, online dictionary, online podcast, online classes, videos, multimedia material incorporating cultural context, partnership with Google™, Apple™, and Microsoft™, Webinars in Chickasaw, weekly e-mails with Chickasaw vocabulary, Skype™ in Chickasaw, TV and movies in Chickasaw. These responses are a strong indication of the great demand that there is for online and multimedia resources. By analyzing the responses, an explanation for this may relate to the fact that many Chickasaws live out-of-state and feel like at this time they do not have ample opportunities to learn the language. Another explanation regarding the demand for self-study materials is that people feel they would be able to learn the language at their own pace and on their own schedule, since many Chickasaws do not live within a driving-distance of where the community language classes are offered. Finally, from the comments that I have read, people also consider that the advantages of online/multimedia materials would be to provide an engaging platform for learning that could also be used in a family context (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

The responses to questions 33 and 34 and my follow-up interviews reveal an important request for more classes. This is again true for out-of-state Chickasaws, employees interested in more opportunities to learn while at work, and other people asking for more classes, at greater frequency, in more areas of the Chickasaw Nation. This makes for a great number of people asking to have a class closer to their place of residence, during the time of the day or of the week that fits their schedule best. Some criticisms of the classes currently available include people wanting all the teachers to be first language speakers, consensus on the orthography and pronunciation of the words,

and better learning materials (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). During my interviews, two students and one language instructor also pointed to the fact that classes only run from October to May, which greatly limits the amount of language that can be learned, and that they should be year-round (Johnson 2014; Holden 2014; Pitman 2014). For many of these reasons, a few language learners explained to me that they feel stuck at the word level, and that they would need to learn through immersion to be able to construct full sentences (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014).

Aside from online resources and more language classes, 15.93% of respondents to Question 33 and 14.74% to Question 34 have expressed their interest in activities and contexts where they could learn and speak Chickasaw. These include songs, storytelling, full immersion language camps, conversational clubs, comics, cartoons, Chickasaw plays, newspapers, church services, praying in Chickasaw, cooking classes, stomp dances, camping weekends, a Chickasaw language-only house, field trips, arts, traditional activities such as stickball, short-story films, or crosswords (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). No respondent listed the Martial Arts program, but this is obviously an example of recreational activity that attempts to incorporate some Chickasaw language.

Overall, while it is great to see that there is such a demand for these resources, meeting all of these requests and suggestions seems completely unrealistic. After talking about this with Joshua Hinson, it is clear that the Department of Language is faced with a conundrum. The Master-Apprentice is at the core of their program and daily immersion is seen as the most effective way to develop conversational fluency. As such, the Department is focusing a lot of its efforts on this program, which is for people living in the Service Area in South Central Oklahoma. This investment is justified by

the fact that the apprentices are the people who are the most likely to develop conversational fluency in the language since they live in geographical proximity from the remaining first language speakers. But then there are all these other people who have expressed their desire for an online learning program, more language classes, more activities to learn it, and many of them live far away from South Central Oklahoma. What program should be developed for them, knowing that it may represent an enormous amount of time and money to put together? Joshua Hinson also shared with me his concern that the Department may invest a lot in creating something, with no guarantee that people will actually like it or use it. This is definitely a major challenge that the Department of Language will have to deal with in the future.

In the suggestion boxes for Questions 33 and 34, some respondents have also expressed their interest for more encouragements and recognition for language learners, and more public visibility for the language. This could take the form of more signs in the language in Chickasaw buildings, more education about the importance of preserving the language, having the leadership use the language in public, more Chickasaw language use at public events, better advertisement of the current resources, competitions and awards, rewards for completing various levels of fluency, or contemporary music in Chickasaw (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Other suggestions include that employees should at least learn some of the language, that it could be taught to them for one hour a day, that it could be required for employees working in cultural positions, or that it could be used more by the Government and the Nation's leaders. A few respondents have asked for more IDP, money, compensations, time-off, and other incentives if one learns the language.

Finally, some people have expressed their interest in learning the language in their household with their family, or in classes for families, or language immersion camps for families. A few respondents suggested having the language or developing it further in childcare, Headstart, public schools, immersion schools, and at a tribal college (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Overall, through Questions 33 and 34, respondents have shared an amazing number of ideas for the language, and as such the Chickasaw Language Survey may represent a great resource for future language planning for the tribe. Taken as a whole, they cannot realistically be implemented in the near future. Even by providing some of them, people are likely to still be struggling with the issue of time, or perhaps a lack of motivation. During my follow-up interviews, several highly dedicated learners have told me that even with the best learning materials available, it could still be very possible for people to not be learning the language. These people told me that language revitalization is ultimately about individual motivation, which is what the next chapter is about.

Chapter six: Finding Motivation in Learning Chickasaw

Thus far this research has addressed the efforts that have been undertaken by the Chickasaw Nation to preserve its ancestral language and how people have responded to these initiatives. This chapter will address the question of motivation, or more accurately, what makes certain individuals take the initiative to actively learn the language. As discussed previously, motivation is a critical aspect of language revitalization because people can have positive attitudes and great resources available for language learning without necessarily converting them into action.

Two questions in the Language Survey are particularly important in regards to the issue of motivation. Question 17 asked respondents about their feelings when they hear the language being spoken, and question 23 asked them directly about what motivates them to learn it. The overall results for question 17 confirm the shift towards positive attitudes about the language that were discussed in chapter five. 64.21% of the respondents for this question reported that hearing the language makes them want to be able to speak the language, while 48.10% answered that it makes them proud to be Chickasaw. These results increase to 69.04% and 73.31% respectively by looking at Chickasaw respondents only, which is even more encouraging. More ambivalent attitudes towards the language, such as "feeling embarrassed when hearing others speak it in public", "wondering why people do not simply speak English", or "feeling indifferent" are found in the bottom of the ranking and are not representative of the Chickasaw community today, which is a strong asset for language revitalization.

Answer Choices	Responses	
It makes me really want to be able to speak it	**64.21%**	287
It makes me proud to be a Chickasaw	**48.10%**	215
It makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it	**21.48%**	96
I feel indifferent, as I would for any other language that I do not understand	**14.99%**	67
Other (explain below)	**13.20%**	59
I get emotional	**12.08%**	54
I wonder why people do not simply speak English	**1.57%**	7
It makes me embarrassed when I hear others use it in public	**0.22%**	1
Total Respondents: 447		

(Fig. 11 - Frequency of responses to Q17: How do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken? Check all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses	
I want to keep the language from disappearing	**77.62%**	319
I want to understand my culture and my heritage better	**59.61%**	245
I want to be able to speak to my elders	**45.99%**	189
I want to participate in cultural activities more fully	**43.31%**	178
I need to speak the language if I am to work in a leadership position for the Nation	**31.87%**	131
I want to be able to pray in Chickasaw	**30.66%**	126
I want to be able to deliver short speeches in Chickasaw	**30.66%**	126
I can raise my points through IDP classes because I work for the Nation	**22.14%**	91
Other (explain below)	**13.38%**	55
Total Respondents: 411		

(Fig. 12 - Frequency of responses to Q23: What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw? Check all that apply)

Maintain the unique culture and identity of the Chickasaw people

Respondents to question 23 reported that their most important reason for wanting to learn Chickasaw is to keep the language from disappearing and their second most important reason is to understand their culture and their heritage better. Both of these motivations relate to the overall desire to maintain the unique culture and identity of the Chickasaw people. The idea that learning the language contributes to a better understanding of the culture and its preservation emerged from the follow-up interviews that I conducted. It also resonates with the discourses equating the language to the culture that was discussed in chapter four. I do not think that these ideologies can be viewed as a direct result of the recent Chickasaw Nation multimedia campaign promoting the importance of the language. Most people I talked to said that the language is a very important part of the culture. They defined culture in various ways, from one's knowledge of their Chickasaw heritage, including where they are from, to "ways of thinking and approach to life" (Shackleford 2014b), or specific traditions such as songs and dances. They generally acknowledged that while the language represents a big part of the culture, it is not the only important element. Without the language, a lot of knowledge or understanding of the culture would be lost. A few people who have been actively involved in learning the language shared that it has really made a difference in their lives, from connecting with elders to understanding their culture better (Hinson 2014; Wallace 2014; Gantt 2014).

Concomitant to the idea of preserving the culture, one of the main reasons for wanting to preserve the language articulated by the people I interviewed is to maintain

the unique identity and distinctiveness of the Chickasaw people (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014a; Johnson 2014; Wallace 2014; Holden 2014). Several respondents explained that given the extent to which tribal cultures have mingled in Oklahoma, for instance in terms of songs, dances, or outfits, the Chickasaws would no longer be identifiable from other tribes without their language (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014a; Johnson 2014). Additionally, respondents pointed to the fact that many Chickasaws today are no longer phenotypically identifiable as "Native Americans", which reinforces the importance of remaining culturally distinct, and recognized as such by other groups (Clark 2014; Pitman 2014). This relates to Sturm's findings among the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, and the importance of the language in defining tribal identity (Sturm 2002: 120-123). Relating to this, one respondent made an implicit reference to sovereignty, by suggesting that the federal Government would no longer have to treat them differently if they ceased to be culturally distinct (Shackleford 2014a). Some people – generally learners or teachers of the Chickasaw language - view the language as one of the strongest and most distinctive aspects of their culture and heritage.

A few respondents go a step further by explaining that the ability to speak the language is necessary in order to truly be Chickasaw. Their comments resonate with the idea discussed in previous chapters that the Chickasaws would cease to exist as Chickasaws without their language:

> In order to be truly able to hold your citizenship proudly and say "I am Chickasaw", then you need to be able to say: *Chikasha saya*. You need to be able to speak the language […] Being able to fluently speak the language, understanding and knowing the culture, that's being Chickasaw (Clark 2014).

> It's part of our culture. Without your language, you have no identity […] Tribal members should be able to speak their language. It identifies them as Chickasaws (Holden 2014).
>
> It's a vital part. It's like the blood in our veins (Wallace 2014).
>
> Why should a person who just lives off the blood and doesn't even try to learn their own language […] be counted as a Chickasaw? […] I feel like it's language rather than blood (Johnson 2014).

While these views may come across as quite radical, I interpret them as reflecting the passion that these individuals have towards the language. They also reflect broader identity issues in Native American communities today, and strongly resonate with Circe Sturm's (2002: 120-123) discussion of language ideologies tying language proficiency to Cherokee identity in Oklahoma: "I guess you could say I'm a racist, because I think you're not a full Cherokee unless you can speak […] I would accept a non-identifiable Cherokee who speaks, more than a pure- or full-blood who doesn't". Other people articulated the idea that while knowing the language is important, the fact that they do not currently speak it fluently does not make them less Chickasaw. The act of learning then, has meaning in that people are reconnecting to a heritage that was compromised by external factors. The fact that use of a Native language by learners can be very meaningful in the creation of individual and group identity, even with a very limited linguistic code, the act of learning the Chickasaw language can also be viewed in the same light (Ahlers 2006: 72). Several of my interviewees (Anonymous 2014a; Wallace 2014; Gantt 2014) actually reported that people should learn what they can of the language, putting emphasis on the importance of the process rather than on the end result.

A range of statements collected during my interviews are indicative for this discourse: “I want to learn that language because I feel like that’s part of who I am, who I should be” (Holden 2014). “That is what it is; it’s just what you do, because of who I consider myself to be. My dad used to say that growing up he always knew he was Indian […]. And I’ve always felt this way about myself […].To me it’s just to be who you are” (Shackleford 2014b). Other people explained that their Chickasaw identity is not dependent on the ability to speak the language. “In my family, it wasn’t encouraged; it wasn’t something you had to learn to be part of the family or to be respected” (Taylor 2014). In Question 23 of the Chickasaw Language Survey, “What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw?” a 50-54 year old Chickasaw woman who lives in the service area of the Nation wrote in the comment box:

> I am at the point in my life, age, etc that my learning is in other areas that help me preserve my heritage. I love genealogy and that's how I keep my family culture alive. It doesn't have to be about the language...for me (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Additionally, a few respondents to the Chickasaw Language Survey expressed light criticism of the wording of some of the questions’, such as Question 11, “How important is it for you to know about the following traditions in order to feel Chickasaw?” As an anthropologist, I am perfectly aware of the simplistic implications of this question, but I still thought that it would provide good indication of the importance people give the Chickasaw language, and how it contributes to Chickasaw identity as a whole. Joshua Hinson also warned me that older Chickasaws would probably have a hard time understanding what “feeling Chickasaw” means, while

younger citizens who grew up outside of Oklahoma would be more likely to understand the question (Ozbolt 2013). Interesting, selected responses include the following:

> You either are or are not Chickasaw - a bit confused by what you mean "feel Chickasaw" - I just responded with what I thought was good for folks to know (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).
>
> I feel like it is important to know about these things but it does not make me feel any less Chickasaw if I do not know about some of these things (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).
>
> That's who we are, that's what we are born, you can't say because I do this or that it makes me Chickasaw. It is who we are by blood, by family.....we just are (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Sense of responsibility towards the language

In terms of analyzing people's motivation to learn the Chickasaw language, another theme that emerges from my interviews and from survey data is the sense of responsibility that people have towards the survival of the language. This theme was deliberately brought to this study by including a question that directly relates to language responsibility in the survey (question 23) and follow-up interviews to discuss the survey. People' sense of responsibility towards the survival of their language was hypothesized to be important because it represents one of the very basic principles of Language Revitalization (Fishman 1991: 10). Without a desire to intervene to address language shift, no Language Revitalization is possible. In question 23, "I want to keep the language from disappearing" was cited as the most important motivation to learn the language.

	All respondents	Chickasaw respondents only
I want to keep the language from disappearing	77.62%	88.89%
I want to understand my culture and my heritage better	59.61%	82.76%

(Fig. 13 - Frequency of responses to Q23: What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw? Check all that apply)

This tends to confirm Jeanette King's hypothesis that learners of endangered languages with a relatively small number of remaining speakers are more likely to be motivated by a sense of responsibility towards the survival of the language, while learners of languages with a relatively high number of remaining speakers are more likely to be motivated by a sense of personal benefit (King 2009: 105). In the first case, the language is at more immediate risk of "disappearing" so the emphasis is on its survival; in the second case, the feeling of endangerment is not as urgent and so the desire to learn is more individual-oriented, such as wanting to strengthen one's sense of identity. Chickasaw fits in the first category, while Maori fits in the second, as 25% of Maoris can converse at a basic level, while 14% can converse "well or very well" (King 2013).

In Question 23, many people commented on the fact that they would like to be able to teach the language to their children, grandchildren, or to be able to converse

with family members who are speakers. This came as an unexpected and emerging theme, given that it was not offered as an answer option, yet twenty-two respondents commented on the fact that they are motivated to learn the language by a desire to teach it to their younger relatives[84]. Four out of the thirteen persons I interviewed explained that they started to learn the language when their children or grandchildren were born, so they could pass it down to them, and transmit to them a sense of being Chickasaw (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014b; Gantt 2014).[85]

Other respondents did not identify the birth of their child(ren) or grandchild(ren) as the initial event that triggered their motivation to learn the Chickasaw language, but they did discuss their sense of responsibility to teach what they know of the language to the younger members of their family, which also involves promoting interest in learning the language. This sense of responsibility is well evidenced in the comments of Jeremy Wallace (2014), a young parent, who explained to me:

> Myself I feel right now that it's a very big responsibility for us because as our elders are getting older […] they're not gonna be here very much longer […], we need to get in there and learn as much as we can from them because like I said, we're the next ones to pass it on to the younger ones.

This sense of responsibility towards one's children and future generations comes as no surprise since models of language revitalization are based on the restoration of intergenerational language use and transmission (Fishman 1991: 413). For this reason, the focus of most language revitalization initiatives is to teach the language to children, sometimes in the context of schooling, as is the case in the Hawaiian and Maori models.

[84] Twenty of whom were women

[85] Joshua Hinson did not share this with me during our interview but he talks about it in this video: http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/immersing-myself-in-the-language/list/joshua-hinson-videos

Many language activists who have learned their ancestral language as a second language are teaching it to their children, even in the absence of a school program (Hinton 2013).

While I do not think that the majority of people I interviewed have read Fishman's theory of language shift, they are aware of the real possibility of losing the language given their knowledge of other communities. Two persons I interviewed told me that they are aware that other tribes have already lost all their speakers (Anonymous 2014a; Holden 2014). According to one estimate, about a third of Oklahoma Native American tribes today have already lost all their speakers.[86] During my follow-up interviews, people confirmed that the urgency of decline is a motivator for them and should be a source of motivation for other people to learn the language and teach it to their children. As a result, the next question that arises is whether some people in the Chickasaw community today hold higher levels of responsibility towards the preservation of their language than others. I did not ask this question specifically but this is something that came up after I asked people about their sense of personal responsibility towards the language.

A few respondents suggested that "younger people" should feel even more responsibility than others, given that they are raising or may soon be raising children, and still have the possibility of reaching out to the remaining speakers of the language. In her study of learner motivation among Chickasaw language activists, Chickasaw graduate student Kari Lewis (2011) defined three generations in the community. "Generation A" is made of the remaining fluent speakers of the language who are in their sixties and older and are usually grandparents or great-grandparents. "Generation

[86] http://www.snomnh.ou.edu/collections-research/cr-sub/nal/ok%20spkrs%20w-notes.pdf

B" is composed of active language learners who range in age from their mid-twenties to their mid-fifties and have children. "Generation C" is made of young language learners who range from 18 to 24 and do not have children yet. While all three generations' primary motivation is to preserve the language, faced with the urgency of decline, a few differences can be identified. The members of Generation A whom she interviewed have maintained knowledge of their language through pride for being who they are and positive language ideologies that were transmitted to them by their parents; they are also very pleased by the interest of the younger language learners. Members of Generation B feel the greatest responsibility because of their intermediary generational role in terms of learning the language and teaching it to their children. They are motivated by providing better opportunities to their children to learn the language than they personally had while growing up. They are the ones undertaking the hard work of developing fluency in the language so that their children can grow up hearing and speaking it. Lewis argues that Generation B and C are ultimately responsible for the revitalization of the language rather than Generation A (Lewis 2011: 76). I agree with this analysis because the first language speakers only represent a very small proportion of the Chickasaw population compared to the non-speakers. Given an estimated sixty-five first language speakers among about 57,000 enrolled tribal citizens (Russon 2014), the proportion of speakers can be calculated as 0.11% and the non-speakers as 99.89%. It is among this much larger group that individuals with an incredibly high motivation will need to come out and take on the formidable task of learning the Chickasaw language at a fluent level, and teach it to other people. The first language speakers can only provide their expertise in the language, which they are already doing.

Additionally, the literature discusses instances where one segment of a community tends to reject the responsibility of revitalizing the language and project that responsibility on another segment, or blame them for not doing enough to preserve it. For instance, Deborah House (2002: 100) discusses how some Navajo parents and grandparents may believe that they are no longer responsible for teaching the language to the younger ones after it has been made part of the school curriculum. In another study on the Navajo language, Zepeda, McCarty, and Romero (2006: 35-37) discuss that it is common for adults to say that the youth are not interested in the language, and for the youth to say that the parents should speak the language to them at home. During my fieldwork, a language instructor told me that younger Chickasaw people are simply not interested in the language, and an elder shared the same view during our interview (Ozbolt 2013; Anonymous 2014b). My experience attending various language-related events in the community suggests otherwise (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). While it is very understandable for people to expect the full support of their community, it can also lead to people forgetting their own responsibility to take part in the work.

The information I gathered in my interviews tends to confirm Lewis' generational patterns, in that a few individuals said that younger people bear the greatest responsibility for reviving the language (Hatcher Travis 2014; Shackleford 2014a). This definitely makes sense for parents of young children who have the opportunity to learn the language from the remaining speakers. Brooke Shackleford (2014a) brought up the interesting point that a sense of responsibility can potentially become a burden too, and that people today should not be held accountable for what has caused language shift in

the first place. Aside from generational factors, Brooke Shackleford (2014a) also suggested that people's level of responsibility towards the language should perhaps depend on their level of access to the language:

> Some people don't have access; I have some good friends in South Dakota and they don't have anybody to speak to, to learn from, whether it'd be on culture or language question, they don't really have anybody out there to go to, so I don't think you can hold them accountable … I guess in some ways there is a little less responsibility on them than the ones like us who are close and we do have access, we can talk to people, or even those whose family are speakers.

In her ethnographic study of Hopi youth, Nicholas (2008: 188-190) underlines that teenagers feel responsible towards the language and that this sense of responsibility coincides with their larger sense of responsibility towards their culture, families, clans, and community. Belonging to a clan is based on various responsibilities towards it, including participation in ceremonies. Consequently these youth feel responsible to continue the ceremonies, and as such, the language. This case study suggests that cultural involvement is a good thing for language preservation.

By looking at the percentage of Chickasaw respondents who picked "I want to keep the language from disappearing" in question 23 according to their place of residence, we can see that those living in the service area report a higher motivation than the others.

	I want to keep the language from disappearing
Chickasaws living in the service area	90.91%
Chickasaws living elsewhere in Oklahoma	80.95%
Chickasaws living out-of-state	87.50%

(Fig. 14 - Frequency of responses to Q23: What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw? Check all that apply)

In terms of place of residence, we can see that Chickasaws who live in the service area report more sense of responsibility towards the survival of the language than Chickasaws living elsewhere. However, this difference is not very important, which is probably a good thing for language revitalization because it shows that "at large" citizens also feel a strong sense of responsibility towards the language. The next table examines levels of participation in cultural activities and compares people who reported feeling a sense of responsibility towards the survival of the language to respondents who did not. Nicholas' findings on Hopi would be confirmed in the Chickasaw case if people who participate in cultural activities more would report a stronger sense of responsibility towards the language.

	Chickasaw respondents who indicated in Q23, "I want to keep the language from disappearing"	Chickasaw respondents who did not indicate in Q23, "I want to keep the language from disappearing"
Culture and History classes	58.22%	57.02%
Language classes	49.77%	50.44%
Arts and crafts	39.91%	40.35%
Preparing traditional food	38.03%	35.53%
Telling or listening to Chickasaw stories	36.15%	34.21%
Genealogy	28.17%	26.75%
Indian Church	27.23%	26.32%
Land activities in Chickasaw Country (harvesting, hunting, fishing, etc…)	24.41%	22.81%
Stomp dance	21.60%	20.18%
Stickball	15.96%	15.79%

(Fig. 15 - Frequency of responses to Q10: "Do you participate in the following Chickasaw cultural activities?")

The difference between the two columns is not very convincing. The different percentages for each cultural activity do not allow concluding that people who are more connected to the cultural core of the Nation tend to be more motivated to learn the language to keep it from disappearing, and as such, have a stronger sense of responsibility towards its preservation. In some ways it reflects similar results to those presented in the previous table that participation in cultural activities is easier for people who live in the service area. It also confirms that people who live elsewhere still consider the language to be important. Finally, it confirms that Chickasaw identity cannot be reduced to knowledge or participation in specific cultural activities. Again, this is an encouraging finding for language revitalization because it reveals that a variety of citizens are concerned about the language, regardless of where they live and how much they participate in the culture.

Shame for not speaking

After having discussed several forms of motivation that people may have for learning the language, a study of motivation and language ideologies also needs to take into consideration other attitudes towards the language, including more ambivalent, indifferent, neutral, and even negative feelings. These various attitudes and feelings are discussed in the literature, and the goal of the Language Survey was to find out how widespread they would be in the Chickasaw community, what would account for them, and what impacts they have on language revitalization efforts.

The process of language shift is caused in the first place by a shift in language attitudes. Minority languages become subordinate to languages that have more political and socio-economic power and people start speaking the dominant language to their children. In some cases, language shift is the outcome of an aggressive and systematic policy of assimilation by one cultural group towards another. This has very much been the case historically in North America, with Native American children being forced to attend boarding schools from the late nineteenth century to the 1970's and being forbidden to speak their languages. Most Native Americans today did not attend boarding schools given that they grew up after most of them had already been closed. However, many elders did have this experience, which continues to have a deep impact on them and on younger generations. The literature has discussed how shame inhibiting someone from speaking, teaching, or learning their ancestral language is often caused by painful past experiences, such as having been punished in boarding schools for speaking one's ancestral language (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998: 64-65; Meek 2010: 5, 7, 19). The next generations often continues to be affected by these assimilation policies, which sometimes cause individuals to become unconsciously biased against bilingualism. They often consider speaking English only and well as necessary in order to advance in today's society (Zepeda, McCarty, Romero 2006: 36, 38-39). In Native communities where the ancestral language is still spoken by a significant part of the tribal population, teenagers and youth can have internalized ambivalent attitudes towards it, fearing to be perceived as "backward" for speaking their language. They may have also been teased by fluent relatives for speaking it imperfectly (Lee 2007: 20-22). For all these reasons, people can have ambivalent

feelings towards the idea of language preservation. They may officially support the idea, yet have inner doubts about the utility of doing so (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998: 67). In the case of the Chickasaws, the question is how prevalent these attitudes are given that the vast majority of the population does not speak the language, and yet there are still a number of elders who attended boarding schools in their early years?

The idea of shame towards the Chickasaw language did not emerge as a very significant theme throughout my fieldwork. Only two people during the interviews mentioned the fact that there are still individuals in the older generation today who don't want to speak or be heard speaking the language because of these historical reasons (Clark 2014; Pitman 2014). Matt Clark tells me however that these elders can open up if they are told that it is fine to speak the language and if someone demonstrates that they have a genuine interest to learn from them (Clark 2014).

In the Chickasaw Language Survey, virtually nobody reported being ashamed of the language, or ashamed for speaking it. However, the issue of shame appeared to be very relevant in Question 17, as 21.48% of the respondents reported that hearing the Chickasaw language makes them ashamed that they cannot speak it. A break-down by demographic categories provides the following results:

	It makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it
All respondents	21.48%
Chickasaws only	30.60%
Other Native Americans	17.58%
Non-Natives	5.19%
Chickasaw men	19.44%
Chickasaw women	35.47%
Chickasaws living in the service area	31.86%
Chickasaws living elsewhere in Oklahoma	23.26%
Chickasaws living out-of-state	32.35%

(Fig. 16 - Frequency of responses to Q17: How do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken?)

What is very interesting about these results is that they seem to follow the same pattern as found in the attitudes of the people the most interested in the language, with Chickasaws, women, and people living in the service area being generally more supportive of the language and the culture.

The first explanation that was provided for this response during my follow-up interviews is that people who are feeling ashamed for not speaking the language are likely to be the generation that grew up around the language and yet did not learn to speak it, for all the reasons discussed in chapter two. These people would be in their fifties and older (Clark 2014). Some of these people may be “passive speakers”, in that

they understand the language and yet do not speak it. Other people spoke the language when they were younger but stopped because they left Oklahoma, or because their parents discouraged them to do so. Many of my interviewees advanced this explanation when I discussed this issue with them (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014b; Hatcher Travis 2014; Shackleford 2014a; Hinson 2014; Gantt 2014). The people from the generation that "lost" the language then would be the ones who are more likely to feel shame for not speaking it, as Keith Shackleford (2014b) explained to me: "they have the greater loss because they had it. They had it in their hand, they had it in their lives, and they grew up hearing it".

Recent studies on language attitudes and ideologies conducted among youth and teenagers in the US Southwest where Native languages are often still spoken by a significant portion of the tribal population have shown that not speaking the language, or speaking it "imperfectly", can cause anxiety or shame, which in turn can inhibit learning. The literature discusses such feelings among young adults and teenagers in the Navajo, Pueblo, and Hopi communities (Lee 2007 and 2009, Nicholas 2008, 2009, 2010, McCarty, Romero, Zepeda 2006). These non-speakers often report feeling excluded in some social contexts, or feeling that their identity is incomplete without the language. Even people who have respect for the language and the culture may feel ashamed for not speaking it and may decide to withdraw from community activities in order to avoid having to deal with this feeling and with their self-perceived "handicap" (Lee 2009). There is strong indication that these attitudes and ideologies can also inhibit people from learning: "in reality, many people are afraid of the traditional language. It is alien, unknown, and difficult to learn. It can be a constant reminder of a deficiency

and a nagging threat to one's image of culture competence" (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998: 65). A reasonable hypothesis is that shame is more likely to be present in communities where the ancestral language is still spoken by a good percentage of the adult population, as opposed to a community where few, if any, speakers are left. For instance, a 30 year old Navajo seems more likely to have anxiety about not speaking Navajo compared to a 30 year old Chickasaw who does not speak Chickasaw, since there is more social and familial expectation for the former to speak his or her ancestral language.

While these studies were conducted in different communities at a different time, they seem to offer a reasonable explanation as to why growing up not speaking the Chickasaw language when one's parents and grandparents did may have been difficult for some people, and could explain current feelings of shame prevalent in this generation. Joshua Hinson (2014) agreed with this analysis as well as with the fact that it is probably harder to be a non-speaker in communities that still have healthy languages compared to the Chickasaws.

An important nuance to the issue of shame was brought to me during my interviews when several people indicated that they have never witnessed anyone being ashamed for not speaking the language, or that shame and embarrassment are actually quite different feelings (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014b; Pitman 2014). Shame is a strong negative feeling, while embarrassment is more about having regrets for not speaking or being self-conscious about it, but without blaming it on oneself. This brings up the issue of how respondents may have read and understood the questions. Additionally, the concept of shame may have been the closest to another negative

emotion felt by some people, anxiety for instance, and since it was the only one offered as a response choice, they picked it.

An alternative explanation that interviewees brought up instead of shame is that many people may have regrets for not having learned the language when they were younger. An elder told me during our interview:

> There's a bunch I talk to, that would say, "Well, I wish my mother had taught me about to speak. At the time, I didn't think I'd ever need to speak Chickasaw. Now it's too late, I'm getting too old. I wish I had learned back then when I was young". I talk to a bunch of them and they all tell me that (Anonymous 2014a).

This corroborates the oral stories of elders discussed in chapter two, and what Amanda Cobb encountered through her examination of the personal narratives of women who attended the Bloomfield Academy (Cobb 2000).

What a few language learners reported is that they may feel or have felt embarrassment or frustration at times when trying to speak the language, but that this is different from feelings of shame (Shackleford 2014b; Hatcher Travis 2014; Gantt 2014). Other people I talked to said that they do not feel ashamed for not speaking the language because they are trying to learn it, or because they never had an opportunity to learn (Shackleford 2014a; Hinson 2014; Gantt 2014; Wallace 2014). As Brooke Shackleford (2014a) puts it:

> I don't really see any point in being ashamed in something that was not really in your hands, but I have felt sad, like I wish I can, but not like embarrassed that I should know it, because I'm trying. There is a little bit of a difference there.

Jeremy Wallace (2014) says:

> I do see a lot of people that do feel like they're ashamed because they're Chickasaw but they don't feel like they are enough Chickasaw if they don't speak the language, which isn't right. They're all Chickasaw, and they were just brought up in a different way.

This last comment seems to contradict my earlier claim that feelings of shame for not speaking the language are not very widespread in the Chickasaw community today. But Joshua Hinson (2014) adds that feelings of guilt can be present every time someone feels bad because they don't know some aspects of the culture and feel like they should:

> So maybe those moments where, someone says something to you in Chickasaw or someone asks, "Hey how do you say such and such?" Maybe people do feel like kind of a twinge: "Damn, I should know that. My father was a speaker. How do I not know that? I should have asked him." That kind of stuff.

Hinson (2014) agreed with me that overall, feelings of shame for not speaking the language are not very widespread today if we consider the tribal population as a whole, especially as people are further removed from the last speaker in their family. Actually, four different interviewees came up with a similar explanation (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014b; Hinson 2014; Gantt 2014). As Keith Shackleford (2014b) puts it:

> Others who never had that, who didn't grow up hearing the language spoken, at least not to any great extent, I don't think they're gonna feel so ashamed. In the fourth generation, they'll feel, "Why didn't they teach it to me?" I think the attitude changes the further generations that you get.

Both Joshua Hinson and Amy Gantt, who are or have been learners in the Master-Apprentice program for a long time, told me that they never felt ashamed for not speaking the language since they never had any opportunity to learn it until recently. Additionally, they did not grow up in Oklahoma (Hinson 2014; Gantt 2014). On this latter point, Amy Gantt (2014) also made the very interesting suggestion that these

expectations and pressure probably vary depending on the family someone is coming from:

> I think people who are […] raised more traditionally, even around the language, might feel like somebody might make fun of them if they say it wrong, or they don't want to draw attention to themselves by speaking it […]. Because like for me, nobody in my family speaks Chickasaw, so if I say it wrong, nobody knows [laughs].

Given that many people I interviewed provided the same explanation regarding who in the community would be more likely to hold feelings of shame for not speaking the language an obvious manner to examine this hypothesis was to look at the age of the respondents who picked "it makes me ashamed that I don't speak it" in Question 17. The results are presented below.

Age groups	Proportion who picked, “It makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it”
18-24	28.21%
25-29	16.95%
30-34	39.13%
35-39	15.25%
40-44	25.00%
45-49	22.45%
50-54	22.22%
55-59	13.16%
60-64	11.11%
65-69	18.75%
70-74	0% (only 6 respondents in this age group)
75-79	20% (only 5 respondents in this age group)
80-84	100% (only 1 respondent in this age group)

(Fig. 17 - Frequency of responses to Q17: How do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken?)

As we can see, the percentage of respondents for each age group who reported shame shows that it does not increase with age, but actually decreases. This means that the survey does not confirm the hypothesis that my interviewees provided. Again, one limitation with this question is that we do not know exactly how respondents interpreted it and how exactly they understood the concept of shame.

As explained previously and shown in figure 16 on page 171, the demographics for respondents who reported feeling ashamed for not speaking the language are interesting in that they have a propensity to follow the trends of people in the population who tend to be more interested in the language (i.e. Chickasaws over non-Chickasaws, Chickasaw women over Chickasaw men, and citizens living in the service area versus "at-large Chickasaws"). Regarding place of residence, while there is throughout the survey a tendency for Chickasaws living in the service area to show more commitment to the language in comparison to Chickasaws living elsewhere in Oklahoma, the ones living out-of-state sometimes ranked high as well (in this instance they reported the most shame). This comparable trend between interest in the language and shame for not speaking is important for Chickasaw language revitalization because it suggests that "shame" may not necessarily impact motivation in a negative way, and could even be a sign that people care about the language. To investigate this question further, I compared the survey answers of people who expressed shame for not speaking to people who did not express it.

Question 17 revealed that people reporting shame for not speaking the language are also more likely to really want to be able to speak the language when hearing it spoken compared to people who did not report shame. They also report more pride in being Chickasaw, more emotional reaction, and less indifference when hearing the language spoken.

	"Ashamed" people	"Non-ashamed" people
It makes me really want to be able to speak it	82.29%	66.13%
It makes me proud to be a Chickasaw	73.96%	49.54%
I get emotional	21.88%	12.44%
I feel indifferent	1.04%	15.44%

(Fig. 18 - Frequency of responses to Q17: How do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken?)

In question 23, "ashamed" people reported higher percentages over "non-ashamed" ones in all motivations that I have discussed as representing positive attitudes towards the language. On the one motivation that I discuss later in this chapter as being more problematic (as it reflects a short-term, financial motivation), "I can raise my points through IDP[87] classes", "ashamed" people scored lower than those who responded as "non-ashamed".

[87] Individual Development Program (IDP) classes for Chickasaw Nation employees

	"Ashamed" people	"Non-ashamed" people
I want to keep the language from disappearing	91.49%	78.03%
I want to understand my culture and my heritage better	77.66%	60.61%
I want to be able to speak to my elders	70.21%	46.21%
I want to participate in cultural activities more fully	48.94%	43.69%
I want to be able to pray in Chickasaw	50%	30.81%
I want to be able to deliver short speeches in Chickasaw	40.43%	30.81%
I can raise my points through IDP classes	15.96%	21.97%

(Fig. 19 - Frequency of responses to Q23: What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw? Check all that apply)

In subsequent questions, "ashamed" people reported wanting more Chickasaw in school in all grades, and more Chickasaw in all social contexts compared to "non-ashamed"

respondents. They also showed that they are more aware of all learning resources available for the language, and approve of all these resources at higher percentages compared to "non-ashamed" respondents.

These results suggest overall that people who reported feeling ashamed for not speaking Chickasaw also show greater concern about the language compared to other respondents. While it is impossible to know what each respondent who chose that specific answer had in mind at the moment they clicked on it, and while their ages do not confirm the hypothesis that I derived based on my interview data, there is strong indication that these people have clearly positive attitudes and commitment towards the language.

A test of statistical significance was also run to test a possible correlation between feeling ashamed for not speaking the language and being a learner of the language. The results are presented below.[88]

[88] I am immensely grateful to Derrell Cox, a fellow graduate student, for running this statistical test for me.

		Are you currently trying to learn the Chickasaw language?	It makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it
Are you currently trying to learn the Chickasaw language?	Pearson Correlation	1	.036
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.449
	N	450	450
It makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it	Pearson Correlation	.036	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.449	
	N	450	498

(Fig. 20 - Correlation table between Question 20, “are you currently trying to learn the Chickasaw language?”, and Question 17, “how do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken?”)

This analysis suggests that there is no correlation between shame and being a learner of the Chickasaw language. We can see that despite the above noteworthy differences in percentages between “ashamed” and “non-ashamed” people, it is impossible to conclude that shame for not speaking causes people to start learning the language.

In my interviews, one person suggested that shame could be a motivation to learn the language (Shackleford 2014a). The idea that shame can cause motivation is perhaps surprising since a lot of research in Second Language Acquisition, including Krashen and Terrell’s (1998) concept of low affective filter, emphasizes the importance of positive feelings and attitudes for the learner to be receptive and for acquisition to

take place. Shame obviously goes in the opposite direction of that. However, as we have discussed, it remains unclear what people had in mind when they selected "it makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it". The term "shame" may well be exaggerated, and people may have wanted to express the more nuance feeling that they are missing something by not speaking the language and that they really think they should know it.

Overall, we can see that when talking about shame and other negative feelings towards a language, the worst-case scenario is when people sense shame about the language. In a typical situation of language shift, many parents consider that it will simply be better for their children if they grow up speaking the dominant language. Another way shame or negative feelings may play out is when people sense them due to the fact that they are unable to speak their ancestral language. This is a context that is comparatively better for language revitalization, because at least these feelings reflect the fact that people consider their ancestral language to be important.

In the Chickasaw community today, it seems that a majority of people do not feel ashamed for their inability to speak the language. This is a great asset for language revitalization, as people can become involved in learning the language without having to deal with excessive pressure or high expectations from their families that they should speak at a high level of proficiency. It is true that 21.48% of the respondents to Question 17 picked "it makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it", but we have discussed that it remains unclear if they truly meant *shame* in a strong semantic sense. Additionally, these respondents demonstrated a significantly high level of support and involvement with the language throughout the survey.

Integrative motivation

So far we have discussed several motivations for people to learn the Chickasaw language, including preserving the unique heritage and identity of the Chickasaw Nation, and their sense of responsibility towards its survival. Looking from a more individual perspective, we have examined feelings of shame and embarrassment for not being a speaker.

The form of motivation discussed in this section is integrative motivation, which consists of wanting to learn the language in order to associate oneself or interact with the people or culture speaking that language. In contrast, wanting to learn the language in order to earn Individual Development Program (IDP) credit in order to receive an extra paycheck at the end of the year is a form of instrumental motivation, meaning that the learner is motivated by a form of material benefit in acquiring the language (Bennett 2006: 276).

Except for the IDP credit answer, all the other response choices to question 23, "What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw?", are forms of integrative motivation (see figure 12 on page 154). The results for this question can be seen as good for language revitalization because the literature demonstrates how integrative motivation may ultimately be better for language learning than instrumental motivation. Indeed, if learners are valuing the language for its own sake, they may be more receptive and more persistent about their learning in the long term (Bennett 2006: 279). This is especially important in the case of endangered languages, as the material

benefits and employment opportunities that come with learning to speak them may be very limited, if they exist at all.

The first aspect of integrative motivation that comes out of my interview data is pride in being a Chickasaw, or pride for being able to speak or having learned the language. One respondent reported feeling proud to speak with his granddaughter in a language that very few other people can understand (Clark 2014), and that some of the youth who have learned it report a similar pride in their accomplishment. Throughout my interviews, I was told that learning the language is a way of showing pride for one's identity as a Chickasaw. So in this sense, pride is primarily a motivator, and is a form of integrative motivation. Additionally, one respondent reported that she would feel very proud of herself if she could learn the language (Hatcher Travis 2014). In that sense, pride would be the result of having achieved something exceptional, which would enhance a person's self-esteem. Question 13 in the Language Survey asked respondents if they think that someone who speaks Chickasaw has more chances of achieving their goals in life. The results are presented below.

	I don't know	I completely disagree	I slightly disagree	I slightly agree	I completely agree
Percentage of respondents	29.82%	12.28%	15.13%	29.82%	15.79%

(Fig. 21 - Frequency of responses to Q13: Someone who speaks Chickasaw has more chances of achieving their goals in life)

The most interesting is the responses left in the comment section for this question. 15 respondents related the ability to learn Chickasaw to a strong indicator of individual determination. Here are the most interesting and representative comments:

> Learning their native language they have a better drive to strive for better things because they have pride in themselves and where they are from (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).
>
> To speak Chickasaw fluently, someone must be very dedicated to that goal … Anyone with that determination, probably does have a better chance to achieve their goals in life (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).
>
> I do not believe just the fact of speaking Chickasaw gives anyone a better chance, but their resolve to learn it is the deciding factor (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Overall, we can see that pride can be both a motivator and a reward. Regardless of the level of fluency that an individual may be able to achieve, the simple fact of being interested in the language and attempting to learn it, even at a minimal level, can give an immediate reward. In the long term, ambitious and hard-working learners could also enhance their self-esteem through their achievements.

Another example of integrative motivation that comes out of the interviews is the desire to connect with elders, Chickasaw speakers, other family members, and other Chickasaws. In Question 23 of the Language Survey, "speaking to my elders" was the third most often selection in the list of motivations, picked by 45.99% of the respondents, or 56.32% of Chickasaw respondents. Several respondents (Wallace 2014; Pitman 2014) explained how speaking the language, even at less than fully conversationally levels, allows them, or would allow other people, to connect with the elders or the speakers in their families:

> That's what keeps our people connected. It's what keeps our youth with us […]. It makes me feel proud to know that I'm able to teach her [his daughter] that, and that I was taught that from my mom, my grandma, and my elders (Wallace 2014).

Other respondents discussed that speaking the language allows reaching out to the elders. This is something that gives them satisfaction, or that they would like to be able to do (Anonymous 2014b; Johnson 2014). The few second language learners who have been able to reach a conversationally proficient level can attest to that: "It's meaningful to be able to communicate with folks. It's meaningful to have an understanding of the culture in ways that non-speakers don't. It means something" (Hinson 2014).

Other respondents explained how the language can potentially provide a way to connect with other Chickasaws and share the unique heritage that they have in common. This is a form of integrative motivation in that the goal is to connect with other people speaking or being interested in that language. "Knowing that allows you to better know yourself and others, whether it'd be family or friends. That's a connection and that helps people" (Shackleford 2014a). "Be able to talk the language transcends a lot of these things that keep us as Chickasaws apart, like the old people, the full blood brown don't really care that I was raised in Texas, that I'm mostly white, that kind of stuff. They say, "Hey Josh, he's a good guy, he can talk Chickasaw". And that's cool" (Hinson 2014). Ezra Johnson tells me about the people he speaks Chickasaw to, and since they do not correspond to his biological family, he adds: "They are kind of like my language family" (Johnson 2014). In this context, connecting with other people through the language also goes in the same direction as the first motivation discussed in this

chapter, which is to maintain the unique identity and culture of the Chickasaw people. This latter can be shared across generations, across families, and regardless of phenotypes.

Aside from pride and wanting to connect with family and elders, my interviewees discussed how learning the language has allowed them, or would allow them, to understand their culture better. In Question 23 of the Language Survey, 43.31% of respondents (or 47.13% of Chickasaw respondents) answered that they are motivated to learn Chickasaw "to participate in cultural activities more fully", while 30.66% (or 39.85% of Chickasaw respondents) reported wanting to be able to pray in Chickasaw.

In the follow-up interviews, people discussed some other practical benefits about learning the language, such as understanding place names derived from Muskogean words (Shackleford 2014b), understanding one's ancestors' worldview better (Hatcher Travis 2014), or using Chickasaw as a code language during a martial arts tournament (Clark 2014). Other respondents expressed that if they knew the language, they would like to pray in Chickasaw, or they would try to incorporate it through cultural activities in the youth workshops that they facilitate (Anonymous 2014b, Taylor 2014).

Because integrative motivation consists of the desire to learn a language in order to identify or interact with the people or culture speaking it, I asked people if they thought speaking the language could change the way other people perceive them in the community. In other words, would it give them more credibility in regards to their knowledge of the culture? In Question 23 of the Chickasaw Language Survey, "What

motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw?" this would correspond to the answer, "I want to be able to deliver short speeches in Chickasaw". While a few people discussed how knowing the language can give someone prestige, it did not emerge as a very strong motivation for people overall.

The comments supporting that idea came from the few people who have attained a good level of fluency as second language learners, and few other learners mentioned this as a motivation. "I don't think it would be too much different. Most people speak English. If you have a question you can still ask and you'll get an answer", Brooke Shackleford (2014a) told me. Someone else brought up the obvious point that the remaining first language speakers have something that no one else does (Shackleford 2014b), or that being able to pray or give a short speech in Chickasaw are definitely things that very few people can do (Johnson 2014). Two advanced learners who have done or are currently doing the Master-Apprentice Program expressed more articulated views on the benefits of having attained a good level of fluency. "It's meaningful to have a place in the tribe where that's what I do. It's meaningful to be known as that kind of person" (Hinson 2014). "A lot of people that I work with will say, "Hey, how do you say this or that?" Usually I can answer them. Sometimes I have to ask Hannah. But it's been really nice; it's been a good thing" (Gantt 2014). We can see that overall, being a speaker of the Chickasaw language can definitely give prestige to someone, since it is an expertise that very few other people have. At this point in time, there is strong indication that this prestige is associated with the first language speakers, which may be why it did not come up as a very important factor of motivation for language learners.

We can see that a few advanced learners then are enjoying some prestige by having reached relatively high levels of fluency. However, only by talking to Joshua Hinson did I get a sense that learning the language can even lead to a sense of inner-transformation. “I think it can change someone not just economically but also culturally, emotionally and spiritually. If you really give yourself over to it, it will change your life […] in substantive ways” (Hinson 2014). His mention of the emotionally and spiritually transformative nature of language learning echoes Jeanette King’s research on second language learners of Maori, whom she calls “language fanatics” (King 2009: 106). She talks about the potentially transformative nature of heritage language learning on spiritual and emotional levels (King 2003: 113).

Overall, Chickasaw language learners have not really thought about potential personal benefits to any great extent. This tends to further confirm King’s (2003: 118) hypothesis that with relatively few speakers and learners of an Indigenous language, responsibility rather than individual benefits is often a more important source of motivation:

> The more people that know and are learning the language, the more the beneficial effect on the individual is emphasized. On the other hand, the fewer people who know and are learning the language the more the beneficial effect on the language is emphasized.

However, the fact that a few advanced language learners have discussed individual benefits indicates that this could change in the future. With a greater number of advanced learners, there could one day be a shift towards more discussions about the benefits of learning Chickasaw at an individual level.

Instrumental motivation

Integrative and instrumental motivations are typically discussed together as they encompass the main motivations that individuals can have in learning another language. Instrumental motivation refers to learning another language to seek a form of economic benefit, or as a mean towards that end, such as getting a better job or seeking a degree. The Individual Development Program (IDP) classes offered by the Chickasaw Nation to its employees are an example of instrumental motivation. While I have already suggested that integrative motivation is more significant and plays a bigger role in current preservation efforts, it is still very important to analyze how instrumental motivation plays out in terms of Chickasaw language learning today. While the concept of instrumental motivation can come across as having a negative connotation, the language revitalization literature discusses that it can in fact play a very significant role, in the long-term, in revaluing a minority language and bringing it back into daily use.

As I previously discussed, the survey results for Question 23 suggest that integrative motivation is significantly stronger than instrumental motivation in the context of language revitalization efforts in the Chickasaw community today. Additionally, a breakdown by different groups in the population shows that Chickasaws tend to have a stronger integrative motivation while non-Chickasaws have a stronger instrumental motivation. The results for Question 23 showing this are presented below:

	Proportion who picked, "I can raise my points through IDP classes because I work for the Nation"
Overall respondents	22.14%
Chickasaws	14.56%
Other Native Americans	27.38%
Non-Natives	40.58%
Chickasaw men	16.42%
Chickasaw women	13.68%

(Fig. 22 - Frequency of responses to Q23: What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw?)

Keith Shackleford (2014b), who co-teaches a community class in Purcell, contested the explanation that a majority of respondents, especially Chickasaws, are driven by integrative rather than instrumental motivation.

> I think most people are involved at the IDP level. That doesn't show up in the percentage of the response as to their desire but I think that's where the involvement is because it's compulsory, to some degree. If you want to have additional pay, then IDP. That's not a bad thing; it just doesn't captivate people to really maintain, grow, and develop. So I think in one sense this survey, if it were flipped over, you'd have a more accurate reading of what is happening. This is more like desire, but the reality is kind of like the opposite.

By attending the Purcell language class for a semester, I was able to witness the issue of IDP motivation on a few occasions. Keith Shackleford, Leerene Frazier, and Matt Clark, discussed this a few times (Ozbolt 2014). What Shackleford and Clark explained

to me is that a lot of people come to the language class to earn their IDP credit and once this is done, they stop coming. Shackleford (2014b) explains to me that this is why the class is always full in the fall (the community language classes run from October to May). As an illustration, I saw a woman at the class twice, and the second time she came she was very honest and upfront about the fact that it was going to be her last class, given that she had reached her IDP requirements. Something similar happened another night with an older gentleman who came and signed up, did not take any notes and left over the break (Ozbolt 2014). In the open-ended responses throughout the Language Survey, especially in Question 34, "What other initiatives would make you want to learn Chickasaw or would make you even more enthusiastic?" quite a few people mentioned that offering more financial incentives to learning would help (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). According to the highly committed language learners and teachers I talked to, involvement at the IDP level only is not strong enough because it is inconsistent (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014; Pitman 2014). Hannah Pitman (2014), a language instructor in Sulphur and Tishomingo, tells me that a few speakers were very opposed to the Language Program at first, but they decided to take part in it once they found out that people get paid for doing it. An instructor from another class discussed a similar issue with me. In the Master-Apprentice program, people got involved but at the end of the year, it was clear that they had not made the progress that they were supposed to have accomplished (Ozbolt 2013). This is an issue for the Department of Language, which has now created stronger requirements to monitor people's progress, and has also lowered the amount of financial compensation for participation.[89] The Department of

[89] Joshua Hinson's presentation at the Oklahoma Workshop on Native American Languages, April 11, 2013, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah Oklahoma

Language obviously wants to invest in people who are motivated by the love of the language, who pursue learning for its own sake, and not in people who are only there for the money. Aside from the issue of inconsistency, Second Language Acquisition research suggests that integrative motivation results in better outcomes than instrumental motivation because the learner will be more engaged in "receptive learning" and value the language for its own sake (Krashen and Terrell 1998: 22). Krashen and Terrell's approach to language learning is also based on the concept of "low effective filter", which means that learning takes place when people find the process meaningful and engaging. Being passionate about the language definitely goes in the sense of a low affective filter.

While up to this point I have outlined the importance of integrative motivation, it is important to also point out that integrative and instrumental motivations are not necessarily incompatible. Additionally, it is important to recall that language shift is brought in the first place by socio-economic forces. People shift to the majority language because it is the language of the economy. During my interviews, Joshua Hinson (2014) explained to me that on the long term, there should ideally be some economic incentives to learn Chickasaw, such as getting a job teaching the language, or working at the local radio or TV station, as is the case with Hawaiian in Hawaii, or with Maori in New Zealand (Hinson 2014). As Hinson points out, there are nowadays jobs for people who speak Chickasaw. They have ten employees, which is a good increase from when they started. "Paying my bills… I pay my mortgage because I can talk Chickasaw; big deal" (Hinson 2014). Kari Lewis talks about this in her study of Chickasaw language learners' motivation: "for language revitalization to be successful

on a large scale, language learners will likely need both integrative and instrumental motivation" (Lewis 2011: 64).

As of now, instrumental motivation is limited to the few jobs that are available in the Department of Language. In the Chickasaw Language Survey, a few people who work for the Culture Department also indicated that it is nice for them to attain competency in the language. However, if it is not a requirement to obtain employment, it remains a form of integrative rather than instrumental motivation. I also had an interesting discussion with a young educated Chickasaw woman who has learned some of the language and has intermittently taught a community class in Oklahoma City. She had an opportunity to do the Master-Apprentice program and to go to work for the Department of Language in Ada. She decided to pass on the offer because she felt that it would have limited her prospects in life, in terms of career opportunities and job advancement (Ozbolt 2013). We can see that even with new job opportunities created for speakers of the Chickasaw language, people who are going to choose to do this as a career will still need a very high integrative motivation, because putting the same amount of time and effort to learn a world language or earn an advanced degree in another specialized area of knowledge will provide comparatively greater career opportunities.

Overall we can see that while someone with a very strong desire to learn the language is more likely to have integrative motivation, the challenge may be that the scope of language revitalization will always be limited to a small number of highly committed individuals, whom King calls "language fanatics" (King 2009: 106). Adding some form of instrumental motivation may definitely help with language revitalization,

and convince some people to make a long-term investment in learning the language, which could include teaching it to their children or sending them to an immersion school, if one existed. It also suggests that people could have varying levels of involvement in language learning, depending on their relative goals and the level of fluency that they are seeking.

Total desire of the individual

As has been discussed to this point, one main challenge to language revitalization is to provide sufficient instrumental/economic and integrative/social incentives for people to learn and speak the language. In communities where the ancestral language is still spoken by a significant part of the tribal population, the motivation to learn can stem from feelings of exclusion from one's community, culture, and traditions, caused by not speaking the language (Zepeda, McCarty, Romero 2006; Lee 2007 & 2009; Nicholas 2008, 2009, 2010).

The difference for the Chickasaws is that because there are only approximately sixty-five fluent speakers remaining, people can have access to all aspects of Chickasaw life today without speaking the language. The motivation seems to be more tied to maintaining a distinct ethnic identity, identified by Leonard (2011) who explains how speaking Miami is a way of maintaining Miami identity and existence, and Goodfellow (2003) demonstrates how speaking Kwak'wala is tied to the motivation of maintaining a distinct ethnic identity. An elder who has heard the Chickasaw and Choctaw languages her whole life but cannot speak either one told me that she has never found herself in a

social situation where only Chickasaw was spoken (Anonymous 2014b). Matt Clark (2014) adds:

> And so what is the incentive today to do Chickasaw? It has to be a total desire of one's own personality. There is nothing forcing me to do the Chickasaw language […].That will never be taught in our schools. They don't have to. They already have a hard enough time teaching people English, let alone teaching multilingual. That has to be a total desire of the individual person.

The "total desire of the individual" is a good way to phrase motivation because it seems hard to always explain what suddenly makes someone passionate about the language, although some trends can be discerned in the Chickasaw example. It seems that even under the best circumstances, it is ultimately up to the individual to choose to learn the language, given that it represents a major commitment of time and dedication. Several interviewees explained that motivation should ultimately be something personal, internal, led by love for the language (Shackleford 2014b; Shackleford 2014a; Hinson 2014). Hinson tells me that this motivation has to be long-term oriented and go beyond material benefits. He adds, "They have to want it. If you want it bad enough, you'll get it" (Hinson 2014). Hinson (2014) explains how some extraordinarily motivated people have learned their ancestral language even in the absence of a language program. He definitely fits in that category, along with a very few other Chickasaw. Without this very strong desire, someone is likely to always find many things that stand in the way of the language, and many reasons for not learning it. Hannah Pitman (2014) gave me an example of a student whom I got to meet at the Sulphur class who used to drive for hours from Texas every week just to attend the class. He has since moved to the area and continues to attend the class.

People's motivation/ideologies are flexible

Overall, we can see that the prospect of motivating people to learn the Chickasaw language remains a very challenging issue. While people involved in Language Revitalization efforts should do the best they can to encourage other people and provide them with resources and knowledge for them to learn, it remains in the end, a completely individual choice. The word 'choice' may not even be the most appropriate, given that some people, both in the open-ended questions in the survey and in the interviews, discussed the fact that they should, and would like to learn the language, but that they haven't found the time to do so yet, or that their life circumstances do not allow them to do so at the moment. Of course, this can be a very legitimate issue, which explains why levels of commitment towards the language, individual motivation, and language ideologies are flexible and subject to change over time.

In the previous chapter I determined that one of the main challenges for the future of language revitalization in the Chickasaw community was the high demand for various materials and opportunities to learn the language, especially for "at-large" Chickasaws, when most of the Department of Language's current investment is in the Master-Apprentice Program. In this chapter, I examined an issue that the Department of Language will have to face in the future, which is to find methods to motivate people to learn the language. This is critical because language revitalization efforts can only go so far without people's motivation. Hinson (2014) explains that it is challenging to find a way to motivate people and convince them that language is more important than the

other things that they are doing in their lives. My interviews documented a range of personal stories and specific events or experiences in the lives of my interviewees that made the language important to them, or that triggered their interest to learn it. This was due to a variety of factors, usually based on personal experiences, and not a result of the Department of Language's campaign to promote the importance of the language.

Several individuals for instance, explained that their motivation to learn the language primarily came from other people. Rebecca Hatcher Travis (2014) and Brooke Shackleford (2014a) for instance, both had a parent who was interested in the language, had a Chickasaw dictionary in the home, and would read to them. Jeremy Wallace (2014) tells me that hearing other people speak the language is definitely a source of motivation for him: "when I hear other people, even people who are younger than me that do speak it, then that makes me want to speak it more. It gives me that strive to go out and learn it. Ezra Johnson (2014), an eighteen year-old Chickasaw shared with me that he was not initially interested in the language, but that his involvement in the Martial Arts Program and his close personal relationship with Matt Clark made him develop a desire to learn the language:

> The want for that knowledge, the craving. There are a lot of reasons now but it all started because of martial arts. Now I've grown to need and want the language. The language is like a fire. If you continue to nurture the fire, it still gets off heat. But you'll lose it if you keep it cold, if that makes sense.

Ezra Johnson also said that if he could become proficient in the language one day, he would hope that it could serve as an inspiration for other people to learn.

Aside from people's initial motivation being triggered by their close relationship with a parent, relative, or another person, it seems that sometimes, for some people, the

fact that they grew up outside of the culture made them pursue the language in a passionate manner. At the language class that I attended in Sulphur, three of the most regular students had previously lived outside of Oklahoma during most of their lives and moved in the Service Area upon retiring. Rebecca Hatcher Travis (2014) is one of them, and she shared the following with me:

> I also feel a sense of loss in so many of us losing the culture and the language during assimilation and all of that. I want to reinstate it for that reason also. I want to re-learn the language as I am re-learning the traditions and a lot of the culture aside from the language […]. Leaving outside the nation gives me that strong desire, or at least is partially responsible for it I think.

Joshua Hinson's (2014) story is also very similar, in that he grew up far removed from the culture, and yet developed an exceptional motivation later in life to learn the language:

> So for me it was just that fascinating thing that was out there that I knew was my heritage but you know, it's just cool, that's my dictionary from when I was a little kid, I just thought that was the greatest thing ever. I didn't care that I was saying stuff wrong; I just wanted to say stuff.

Finally, another related trend in people's original desire to learn the language came from several respondents who indicated that they developed an interest in the language once they started to work for the Nation, sometimes in the culture department but not always (Wallace 2014; Gantt 2014; Holden 2014). This shows us once again that people's motivation and attitudes towards the language can ultimately change. The fact that Chickasaw children and adolescents today are growing up at a time where the language is promoted and encouraged once again, while being much more accessible than it was ten or twenty years ago, represent a critical asset for language revitalization.

With a new generation being brought up with a fresh take on the language, positive language attitudes are likely to continue to grow stronger.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have reviewed that a major motivation to learn the Chickasaw language today is to maintain the unique identity and culture of the Chickasaw Nation. This unique identity, and even the existence of the Nation itself, is seen by many as endangered if the language was to completely go away. A strong motivation to learn the language for many people is to keep the language from disappearing, which conveys a sense of responsibility towards it. This finding was to be expected, and confirms previous studies of Indigenous language learner motivation (King 2009).

The issue of shame for not speaking the language is very intriguing and raises a number of questions. On one hand, almost a third of Chickasaw respondents reported it, and yet most people I interviewed one-on-one said that the term is an exaggeration; sadness, regrets, embarrassment and perhaps anxiety may be better terms. The literature has described how difficult it can be to be a non-speaker in an endangered language community that still has a substantial number of first language speakers. These ambivalent language ideologies do not seem very widespread in the Chickasaw community today, probably because most people never had a chance to learn the language in the first place. This may be an advantage for language revitalization as potential learners could approach the language without feeling an overwhelming

pressure or expectation upon them. At the same time, the survey has also showed that people who reported "shame" seem to have greater concern for the language, even if no causality could be found between "shame" and being a language learner. Future studies could examine these ambivalent language ideologies further, as they perhaps sometimes encourage people to learn their ancestral language.

The data also suggests that integrative motivation to learn Chickasaw is important in the community today, which is an important and positive finding for language revitalization efforts. Integrative motivation to learn Chickasaw include wanting to enhance pride in one's heritage, raising one's self-esteem, connecting with other Chickasaws, and understanding the culture better. As was expected, instrumental motivation is not as important comparatively, given the limited economic opportunities resulting from speaking an endangered language. Instrumental motivation cannot take someone very far in their learning if it is the only motivation. However, it does not mean that it should be discarded completely. The Nation is offering a few language-related jobs today, and expending these opportunities in the future could encourage more people to get involved, as has happened in Hawaii and New Zealand. The other advantage is that it allows some people to work full time on language revitalization efforts.

Committing to learn Chickasaw is ultimately a very personal decision. I have presented examples of individuals whose initial decision was influenced by a family member, a friend, the birth of their first child, the fact that they started to work for the tribe, or even the fact that they grew up outside of the Nation. In terms of motivation,

the biggest challenge the Department of Language will have to face in the future seems to be to motivate other people to learn. This chapter has confirmed that this is a daunting task that will probably continue to be accompanied by many frustrations. However, examples of successful language revitalization projects have shown that the hard work of extremely perseverant individuals can ultimately pay off.

Chapter Seven: Children, Schooling, and Families

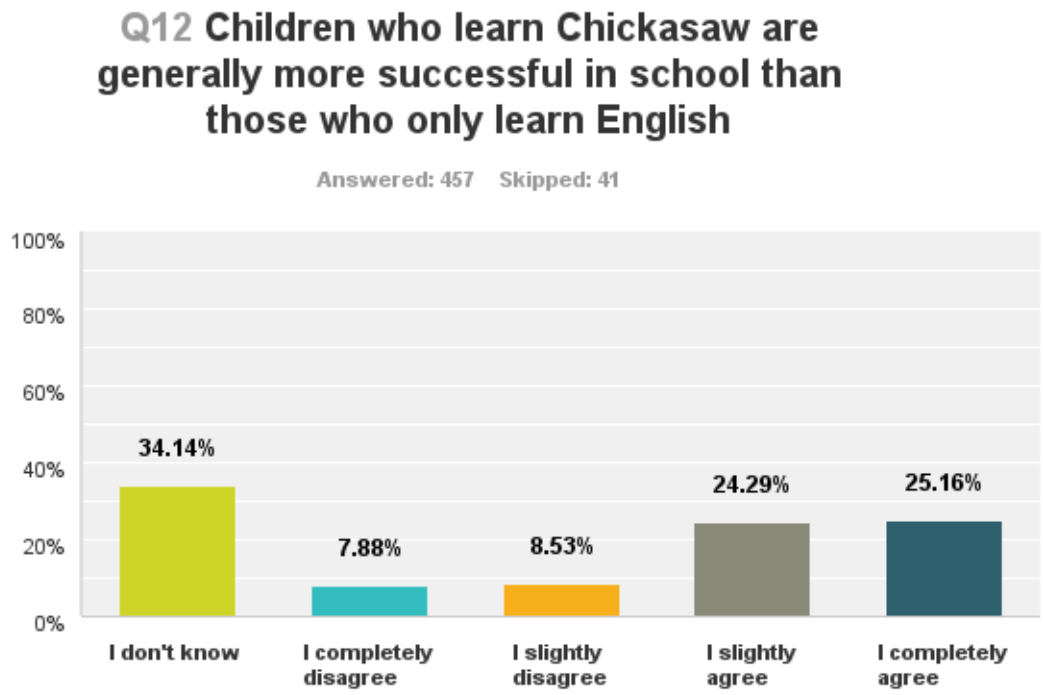
Does all of this matter?

Having analyzed people's general responses to the programs initiated by the Department of Language and having looked more closely at the issue of motivation, this last chapter focuses on how people envision language revitalization by examining their views on the role that families and schools, respectively, should play in the process. Additionally, since the survey has revealed intriguing differences between men and women when it comes to some of their views on the language, I will also discuss gender roles, since they may have an impact on decisions regarding parenting, schooling, and language transmission.

Before examining these specific issues more closely, it is important to comment on the respondents' views regarding the prospect of having their children speak Chickasaw in addition to English. In chapter six, I discussed how positive attitudes towards a language and positive views on the idea of language revitalization do not necessarily translate into motivation and action. In the Chickasaw Language Survey, questions 12, 13, and 14 asked respondents what potential benefits they discern from learning to speak Chickasaw in terms of impacting other areas of life. Question 12 addressed academic success, question 13 on achieving one's goals in life, and question 14 on preparedness to face the hardships of life.

In terms of the perceived outcomes and potential benefits that may result from language revitalization, question 12 was specifically focused on the correlation between

children learning Chickasaw and being more successful in school compared to monolingual English speakers. While an important number of respondents did not perceive this as a possible correlation (34.55%), many others indicated that they slightly (24.35%) or completely agree (24.08%), which is much higher than those who slightly (9.16%) or completely disagree (7.85%).

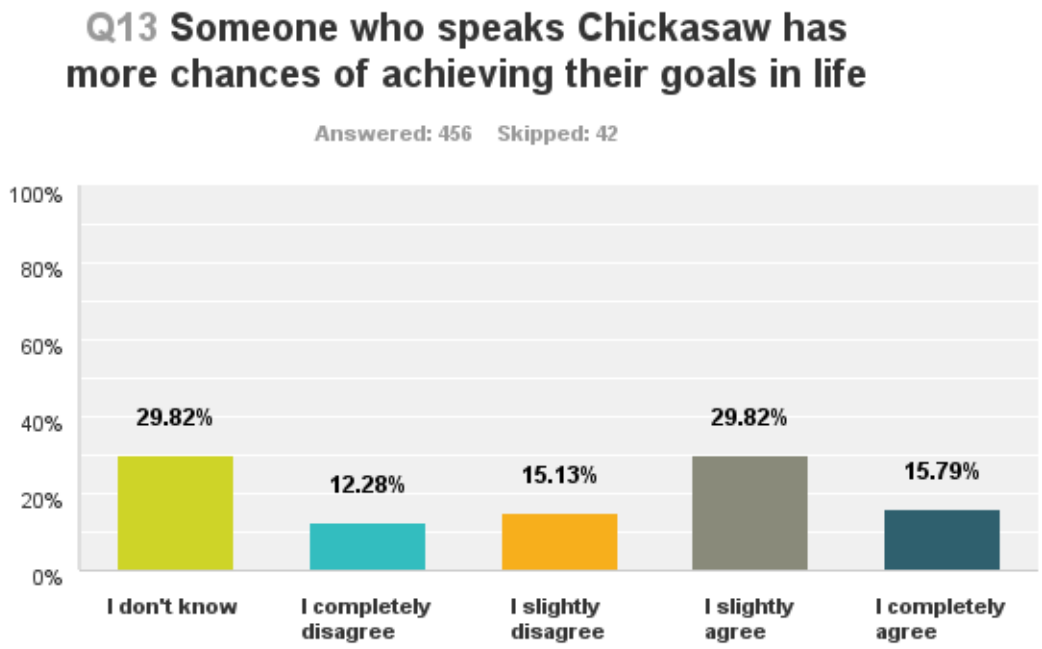


(Fig. 23 - Frequency of responses to Q12: Children who learn Chickasaw are generally more successful in school than those who only learn English)

For this question, no obvious distinction was found between men and women or between Chickasaws and non-Chickasaws through the comparison of the frequencies of answers. These results are encouraging for language revitalization programs and professionals because they demonstrate that a majority of respondents view

bilingualism in Chickasaw as entailing potential benefits. Given that the question was specifically about children, it also suggests that people would be open to the idea of having their children schooled in Chickasaw. In the comments box for this question, 40% of the respondents who wrote a comment discussed what they perceive as being the cognitive and neural benefits of bilingualism. They discussed benefits ranging from an "increased capacity to learn", "better academic success", "cognitive dexterity", "enhanced cognitive ability", "better concentration", "deeper thinking", "cognitive advantages", "increased children's neural connections", "improved cognitive skills", "better reading and writing skills", and "increased intellect" (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014). In one of my follow-up interviews, someone also mentioned that bilingual education would stimulate children's brains and give them more knowledge (Gantt 2014). It is interesting overall to see so many people commenting on the connection between bilingualism and cognitive development. While this argument is frequently cited in the Language Revitalization literature (Hinton 2001a: 12; Berlin 2006: 255; Cummins 1992: 1-12) it may also reflect the fact that this idea is now commonly discussed outside academia, in the popular media for example. Other open-ended comments for this question included that children growing up speaking both Chickasaw and English would develop a higher self-esteem, including knowledge of their culture and heritage, which would enrich them intellectually, and would increase their chances of success in school (Hinson, Linn, Ozbolt 2014).

Question 13 also dealt with potential benefits in life resulting from speaking the Chickasaw language in addition to English.



(Fig. 24 - Frequency of responses to Q13: Someone who speaks Chickasaw has more chances of achieving their goals in life)

Close to half of the respondents indicated that they agree that speaking Chickasaw increases one's chances of achieving their goals in life. More people agreed with this statement than there are people who disagreed, although the difference was not as noticeable as with question 12. Similarly to question 12, no clear difference was found between Chickasaws, other Natives, and non-Natives, or between Chickasaw men and Chickasaw women. In the comment box, a good number of respondents indicated that if Chickasaw is learned as a second language, this would demonstrate a strong sense of determination and confidence on the part of the person. As a result, this person would be more likely to achieve their goals in life, an idea I also discussed in chapter six as relating to motivation. Another set of respondent suggested that by knowing Chickasaw, a person would have more pride and knowledge of their tribal identity, which may

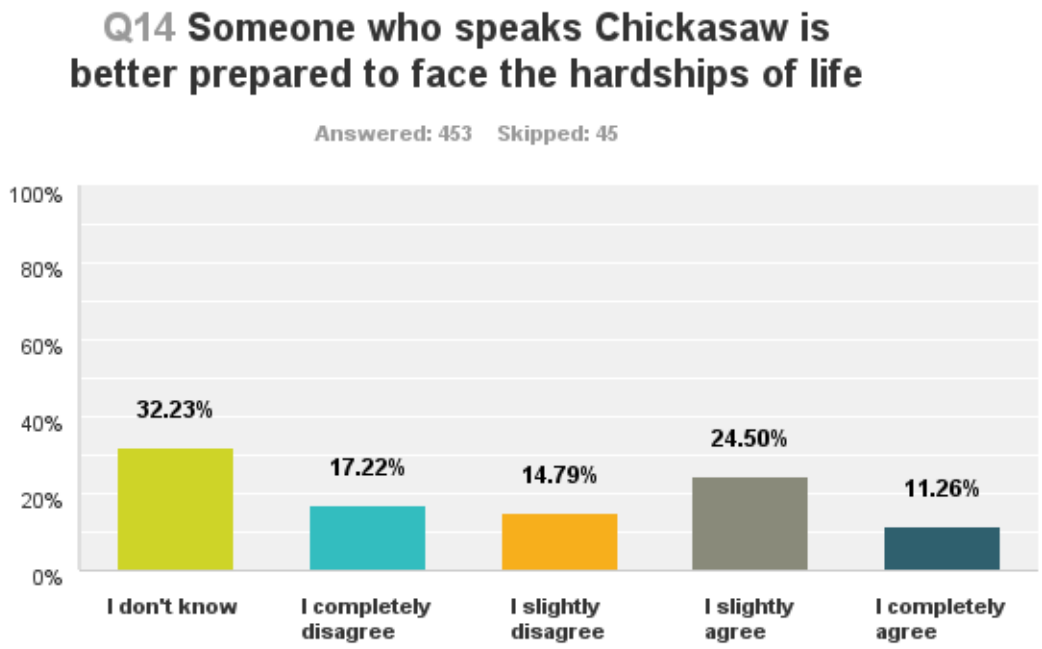
translate into a higher self-esteem and capacity to achieve their goals in life. Again, results for this question are rather encouraging because they show that a good number of people see some potential benefits in speaking the Chickasaw language, aside from mere language skills. This could translate into the desire to learn the language, or to encourage their children to learn Chickasaw.

Another question that addressed the potential benefits of speaking the Chickasaw language to other areas of life was question 14, asking for a possible correlation between fluency and preparedness to face the hardship of life. Slightly more people agreed with the statement than those who disagreed. It was however a small margin. In the comment box, respondents discussed the idea that speaking Chickasaw could give someone the determination, inner-strength, and confidence needed to face the hardships of life. Some respondents also commented on how a strong sense of self and of identity could also help in that regard.

I wanted to include these statements because I believe that if people see benefits in learning and knowing the Chickasaw language that translate to other areas of their lives, they would obviously have increased motivation to learn the language or have their children learn it. Very few studies to this day have looked at the relationship between language vitality and community or individual wellbeing. One study has explored the link between aboriginal language knowledge and youth suicide in British Columbia (Hallett, Chandler, Lalonde 2007). It revealed that in communities where at least half of the tribal members speak their ancestral language, the suicide rate is significantly lower than in communities with less language vitality. Research on children who have been to Indigenous immersion schools shows that in addition to

developing strong ancestral language skills without compromising their acquisition of English nor the development of their academic skills, students also develop and strengthen stronger relationships with their families and elders (Romero and McCarty 2006: iii). Other positive community benefits include the strengthening of cultural traditions, and increased self-esteem and cultural pride (Romero and McCarty 2006: 20, 25). A recent program called "healing through language" has been initiated by Douglas Whalen, President of the Endangered Language Fund. This organization's mission is to support research that can document the health benefits of Language Revitalization efforts in Native North America, as well as other community-level benefits, such as academic achievement[90]. Questions 12-14 in the Chickasaw Language Survey, while they did not measure health, were an attempt to examine people's perspectives on a possible correlation between learning/speaking Chickasaw and benefits in other areas of life. Ultimately, this correlation would need to be tested through both objective and subjective measures, at both the individual and the community levels.

[90] healingthroughlanguage.org



(Fig. 25 - Frequency of responses to Q14: Someone who speaks Chickasaw is better prepared to face the hardships of life)

In my follow-up interviews, several people who are in their twenties or thirties confirmed that the language was not encouraged in their families, or not encouraged at the time their grandparents were adults (Taylor 2014; Anonymous 2014b; Shackleford 2014b). In contrast, they are aware that their children today and in the future are growing up at a time when speaking the Chickasaw language is once again encouraged. Of course the long-term impacts of these changes in language ideologies remain to be seen, but the shift towards positive attitudes and increased resources to learn the language that I described in chapter five provide reasons to be optimistic.

A few respondents indicated that they are enthusiastic about speaking Chickasaw with their children or grandchildren, especially given that they are receptive to it (Anonymous 2014b; Hinson 2014, Gantt 2014). Some parents who are active

learners of the language speak Chickasaw to their children, which was not something that they experienced in their youth. Of course, this opens up the interesting prospect that these children may learn the language earlier, faster, and perhaps at an ultimately higher level of proficiency than their parents (Wallace 2014; Hinson 2014; Gantt 2014). Obviously, this will also depend on how much Chickasaw language they actually speak to their children on a daily basis.

While this may certainly constitute an asset for Chickasaw children and teenagers today, another circumstance is less favorable: the remaining first language speakers are aging. Brooke Shackleford (2014) shared this concern with me by telling me that while she thinks her future children and grandchildren will experience increased exposure to the language at an earlier age than she did, there may not be very many fluent speakers left by that time, certainly not when she has grandchildren. As was discussed in chapter six, these circumstances suggest that language learners today - and perhaps young adults and parents even more so – are in a unique position (or maybe have the responsibility) to impact the preservation of the Chickasaw language. They still have the opportunity to learn the language from the remaining first language speakers, at a time when their children are coming of age. Thus they are in a position to teach and expose their children to various aspects of the culture, which may include the language.

We can see that at least for some people, the idea of learning the Chickasaw language or for their children or grandchildren to do so is important. This now leads us to the question of how this can be achieved. Language immersion, which can be defined

as a method of instruction where the target language is used as the language of instruction, is now widely recognized by most language educators and language activists as the most effective way to develop fluency, since it aims to replicate how languages are learned during early childhood (Hinton 2001a: 8; Krashen and Terrell 1998: 16). Echoing this, two of my interviewees explained to me that they feel stuck at the word level in their learning of the Chickasaw language, and that immersion instruction would be the most effective way to advance beyond that. My own experience attending community language classes and consulting learning resources confirm this. "Without immersion it's going to be real hard and if it doesn't involve the total family household, it's going be hard to get the kids to do it" (Clark 2014). "Some kind of immersion, whereas it's one-on-one or a school or at home, is necessary for the language, otherwise you're just going get words, you're not going get structure, you're not going get people comfortable putting words together and conversing, if all we know is words. Words are a start" (Shackleford 2014a). In terms of situations that would immerse people entirely in the Chickasaw language, Matt Clark (2014) discussed with me the possibility of having a one-week camp two or three times a year, with full immersion in the Chickasaw language. Aside from language camps and the Master-Apprentice program, the two main contexts for learning a language discussed in the Language Revitalization literature are to (re)create an immersive learning environment in either the school or at home. I will now review what my study reveals in terms of how people envision the role that schools and families should play in the process of language revitalization, starting first with the schools.

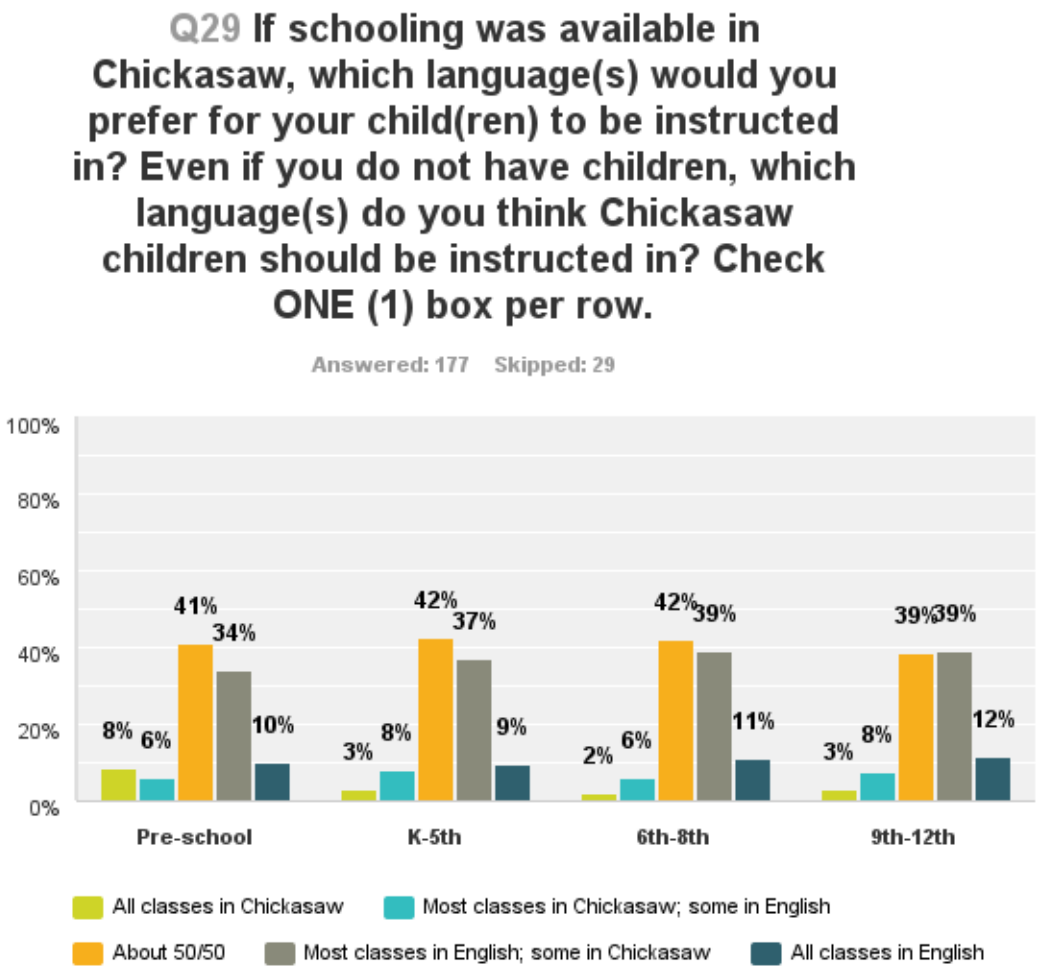
The schools

Question 29 inquired about school and asked respondents what proportion between English and Chickasaw they would like for their children to be instructed in, if schooling was available in Chickasaw. The results seem to mitigate the high proportion of people who have reported that they are learning the language, that it is a critical aspect of Chickasaw identity, or that speaking Chickasaw in addition to English may impact someone's life in positive ways. Despite the favorable/positive results in previous questions, we can see that people are not necessarily ready to have their children schooled in Chickasaw, or at least not entirely in Chickasaw. For all grade levels (pre-school, K-5th, 6th-8th, 9th-12th), the highest response was from people wanting a ratio of 50/50. However, the percentage in favor of "more English" was always higher than for "more Chickasaw", even for Chickasaw respondents. Only among Chickasaw respondents was the demand for "all in Chickasaw" higher than for "all in English".

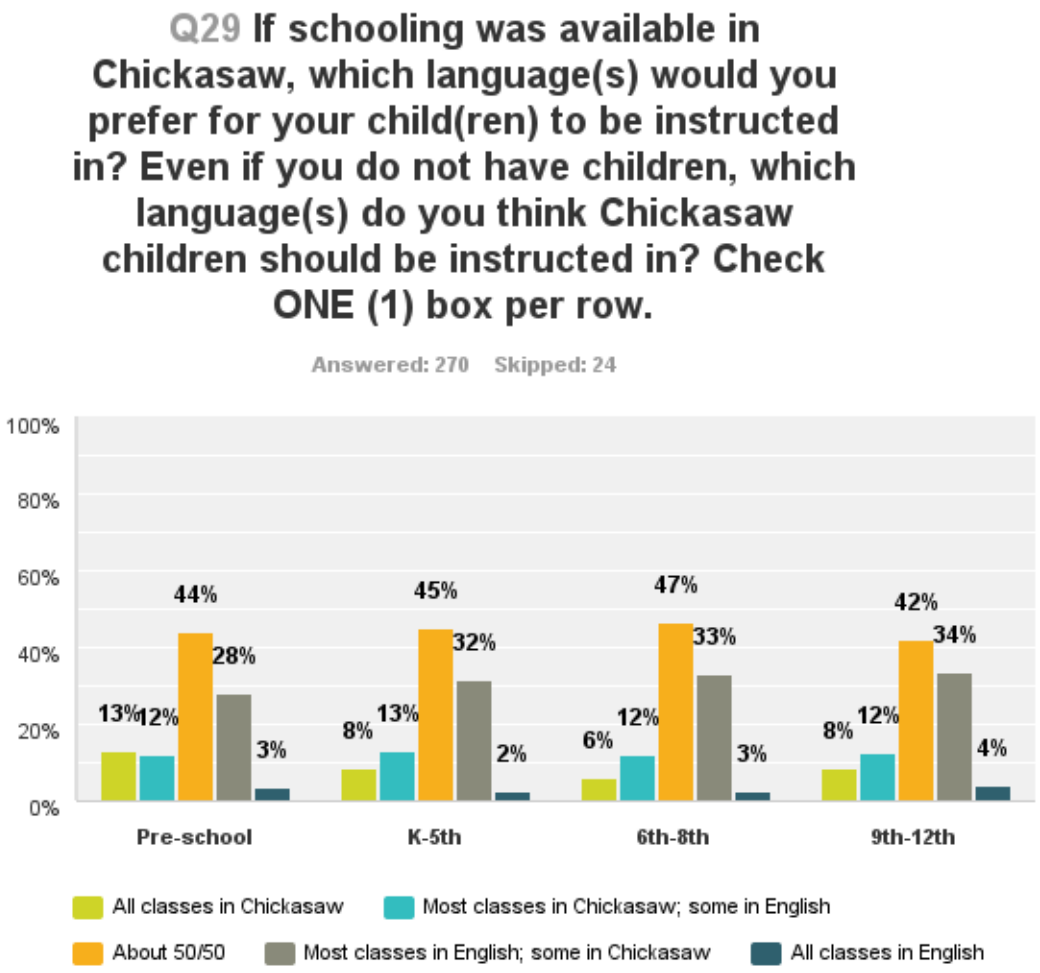
The desired proportion for instruction in the Chickasaw language is higher in pre-school, and tends to decrease as the grade increases. In that sense, this trend follows the models employed by Indigenous language immersion schools, where more English is progressively incorporated as children get older (Fillerup 2011: 151; Romero and McCarty 2006: 20, 22). What is perhaps more surprising is the fact that the demand for schooling "all in Chickasaw" or "mostly in Chickasaw" is not higher, given the strong support for the language expressed by a number of respondents in previous questions. The logic with immersion schooling is that children will learn the dominant language outside of school, which should justify teaching in the Indigenous language as much as

possible, given the unequal power of the two languages at a broader societal level. In addition, research shows that it takes approximately five to seven years for children to develop age-approximate fluency in a second language, if the exposure to that language is consistent and substantial enough (Romero and McCarty 2006: iii). People expressed their desire for bilingualism by choosing the 50/50 option, but bilingual education works best when children already speak their ancestral language when they enter school (Hinton 2001a: 8). If the goal is really to raise the number of bilinguals and if children are no longer acquiring the ancestral language in the homes, then there is strong indication that immersion education is the best option (Hinton 2001a: 8-9), since it does not compromise children's acquisition of the dominant language in the long term (Fillerup 2011: 156). These results could in fact reveal a need for the Department of Language to conduct more public education about the potential positive outcomes of immersion education in other Indigenous communities.

Another noticeable difference in the results is the fact that Chickasaw women expressed a desire for schooling in Chickasaw in higher proportion than Chickasaw men. Chickasaw women reported wanting more Chickasaw in school than Chickasaw men for all grade levels (pre-school, K-5th, 6th-8th, 9th-12th). Chickasaws living in the service area expressed a desire for more schooling in Chickasaw, but only slightly more so than Chickasaws living elsewhere.



(Fig. 26 - Frequency of responses to Q29 for Native Americans from other tribes and non-Native respondents)



(Fig. 27 - Frequency of responses to Q29 for Chickasaw respondents)

Advantages

In my follow-up interviews, respondents discussed various advantages to having an immersion school in Chickasaw. The first involves the fact that children already spend most of their day at school and thus it would be convenient and beneficial to use this large amount of time to teach them the language (Hinson 2014; Hinton 2001a: 8). Another interviewee also talked about the fact that children learn languages faster. While his daughter is currently learning some Chickasaw in Headstart, he knows that

she would learn a lot more through daily immersion (Wallace 2014). Four of my interviewees heard about the Cherokee Immersion Charter School in Tahlequah Oklahoma, and indicated that they believe this school has been doing a very good job at teaching the Cherokee language to children (Shackleford 2014b; Shackleford 2014a; Wallace 2014; Pitman 2014). Two elders I interviewed and who wish to remain anonymous told me that an immersion school in Chickasaw would be a good thing and would definitely help with language preservation (Anonymous 2014a; Anonymous 2014b).

Aside from the fact that schooling can be a very efficient way to teach languages to children, a few other important factors should be considered. Two of my interviewees, who are themselves parents, pointed to the fact that since most parents do not speak the language themselves, schooling would be the best option for their children to learn it (Holden 2014; Gantt 2014). Another practical advantage with a school is that in a classroom environment, the language can be taught simultaneously to a number of students, while the Master-Apprentice program only trains one person at a time (Hinton 2001a: 8).

Challenges

In terms of challenges to having public schools teach primarily in Chickasaw, the main one discussed in my interviews was the anticipated difficulty in finding a sufficient number of capable teachers. On one hand, most of the fluent speakers in 2014 are in their sixties and older, and do not have the certifications that would allow them to teach in the public schools (Pitman 2014). Matt Clark (2014) also tells me that knowing

about something is actually different from knowing how to teach it, a gap between skills and pedagogy that he has observed in both the Chickasaw language and throughout his career in martial arts.

While using speakers as public school teachers is a challenge, the reverse is also true. When I asked Joshua Hinson about the possibility of having an immersion program at some point in the future, he replied that one of the biggest challenges would be the lack of childcare providers who are proficient in Chickasaw: “If we were to do an immersion education […], that would require us to be more proficient than we currently are. We got to grow more second language learners that are proficient […]. We need more people, badly. We need more women too” (Hinson 2014). Amy Gantt (2014), a learner in the Master-Apprentice program, tells me that she would be interested in working in Chickasaw language education at some point, but that right now, she does not know of any teacher working with children who is also fluent in the language.

Aside from the issues of teaching certification and language proficiency, further discussion of the Cherokee Immersion Charter School, caused three respondents to comment on the fact that Sequoyah's Syllabary is a great asset for the Cherokee Nation. They also commented on the fact that they see the Cherokee school and their syllabary as part of a larger foundational effort to preserve their language, and that the Chickasaws have not laid out these foundations (Shackleford 2014b, Shackleford 2014a; Clark 2014).

Joshua Hinson (2014) also brought up the issue that learning a language in school can lack the naturalness that is part of ordinary language acquisition, because children are being talked to a lot instead of talked with, so they learn a lot of

imperatives, but lack in other aspects of the language. Leanne Hinton (2001a: 9) confirms this, adding that transmitting traditional cultural values in a school setting is very challenging: "the school is a specialized setting that makes inflexible demands in terms of subject matter and styles of interaction […] If the language is learned solely in school, then it is school culture and school values that are learned along with it". Overall, these challenges are part of what language revitalization efforts constitute, and they do not represent resistance to the idea of teaching Chickasaw to children.

Concerns with English/academic achievements

Most of the people I interviewed who support a Chickasaw immersion school also expressed a lack of concern about their children's acquisition of English. The fact that the surrounding society speaks English almost exclusively is a clear indicator that children would still learn to speak English fluently, even if their schooling was mostly in Chickasaw (Clark 2014; Shackleford 2014b; Hatcher Travis 2014; Shackleford 2014a; Holden 2014; Gantt 2014). While the last monolingual speaker of the Chickasaw language passed away in December 2013 (Russon 2014), most of the remaining speakers are fully bilingual, a living example for community members that bilingualism is achievable and would not cause someone to have problems in English language proficiency.

Matt Clark (2014) also told me that he does not believe second language learners could acquire Chickasaw to the point where it would no longer require code-switching to English as the dominant or first language. The fact that the Chickasaws live in a larger society where English is so prominent and the fact that even the fluent

remaining speakers have to occasionally insert English words that do not have a Chickasaw equivalent are a proof of that. “Will it ever be used totally without English or any other language? No. I don’t believe it will”. Hannah Pitman (2014) tells me: “well I think now there are so many kids who are part Chickasaw or Cherokee so I don’t think you can really say, “well this is going to be a Chickasaw school” because a lot of them speak nothing but English and you’re just thrown into something like that”. Her intuition is confirmed again by existing Indigenous language immersion schools, which are never *entirely* in the Indigenous language, both in terms of the curriculum and the language(s) that children speak outside of the classroom (Romero and McCarty 2006: 20, 22; Fillerup 2011: 151; Arviso and Holm 2001: 206).

Overall, while my interviewees were generally more committed to the language than the average Chickasaw population, I still perceived at times some uncertainties about bilingual education, which coincides with people’s ambivalence, as revealed in question 29 of the Language Survey. A young adult mentioned that learning two languages could be challenging for children at times, as they wouldn’t always know when to speak English and when to speak Chickasaw but that it would be manageable overall (Wallace 2014). Another one said that the development of their academic English could be a concern, to some extent (Shackleford 2014a). A third young adult explained that he would prefer for his future children to be schooled at a 50/50 ratio between Chickasaw and English, as he would be concerned that his children would not speak English well enough to function properly in mainstream society, if they were only instructed in Chickasaw (Johnson 2014). Again, these views do not constitute an opposition to immersion schools, but they perhaps reflect a lack of knowledge about

them, and a possible need for clarification on the part of the Language Department regarding the outcomes of immersion education in other communities, including no evidence of dysfunctional English proficiency. Measures of English language development in several Indigenous language immersion schools across the United States have shown that children ultimately acquire English as well as children who go to English-only schools (Romero and McCarty 2006: ii-iii), although it may take them a few years to close the gap (Romero and McCarty 2006: 20). On standardized English tests, children who have been to Indigenous language immersion schools perform just as well as students who have been to English-only schools, and sometimes even better (Romero and McCarty 2006: 18, 23; Arviso and Holm 2001: 211; Fillerup 2011: 156).

During my follow-up interviews, respondents did not express overt concern about the academic achievements of children attending immersion school (Shackleford 2014b; Hatcher Travis 2014; Shackleford 2014a; Holden 2014). This goes in the sense of the positive views towards bilingualism expressed in question 12, "children who learn Chickasaw are generally more successful in school than those who only learn English", with 49.45% of respondents agreeing with the statement, 10.78% disagreeing, and 32.76% not knowing. This is confirmed in the literature. Measures in Hawaii show that students who have been to Hawaiian immersion schools perform just as well on standardized tests, and sometimes better, than those who went to English-only schools, and pursue a college education in similar proportions (Romero and McCarty 2006: 18; Wilson and Kamana 2006). At a few Navajo immersion schools in Arizona, students have been shown to perform as well as their English-only counterparts on English

standardized tests, and better in mathematics (Romero and McCarty 2006: 20, 23; Arviso and Holm 2001: 211; Fillerup 2011: 161-162).

Would you send your children/younger relatives?

Given these relatively minor concerns, it is not surprising that five of my thirteen interviewees indicated that they would send their children to an immersion school if one was established (Clark 2014; Anonymous 2014b; Wallace 2014; Holden 2014; Gantt 2014). Ezra Johnson (2014) and Keith Shackleford (2014) expressed their lack of enthusiasm about school based language acquisition in general. Keith Shackleford (2014) has a very family-oriented approach to language revitalization, since he started teaching Chickasaw to his children as a part of their home-schooling long before the Department of Language was established (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014). Ezra Johnson (2014) also said that he would prefer to home-school his future children. So their disagreement is not about immersion education but concerns about public schools in general, which they view as not providing a very high level of academic achievement and a different foundation for the development of a child than the family does. Aside from these individuals, most people I interviewed told me that the teaching and learning of Chickasaw should take place both in the schools and in the homes (Anonymous 2014a; Hatcher Travis 2014). Another young adult shared that she likes the idea of an immersion school but would need to look at other factors, such as the quality of the teachers and the school in general (Shackleford 2014a). Only one adult, who does not have children, expressed a clear disinterest in a Chickasaw immersion school, explaining that there is not enough use for the language in society today, and

that learning it could entail non-specified challenges for her children. In her case, she is not against the schools specifically, but simply not convinced of the benefits of learning Chickasaw (Taylor 2014).

The homes

Based on my discussion of the advantages and challenges of using the schools as a site for Language Revitalization, and their outcomes in other communities, I will now present "homes" as another major site for language learning. Given that the goal of reversing language shift is ultimately about the restoration of the ancestral language into daily use, even a strong immersion school cannot achieve this independently. These initiatives will fail without significant and consistent reinforcement on the part of families and the community as a whole. This is especially true given the need to provide the cultural knowledge that reinforces language acquisition, an element that is difficult to provide in school based programs (Hinton 2011: 9, 10; House 2002: 60, 72-76; Nevins 2004).

While not all language activists or models of language revitalization are based on the use of schools, virtually none of them ignore the household, given that this is where Indigenous languages were traditionally learned, and also where language shift is most acute (Hinton 2011; McCarty 2008: 219; Hinton 2013; Romero-Little, Ortiz, McCarty 2011). Since the family largely the foundation of someone's upbringing and one of the most central influences in a person's life, the household offers the prospect for advanced language learners to teach endangered language to their children, with the

ultimate hope that it will become their first language, or one of their first languages (Hinton 2013: xiv). This idea is particularly strong in Joshua Fishman's (1991: chapter 381-415) work, a major theorist of Language Shift and Revitalization. To him, the breakdown of the traditional family played an important factor in language shift, and so the family needs to be the place where reversing language shift begins, to then expend to other domains of society.

Fishman argues against the widespread belief that schools can reverse language shift. He is not opposed that they can play a role, but he claims that they cannot do the job entirely on their own. Fishman believes that schools can have an initiatory role in revitalization by revalorizing a language, but that a lot of reinforcement is necessary outside of school. He considers the family to be the most important vector in language transmission, and he deplores the fact that nowadays children are spending less time with their families, and more with childcare specialists. He considers that these new domains of socialization should be targeted by revitalization efforts. His ideal language revitalization model starts at the local level since he argues that successful revitalization efforts were initiated at the local level, and not from the top-down (Fishman 1991: 368-380; McCarty 2002; McCarty and Watahomigie 2004).

The Chickasaw Language Survey reveals that the family, and especially familial (parental) desire to teach Chickasaw to younger family members, can be an important motivator for people to want to learn the language. In question 23, "What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw?" 40% of the respondents who wrote in the comment box explained that they would like to be able to teach the language to their

children, grandchildren, or other family members. Family was the most important theme that emerged from the comment box for this question.

Illustrating this, seven of my interviewees explained that ideally the home would be where the language is taught and learned. This is confirmed as an effective context for language acquisition as this is how the sixty-five remaining first language speakers of Chickasaw acquired their Native language during their childhood (Anonymous 2014a; Anonymous 2014b; Hinson 2014). While the school represents a large part of the day, speaking the language at home represents an even longer and more continuous period of time (Pitman 2014). Again, one key issue is the fact that the vast majority of parents today don't know the language, and it would be hard to expect many of them to take the time to learn it. In this case, the prospect of learning it in school appears optimum in the current situation (Shackleford 2014a; Hinson 2014). Charles Holden (2014) explains that for this reason, parents should be learning the language as well, and that if children learn it in school, they will end up teaching it to their parents at home.

In the homes, Joshua Hinson (2014) explains that the main challenge is to fight against the dominance of English, which represents a huge challenge when it comes to accessing media. Indigenous language activists may take some radical decisions to limit the use of mainstream media in the household, such as not having a TV, given that it may send a message to children that English is more prestigious than Chickasaw (Hafsteinsson and Bredin 2010; Ginsburg 2002). Various studies have shown that children who grow up in multilingual environments are able to discern at a very early age if one language has more prestige than another one, sometimes even before they

start going to school (Gomez De Garcia, Axelrod and Lachler 2009: 106; Hinton 2001a: 3).

Ezra Johnson and Jeremy Wallace related that they would like to teach both English and Chickasaw to their children, although they are not fluent speakers at this point and Ezra does not have children (Johnson 2014; Wallace 2014). Their views are worth discussing because they reflect idealized conceptions of bilingualism between English and Chickasaw. However, just as in our examination of schools as a site for language revitalization, in the midst of a society were English is so powerful and dominant, research suggests that parents should privilege the use of the target Language as much as possible in the home, especially if one of the two parents is not fluent, since children will learn the dominant language outside of the home (Hinton 2013: 228-230). As Leanne Hinton (2001a: 13) explains:

> If parents try to do something like spend "equal time" on the two languages, it is the endangered language that will suffer, for unlike the mainstream language, the endangered language receives little or no reinforcement outside the home. Since children do a great deal of language learning outside the home, the parents, if their goal is bilingualism for their children, should spend relatively little time on the language that is dominant in the general environment and concentrate instead on speaking in the endangered language.

In the context of efforts to preserve the Chickasaw Language, the scenario previously outlined remains purely hypothetical at this point, since it does not seem currently realistic to expect young language learners to be able to speak *mostly* Chickasaw to their children. Even a widely acclaimed and extraordinarily dedicated language revitalizationist such as Daryl Baldwin is estimated to speak Miami to his children at home approximately 30% of the time (Leonard 2007: 14). However, just as in the

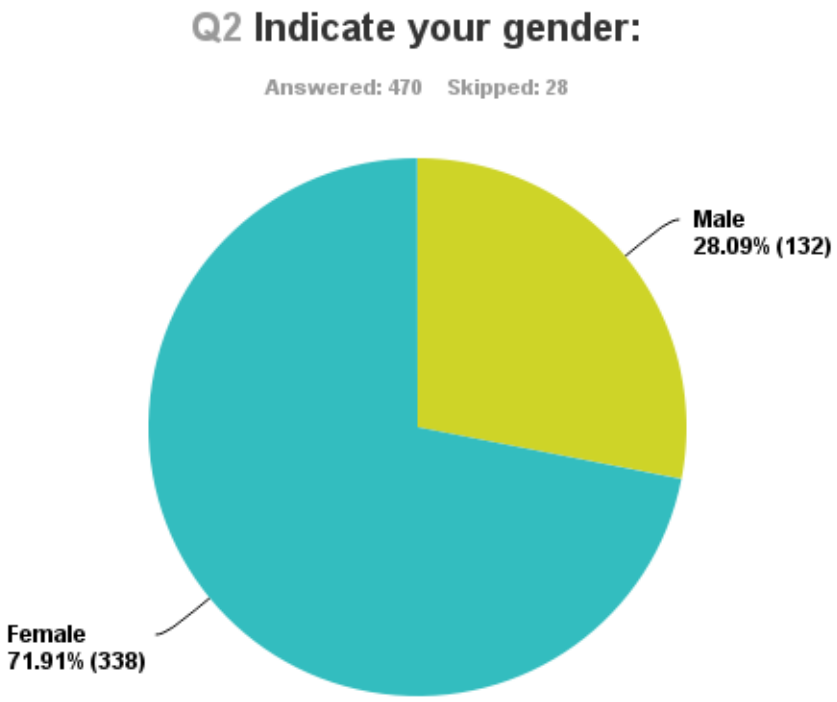
context of schools, some clarifications about how to optimize the home as a site of language learning - if the goal is really to raise bilingual children – could be beneficial.

Men and Women

Building on my examination of people's views on the importance and role of schools and households as sites of learning for the Chickasaw language, I will now discuss some interesting differences between Chickasaw men and women that were revealed through the Language Survey. I discussed some of these results during my follow-up interviews, which allowed me to ask for people's opinions and explanations for these differences. When designing the Chickasaw Language Survey, I decided to include a number of demographic questions because I wanted to see who in the population would be most likely to learn the language and be the most supportive of language revitalization. The survey included questions about respondents' age, education, profession/occupation and income. I hypothesized that these variables could impact someone's likelihood of being a language learner, or taking a more supportive stance on language revitalization. No significant measurable difference could be seen along the lines of these variables in terms of people's views and language-related behavior, except for ethnicity and gender. Given that this chapter is about the respective importance of schools and homes as sites of language learning, the fact that the Language Survey has revealed significant differences between men and women is worth discussing here, as these differences could have implications for language revitalization efforts.

Survey results

The first interesting result from the Language Survey is the gender demographics of the respondents. 71.91% of those who took the survey are women, while 28.09% are men.



(Fig. 28 - Frequency of responses to Q2: indicate your gender)

	I want to be able to pray in Chickasaw	I want to be able to speak to my elders	I need to speak the language if I am to work in a leadership position for the Nation	I want to participate in cultural activities more fully	I can raise my points through IDP classes because I work for the Nation	I want to understand my culture and my heritage better	I want to keep the language from disappearing	I want to be able to deliver short speeches in Chickasaw	Other (explain below)	Total
Q2: Male	**37.31%** 25	**53.73%** 36	**32.84%** 22	**49.25%** 33	**16.42%** 11	**85.07%** 57	**88.06%** 59	**49.25%** 33	**10.45%** 7	283
Q2: Female	**41.05%** 78	**57.37%** 109	**30.00%** 57	**46.84%** 89	**13.68%** 26	**82.11%** 156	**88.95%** 169	**32.11%** 61	**11.05%** 21	766
Total Respondents	103	145	79	122	37	213	228	94	28	257

(Fig. 29 - Frequency of responses for men and women to Q23: What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw?)

In Question 23, "what motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw?" a comparison between Chickasaw male and Chickasaw female respondents does not reveal any striking difference at first, except for the answer choice, "I want to be able to deliver short speeches in Chickasaw". The higher percentage of men having clicked on this answer choice compared to women (49.25% to 32.11%) is noticeable enough to attempt to provide an explanation for it.

	I wonder why people do not simply speak English	It makes me embarrassed when I hear others use it in public	I get emotional	It makes me really want to be able to speak it	It makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it	I feel indifferent, as I would for any other language that I do not understand	It makes me proud to be a Chickasaw	Other (explain below)	Total
Q2: Female	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**16.26%** 33	**69.46%** 141	**35.47%** 72	**4.93%** 10	**79.31%** 161	**8.37%** 17	434
Q2: Male	**0.00%** 0	**1.39%** 1	**15.28%** 11	**69.44%** 50	**19.44%** 14	**11.11%** 8	**56.94%** 41	**12.50%** 9	134
Total Respondents	0	1	44	191	86	18	202	26	275

(Fig. 30 - Frequency of responses for men and women to Q17: How do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken?)

In Question 17, "how do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken?" some of the differences in responses between Chickasaw men and women are very interesting. 19.44% of Chickasaw men reported "feeling ashamed for not speaking the language" when hearing it spoken, while 35.47% of Chickasaw women reported this feeling. 56.94% of Chickasaw men reported "feeling proud of being Chickasaw" when hearing the language spoken, while 79.31% of Chickasaw women reported this feeling. 11.11% of Chickasaw men reported "feeling indifferent" when hearing the language spoken, while 4.93% of Chickasaw women reported this feeling.

So far, these results suggest two things. First, women seem to express greater concern about the language than men do. The fact that they took the time to respond to the survey in such higher proportion than men is a proof of that. A possible explanation that was given to me is that the Chickasaw Nation employs more women than men (Gantt 2014). This was confirmed by an employee in the Human Resources department who informed me that 57% of Chickasaw Nation employees are women and 43% are men (Ozbolt 2014). Additionally, as I explained in chapter three, the ratio between men and women respondents was already quite unequal before the language survey was advertised to all employees of the Chickasaw Nation on December 17, 2013. Before that, the ratio was 29.21% for men and 70.79% for women (for 90 respondents), while 51.69% of the respondents were employees of the Nation. After the survey was widely advertised to the employees, their proportion among respondents rose to 84.28%, and yet the sex ratio was only slightly altered (71.91% for women, 28.09% for men). Thus

the sex ratio among Chickasaw Nation employees could not account for such a difference among respondents as a whole. Additionally, results to question 17 show that women report more pride and less indifference about the language, and more shame for not speaking it; however, as was discussed in chapter six, shame for not speaking is often associated with a stronger motivation and commitment to learning Chickasaw. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, Chickasaw women also want more schooling in Chickasaw than Chickasaw men do for all grade levels. Despite this trend, it is nevertheless interesting that men reported being motivated by wanting to be able to deliver short speeches in Chickasaw more so than women. An explanation for this difference was sought through the follow-up interviews and a review of the literature.

Finally, results to Question 20, "Are you currently trying to learn the Chickasaw language?" were analyzed along several demographical variables. In binary logistic regression analyses, women were found to be 2.288 times more likely (-2LogLikelihood=565.773, Nagelkerke R^2=.045, p<.000) to be language learners than men across all age ranges, which is a significant finding.[91] The rest of this section is devoted to the discussion of possible explanations for these differences, and the implications for future language revitalization efforts.

Women in Chickasaw culture

The first explanation that was provided to me during the interviews is that the Chickasaws are traditionally a matrilineal society, with women being the core of the society and the culture (Hinson 2014). Women were the cultural bearers of a family,

[91] I am immensely grateful to Derrell Cox, a fellow graduate student, for running this statistical test for me.

transmitting the unique aspects of Chickasaw heritage such as domestic products and artwork (Clark 2014). Female family members were the ones who would pass on the traditional stories across generations, mostly to younger female family members (Shackleford 2014b; Hatcher Travis 2014). The Chickasaws have traditionally been a matrilineal society, with people tracing their ancestry through their mother side and being born into their mother's clan (Gibson 1971: 20, Cushman 1899: 435, Hudson 1976: 185). Women's responsibility included the cultivation of crops, collection of wild foods (Hudson 1976: 259), and maintenance of the households (Hudson 1976: 264, Cushman 1899: 395-396). While Hudson explains that women in Southeastern Indian societies did not traditionally hold significant political power at the community level, they owned and controlled the houses and some of the land, enjoying significant power at the familial, clan, and town levels (Hudson 1976: 186, 268).

Since women had a more active role in child rearing they were critically important as the transmitters of culture (Hatcher Travis 2014; Gantt 2014). Today, Joshua Hinson (2014) tells me that women still assume the primary role of transmitting the culture to children, especially when the father is not Chickasaw, which has initiated a debate over whether they should be allowed to participate in, and transmit aspects of the culture that have traditionally been viewed as male domains, such as stickball. In recent history, several factors contribute to the continued role of women in this position of cultural experts and transmitters. April Taylor (2014) tells me that in her family, the women went to boarding schools, came back educated, and retained a stronger sense of identity. This echoes Amanda Cobb's research on the Bloomfield Academy, where

women strengthened their sense of American Indian identity by going to boarding school and acquired skills that empowered them for the rest of their lives (Cobb 2000). On the other hand, men went away to make a living, often served in the military at a time when Native American ethnicity was not a positive attribute. “Our women have more and they remember aspects of things about growing. Whereas the men almost didn’t want to remember it; it was hard for them” (Taylor 2014). Another factor today that contributes to reinforce the image of Chickasaw women as the carriers of the culture is that they often outlive men (Hatcher Travis 2014; Hinson 2014; Pitman 2014). Hannah Pitman (2014) tells me:

> It’s like you go to a small Indian church, and the women will outnumber the men like 5 to 1 or so. You see a lot more women. And these are women who have lost their husband, but there will be more women in there than there are men a lot of times. And that is why I think sometimes if it were not for the women this place wouldn’t still be going, different things that I see, because they’re the ones that stay in there and try to make things work.

Men in Chickasaw culture

Since the focus of my interview-related questions was on women, my interviewees did not comment as much on the traditional role of men in Chickasaw society. As the family providers, men were typically outdoors while the women were at home with the children (Hatcher Travis 2014; Hinson 2014; Anonymous 2014b). Men were hunters and warriors (Gibson 1971: 7, Cushman 1899: 309, Hudson 1976: 259, 267), but also priests, ceremonial, and political leaders (Gibson 1971: 12, Hudson 1976: 268).

An even more culturally distinct tradition that two of my interviewees told me about is that the men used to play the most prominent role in the public sphere by being

the civil, military, spiritual, and ceremonial leaders. They would also be the public speakers and give grand oratories (Shackleford 2014b; Hinson 2014). Keith Shackleford tells me about a modern equivalent of this, through the example of a first language speaker whom he knows who told him once that he would like to be able to deliver a sermon in Chickasaw one day. Shackleford is not sure why this elder cannot do it today, but it could be due to the fact that the audience would not understand (2014b). In any instance, this would be an example of a contemporary context for public language use by men, which is why the answer regarding short speeches in question 23 is very interesting, since the results show that this is an important motivation for language revitalization among my male interviewees.

Implications for Language Revitalization

After asking my interviewees for an explanation of the significant differences in attitudes and behaviors towards the language between men and women, as revealed by the Language Survey, I inquired about potential implications that these differences could have on future language revitalization efforts. This was not an easy question for people to answer. A fairly obvious answer to this question was there are more women learners of the language than men, and since they seem more likely to be the ones teaching it to children, they should play a greater role in language revitalization efforts (Hinson 2014; Anonymous 2014a; Hatcher Travis 2014; Gantt 2014). Keith Shackleford (2014b) joked with me that the women may have to play the leading role before the men can get involved:

> So it may well be that the Chickasaw men wait on the Chickasaw women to get the ball rolling and finally when it gets enough people to understand it, they'll

> say, “Ok now I can make speeches, these people can understand it”. That may be what happens! [Laughs]. You know, the women do it all first! [Laughs].

Joshua Hinson (2014) told me that since women are likely to comprise the majority of people working at a language school and involved in home-school programs, they could potentially be targeted for this type of work, and that this is something that could be taken into consideration in future language planning.

Others suggested that men should become more involved than they currently are, especially since they may have a stronger influence on their sons, and that men are more likely to serve as role models for other men (Holden 2014; Shackleford 2014a). Finally, one respondent suggested that strategies to motivate men should be different than for women. For instance, men could be encouraged to know the language through learning about key male figures in Chickasaw history, some of the things that they said in the language, or for instance by learning about the Code Talkers (Taylor 2014).

Conclusion

Overall, one of the most encouraging findings in this chapter is the proportion of people who have reported favorable views about bilingualism in Chickasaw and English. They view bilingualism in English and Chickasaw as potentially leading to an increase in academic achievement, self-esteem, and ethnic pride. For this reason, it makes sense to people that children should be targeted as language learners. In chapter six, I suggested that in an endangered language community with relatively few speakers, the non-speakers have less pressure for being non-speakers compared to a

community with still a relatively high number of speakers. In this chapter, the favorable views on bilingualism could be due in part to the fact that most Chickasaws today are monolingual and live under socio-economic conditions that are better than those of many other Native American communities. Margaret Field for instance, discusses that while some language ideologies support Navajo language maintenance today, others constitute internal factors contributing to language shift. Some people may have internalized the idea that speaking the ancestral language may hold their children back in their acquisition of English, thus limiting their academic achievement. Poorer families may favor assimilation more due to these factors (Field 2009: 42-44).

When it comes to supporting a Chickasaw school, we could have expected support for a higher proportion of schooling in the Chickasaw language. Research conducted in other communities suggest that if the teaching is "only" conducted 50% of the time in the endangered language, this is not enough to produce bilingual speakers, given the vastly unequal power of the ancestral and dominant languages at a broader societal level. Teaching Chickasaw in the schools would offer the advantages of reaching a much higher number of students at once and provide instruction in the language that most parents are not able to give. The disadvantages would be that it would limit language instruction and learning to a specific and limited socio-linguistic environment. At this point in time, the Chickasaw Nation does not have the qualified teachers or the curriculum to open such a school. In the meantime, homes are seen by many as the best environment for learning Chickasaw. Again, the main challenge for learning in the homes is to have parents fluent in the language, and most of them today are not. Overall, while a satisfying proportion of people favor bilingualism in English

and Chickasaw, they perhaps do not realize the enormous commitment and work required to achieve this goal. Again, a "50/50" approach in the homes or in the schools would be insufficient for children to reach bilingualism. Successful cases of language revitalization have shown that even with immersion schools, full support of the community across generations is needed, especially from parents committing to learning the language to reinforce it at home with their children.

At the moment, an urgent need for the Chickasaw Nation is to be able to produce conversationally proficient second language speakers, as the number of first language speakers is diminishing. As we discussed, most of the investment made towards that end is through the Master-Apprentice Program. While the present study does not address this question, I have heard on a few occasions throughout my fieldwork that the effectiveness of this program in achieving that goal is an important concern (Ozbolt 2013; Ozbolt 2014)[92]. This is very understandable given that the future of the Chickasaw language is at stake, and given the investment of time and resources towards that end.

As part of improving the efficiency of the current Master-Apprentice Program, Joshua Hinson and the Department of Language seem to also be working towards a slightly modified version of it, where more than one person would be learning the language at once. Joshua Hinson is currently seeking an interdisciplinary PhD in Native American Language Revitalization at the University of Oklahoma. His research concerns the model of Master-Apprentice Program used in the Sauk Nation of Oklahoma, which he considers to be the best model he has seen so far since there is

[92] Joshua Hinson's presentation at the Oklahoma Workshop on Native American Languages, April 11, 2013, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah Oklahoma

more than one language learner at a time (Ozbolt 2013). Another modification that has been attempted in the Sauk program is to have the master visit the apprentice in their home, so parents can speak the language to their child(ren) as they are learning (Hinton 2011: 316). A last idea that I have heard from Matt Clark (2014) and previously discussed in this chapter would be to create language camps that are truly and fully immersive in the Chickasaw language. My experience attending the Chickasaw Language Immersion Family Camp at the Tatanka Ranch in Stroud Oklahoma in June 2013 showed me that while the language is taught there, it is not taught through full immersion. All these alternative methods of language immersion teaching would offer the advantage of having more than one learner at a time, having learners from different generations, and it would be possible to get started on them now, without having to wait until adequate resources and personnel are available to start an immersion school. This approach would resemble the language nests that were developed for Maori in New Zealand and Hawaiian in Hawaii (King 2001: 119-128; Wilson 2001: 151-175).

With this grassroots approach, other factors to consider would be the demand for homeschooling. The Chickasaw Language Survey did not inquire about this specifically, but it seems that this is something that a good number of families are already doing. It would be important to inquire in future surveys about interest in incorporating the Chickasaw language as a part of a home-school program. The fact that women have expressed such high concern for the language compared to men could be taken into consideration when developing an approach for Chickasaw language through homeschooling. It could at least initiate a debate in the community regarding these

results, and the implications they could have for language planning. These results could give pride to women and reinforce their perceived role as cultural bearers. For men, the implications could be to think about approaches that would tailor language learning and teaching to their specific interests. Interest in public speaking, as revealed in Question 23, "What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw?" would be a great example of this.

Chapter Eight- Conclusion

This dissertation has documented contemporary efforts in the Chickasaw Nation to preserve and revitalize the Chickasaw language, spoken today by an estimated sixty-five first language speakers out of a total tribal population of about 57,000 (Russon 2014). More specifically, this study has investigated the language attitudes and ideologies of Chickasaw citizens, Native Americans from other tribes, and non-Natives, a majority of whom work for the Chickasaw Nation. One limitation of this study is that 84.28% of the respondents to the Chickasaw Language Survey work for the Chickasaw Nation, and the majority of people I interviewed one-on-one are active language learners. Using a completely random sample for the Language Survey would require a full list of all enrolled citizens, and even then, the people who are more interested in the language would have probably been more prone to fill out the survey compared to people with less interest in the language.

In terms of surveying non-Chickasaws, one approach would be to randomly select participants in the jurisdictional area of the Chickasaw Nation to investigate their views on the Nation's attempts to preserve and promote its language. Taking such an approach may have revealed less supportive views of the Chickasaw Nation by local non-Chickasaws. Employees of the Chickasaw Nation, compared to respondents who were randomly selected, seem more likely to have had prior exposure to the Chickasaw language through the Individual Development Program classes. These classes are offered to all employees of the Nation in different categories, Chickasaw culture and

language being one, with the prospect of earning an extra paycheck at the end of the year if a certain number of credits are met. The employees are also likely to be aware of the current initiatives of the Nation in attempting to revitalize its ancestral language. However, as was argued in this dissertation, positive ideologies towards the language and awareness and access to learning resources do not necessarily translate into action. This conclusion was reached in part through interviews with more active and advanced second language learners of Chickasaw. In that sense, while the selection of interviewees was even less representative of Chickasaw people in general than it was for the Language Survey, it was justified because I wanted to gain the perspective of some of the most motivated and dedicated language learners in the Chickasaw Nation today.

In chapter four, I discussed the discourses that the Chickasaw Nation promotes, many of which are presented through digital video and emphasize the unique identity of the Chickasaws. An extensive series of video segments emphasize and demonstrate the unique spirit and identity of the Chickasaw Nation and tie its historical legacy to the extensive accomplishments of the contemporary Chickasaw Nation. In these videos the Nation is presented as being both modern and traditional, and its citizens as being diverse and united. In this context the language is presented as unique and as a critical aspect of Chickasaw identity, representative of a unique culture and people, and being a gift from God. The agenda behind these discourses revalue the Chickasaw language through a form of strategic essentialism, which defines the Chickasaw people as being

distinct from everyone else in the World. This philosophical stance also justifies language revitalization to both citizens and the outside society.

Additionally, the Chickasaw Nation is currently experiencing a period of extraordinary economic growth with considerable impact in Southeastern Oklahoma and beyond. This has resulted in greater public visibility of the region and increased desire for approval from mainstream society. The Nation strives to foster its citizens' sense of identity and belonging, while displaying and demonstrating the relevance of the Chickasaw Nation to the State of Oklahoma, the United States and the global community. While doing so, the Nation also wants to convey a sense of not being any less American by being Chickasaw. In this context, the Chickasaw language is sometimes publicly promoted alongside the accomplishments and contributions of the Nation to the economy of Oklahoma or to the history of the United States. These discourses justify to all Chickasaws, and to the rest of the world, that preserving and revitalizing the Chickasaw language is a justified and even a necessary endeavor.

In chapter five, I outlined some of the most positive and the most challenging trends in contemporary attempts to revitalize the Chickasaw language. In terms of positive trends, the most encouraging factor is the clear shift towards positive language attitudes that has occurred over the last ten years. Of course, since the idea to preserve and revitalize the Chickasaw language first emerged, the movement towards positive language attitudes has been very gradual. The last ten years however, saw the creation of the Department of Language, the development of many new resources to learn the language, and a deliberate effort to promote discourses emphasizing the importance of

preserving the language. It appears from the Chickasaw Language Survey that these efforts have paid off by boosting people's positive attitudes towards the language. Overall, it is safe to say that most people in the Nation today support the concept of Language Revitalization. They believe the language should be preserved and that doing so would be a good thing for the Nation. They believe that the Chickasaw language would contribute to tribal solidarity and is necessary in their efforts to preserve their unique identity and heritage. Purist language ideologies exist in the Chickasaw Nation today. For the most part they correspond to people who do not agree with the way the language is changing, especially in the hands of people who did not grow up speaking it as their first language. This disagreement can translate into disapproval or opposition to current language revitalization efforts, disbelief that the language can be taught and learned as a second language, and consequently foster doubt that it can ultimately be preserved. However, these purist ideologies are not held by a majority of the tribal population. It can be assumed that purist ideologies will tend to decline through time as the number of first language speakers decrease, and the number of second language speakers increases.

While this study did not attempt to measure how language revitalization efforts might positively impact people at the community or individual level, my observations in the community confirm that the act of learning the language and speaking it with limited proficiency conveys significant meaning for people. As such, while a lot of people have indicated that they support the idea of language revitalization, being an active and regular learner is a different story. The main barriers towards learning that

people have identified consist of lacking the time to do it, and lacking access to appropriate resources. Additionally, many people indicated that the language is very hard to learn. Attempting to learn an endangered language completely unrelated to English with only sixty-five first language speakers and scarce language learning resources, is undoubtedly a very challenging task. The Chickasaw Language Survey provides indication of possible directions and areas for improved programming including the need for more multimedia learning resources, expanded language classes, more diverse learning activities, and more institutional recognition and rewards for learners. The development of these materials and expansion of programs would require a considerable investment of time and money for the Department of Language, with no guarantee that people would actually like them, use them, or that they would contribute to the development of a significant number of conversational second language speakers. The Department of Language is currently focused on the development of the Master-Apprentice program, which represents a logical investment of time and resources, considering that this approach has produced convincing results in other communities (Hinton 2001b; McCarty 2008: 212-214), and that the Chickasaws are in great need of building a larger pool of conversational second language speakers (Hinson 2014). While conducting this study I felt that there was indeed a dichotomy in the limits of language revitalization outcomes in terms of the relative limits of access to language learning resources and individual motivation to access those resources. My experiences suggest that tribal citizens are more readily inclined to identify the lack of language resources as the major impediment to learning while people working for the Department of Language point out people's lack of motivation as a significant limiting factor.

The second factor, motivation, indeed matters a lot, since people may have access to great resources to learn, and yet do not. This is what I discussed in chapter six. The most important motivation that people identified was their desire to prevent the language from disappearing and the fact that they would lose their unique identity as Chickasaws without it. For this reason a number of people indicated that they felt a responsibility towards the language and would like to be able to pass it to their children. Another factor considered in relation to motivation (chapter six) is shame for not speaking the language, although as discussed it was largely unclear what people meant by shame. My interviews suggest that people who feel shame for language shift often correspond to the generation that "lost the language" - adults in their fifties and older who are not first language speakers. Generally, there are many reasons for people to feel shame in regards to their lack of proficiency in their native language. Feeling that the language is no longer important is the main factor that causes language shift to take place. Once language shift is underway, members of later generations may have doubts about the importance of preserving the language. Similarly, they can feel ashamed for not speaking it if it isolates them socially and culturally, which in turn can be a strong factor in accelerating language shift. One significant asset for Chickasaw language revitalization is the fact that many people are several generations removed from the last first language speaker in their family, and they may have limited knowledge of the history of language proficiency in their families. Because of this, there seems to be little pressure or expectation for most Chickasaw today to be speakers of the language. This is rather positive because it can alleviate the pressures associated with enforced

language acquisition. At the same time it is clear that people who have reported shame for not speaking the ancestral language are also more motivated to learn the language. This is an important finding in the literature on language shift and revitalization because it indicates that feelings of shame, anxiety or incompleteness for not speaking the ancestral language might be important motivations for people to learn their native language.

In chapter six, I also discussed the difference between integrative motivation - the desire to identify or associate with the cultural group speaking a language - and instrumental motivation, which seeks a form of material benefit by learning a new language. This study confirms that integrative motivation is stronger, and should be stronger, than instrumental motivation when it comes to learning an endangered language. People who possess integrative motivation to learn Chickasaw are driven by their desire to enhance their pride in their heritage, their self-esteem, and to connect with elders to gain a better understanding of their culture. Speaking an endangered language also convey a certain status for obtaining an expertise that few other people have. It seems that motivation to learn an endangered language cannot simply be instrumental given that a language is endangered because it has less socio-economic and political power than the mainstream language(s). We have reviewed how it might be possible to create some financial incentives to learn Chickasaw, a very positive motivation for language acquisition as seen in the case for Hawaiian in Hawaii and Maori in New Zealand. Monetary motivation alone is not sufficient motivation for language acquisition as seen in the case of IDP credits in the Chickasaw Nation where

people generally met the minimum of standards and did not pursue acquisition of the Chickasaw language to any great extent.

We have also discussed how becoming a committed learner of Chickasaw is ultimately a very personal decision and largely self motivated. After all, many Hawaiians and many Maoris are not interested in their ancestral language enough to commit to learning it, while the resources and opportunities are superior and greater than those available for many Native American languages. People I talked with discussed various factors and events that initially made them want to learn the Chickasaw language. These factors and events include motivation from a family member, the birth of one's first child, starting to work for the Chickasaw Nation, or growing up outside the Nation and wanting to learn about one's heritage. These are a few examples of potential triggers for a desire to learn the language, but of course, many other people under the same circumstances do not make that decision. As learning the language is ultimately an individual choice and decision, motivating other people is very difficult and will undoubtedly continue to represent a major challenge for the future of Chickasaw language revitalization. The Hawaiian and Maori examples are once again encouraging because in these cases, language revitalization started with a few families and became broader movements once they proved to be successful at the local level. While these two examples should not be considered the only model for "successful" language revitalization they demonstrate that inspiring other people to join is a worthwhile effort that can ultimately pay off. Perhaps the term "motivating" other people should be replaced by "inspiring" other people.

In chapter seven, I explored people's views on the role that schools and the homes should play in teaching the Chickasaw language to children. Many people seem to have positive views of bilingualism, thinking that it could contribute to children's cognitive development, which could translate into higher academic achievements. Other foreseen potential benefits of speaking Chickasaw include an increased self-esteem and pride in one's cultural heritage, which could impact someone's life in positive ways. All of these are important assets for language revitalization, enhanced by the fact that Chickasaw children are growing up in a time when the language is encouraged again, even though the amount they are learning may be limited. It will be important to see what the long-term effects of this will be; it could be that the proportion of second language speakers in this generation will be higher than for the previous ones, which would certainly be an important step towards language preservation as the remaining first language speakers age and become diminished in number. For this reason, many people understand the logic and advantages of "targeting" children to learn the Chickasaw language. Because of this, schooling in Chickasaw makes sense and many people approve the idea despite the limited number of qualified teachers and curriculum materials currently available. When it comes to the proportion of schooling conducted in the Chickasaw language, many respondents favored a 50/50 approach between Chickasaw and English. People wanting all classes or most classes in Chickasaw were in the minority. Again, given the unequal powers and statuses of Chickasaw and English in mainstream society, teaching more Chickasaw in the school would be appropriate if the goal is to produce bilingual children. Research conducted in

immersion schools in other Indigenous communities has revealed that children do not learn their ancestral language at the detriment of English or at the detriment of their academic achievements.

Aside from the schools, the other crucial environment for language learning is in the homes. In many ways, the home is seen as even more important as schools because it is where children were traditionally taught and socialized in the ancestral language. Among contemporary Chickasaw speakers, elders often reminisce about growing up as Chickasaw speakers and its importance in learning the family traditions and values that are the foundation of their Chickasaw identity[93]. This suggests that language and culture are difficult to separate from each other. Language revitalization cannot be successful if parents do not take part in it by reinforcing the language in the homes. In addition, the homes are still seen as a critical environment for the acquisition of culture, something that can be a challenge to integrate and teach in the schools. Some young adults envision a 50/50 approach between English and Chickasaw in their households, but again, the literature on language revitalization suggests that emphasizing the ancestral language as much as possible (to the extent allowed by someone's fluency) is the best option for bilingualism since children will get plenty of exposure to English outside the home. On this question as well, some clarification from the Department of Language regarding the best way to maximize the home as an environment for ancestral language learning could be beneficial.

[93] http://www.chickasaw.tv/home/video/jerry-imotichey-chickasaw-fluent-speaker/list/news

Another important finding in chapter seven was differences between men and women concerning language revitalization in the Chickasaw Nation. Chickasaw women seem more committed to the language than Chickasaw men as they took the survey in much higher number and are statistically 2.288 times more likely to be learners of the language. Additionally, they have reported more pride in the language, less indifference when hearing it spoken, and more "shame" for not speaking their native language which, as we discussed, often translates into a stronger motivation for language acquisition. It is important to remember that the Chickasaw are a matrilineal society, and that women have always played an important role in the homes, particularly in the transmission of traditional culture. Chickasaw women today are often seen as being very prominent among the cultural and language experts, perhaps due to the fact that they often outlive men. Additionally, there are more women than men in leadership positions, and more women working for the Nation as a whole. Chickasaw men have traditionally held leadership positions in politics, war, and ceremonial contexts. The fact that men expressed in the survey much more interest in learning the language to deliver short speeches in Chickasaw is an illustration of this, and could have implications in terms of thinking about different strategies to motivate men and women to learn the language.

Overall, my biggest hope is that this study will contributed to evolving discussions of learning motivation in endangered language communities. Chickasaw graduate student Kari Lewis conducted a previous study on Chickasaw language learners' motivation in 2011, entitled *Pomanompa' kilanompolika chokma (It is good*

that we speak our language): motivations to revitalize Chikashshanompa' (Chickasaw language) across generations. For the most part, my findings corroborate hers. The 2014 Chickasaw Language Survey confirms that the most important motivation across all generations is to feeling of responsibility to preserve and perpetuate the Chickasaw language (Lewis 2011: 78). I have also argued that adults who have children are probably in a unique situation today to impact the future of the language, since they can still access it through the remaining first language speakers, with the potential of teaching it to their children. This supports Lewis' argument that members of "Generation B", which she defines as Chickasaws between the age of twenty-six and fifty-four, feel a particularly strong sense of responsibility towards the survival of the language due to their intermediary role (Lewis 2011: 64, 76-77). In several ways, they are the ones who will need to provide the most interest and work to preserve the language. While I did not interview as many members of Generation A as Lewis did (which she defines as the elders), I agree that they seem particularly pleased with the enthusiasm of Generations B and C (Lewis 2011: 49). Lewis also interviewed learners under the age of twenty-five and as young as fifteen, whom she defined as Generation C (Lewis 2011: 65). Lewis argues that members of Generation C have similar motivations than members of Generation B, although they tend to focus on collective identity more than on individual identity (Lewis 2011: 77).

In my study, while I have compared the remaining first language speakers to the rest of the tribal population, I was not able to determine that age was a significant predictor of learning the language or a significant predictor of particular attitudes towards the language. In other words, nothing in my data emerged that would justify a

precise distinction between Generation B and Generation C, although it is true that I only interviewed adult respondents, who were at least eighteen years old. The fact that Generation C focuses more on collective identity could be due to the fact that given their younger age they may tend to think about the language in a more abstract and idealistic way, while members of Generation B, as working adults and parents, may be more focused on their personal identity as well as on their careers.

I hope that my study has contributed to our understanding of Chickasaw language learning motivation by including people who are not learners or regular learners of the language in the language survey. Otherwise, there is a risk to mainly focus on the handful of people who are already convinced that learning the language is a critical aspect of their identity as a Chickasaw citizen. Studies of learning motivation in endangered language communities should continue to focus on both learners and non-learners, and on positive attitudes and motivations as much as on more negative ideologies that stress feelings of indifference and the absence of motivation to learn the language.

In 2006, Haida scholar Frederick White argued that most of the research on second language acquisition is not applicable to Native Americans attempting to relearn their ancestral languages. Indeed, most of the research in second language acquisition has been conducted among immigrant groups who generally moved to the United States or Canada by choice and learned English through full immersion to meet immediate economic and social objectives (White 2006: 94). Nothing in this model accounts for

the unique history of a tribal community, or the process of forced enculturation into another culture and into speaking English. The prestige and access factors are obviously also very different between the two situations, and so is the motivation of immigrants - largely instrumental - versus Native Americans, largely integrative (White 2006: 96). White had called for defining a new research paradigm called Ancestral Language Acquisition/Learning (ALA/L), which would include the unique social, psychological, and pragmatics factors involved in learning an endangered Native American language as a second language (White 2006: 104). Since then, White (2008) has continued this course of research by looking specifically at student participation and learning styles in the case of Haida students learning their heritage language in a classroom environment. Jeanette King (2009:106) responded to White's call for action by researching the motivation of second language learners among the Maori in New Zealand, by examining their cultural, spiritual, and philosophical ideologies, as well as "internally or externally focused motivators". Internally focused motivators seek a form of personal benefit or self-transformation by learning the language, whereas learners who are externally motivated are more driven by their sense of responsibility towards the survival of their ancestral language. Overall, all these scholars agree on the importance of understanding what motivates language learners in the unique context of their community, as these contexts will vary across cultural groups.

In my opinion, the ALA/L paradigm needs to include some reflection of the degree of language endangerment in a given community. This factor can impact language revitalization efforts in different ways. On one hand, having more first

language speakers may intuitively sound like an advantage. On the other, I have suggested in this study that having less first language speakers can create a situation in which second language learners experience less pressure and less anxiety for not being speakers. This can present a significant asset for language revitalization. The ALA/L paradigm could also consider cultural beliefs associated with the language, forms of language prestige in Indigenous communities, and the role language plays in defining tribal identity. Views in the Chickasaw community on these questions have evolved throughout history and in the last decade have been marked by significant attempts at revaluing the language and encouraging people to learn it. Current efforts to revitalize the language are in fact part of a broader process of sustaining and expanding the Chickasaw Nation politically, economically and culturally. An important component in this exercise in nation building is the transmission of stories that speak to the historical foundations of the Nation and its achievements. These social dynamics are likely to become more prevalent and the current economic security of the Nation suggests that the current investment in language revitalization is likely to continue in the years to come. In the longer term, questions on the return on investments in language revitalization efforts will ask language programs to identify the tangible benefits of language revitalization to justify the financial investment. While these issues are political and economic in nature, the decision to learn and to speak Chickasaw will always continue to reside with individuals and families. As I was told, learning and speaking the language is the result a total desire on the part of the individual, and the language is a fire that has to be nurtured.

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Appendix A: The Chickasaw Language Survey

2. Indicate your gender:
   - Male
   - Female

3. How old are you?
   - 18 to 24
   - 25 to 29
   - 30 to 34
   - 35 to 39
   - 40 to 44
   - 45 to 49
   - 50 to 54
   - 55 to 59
   - 60 to 64
   - 65 to 69
   - 70 to 74
   - 75 to 79
   - 80 to 84
   - 85 to 89
   - 90+

4. Which of the following(s) are you? Check all that apply.
   - I am a Chickasaw citizen
   - I am not Chickasaw, but my spouse or partner is Chickasaw
   - I am Native American from another tribe
   - I am not Native American

5. Where do you currently live?
   - I live within the jurisdictional area of the Chickasaw Nation
   - I live in Oklahoma but not within the jurisdictional area
   - I do not live in Oklahoma

6. What is the highest grade that you have completed in school?
   - Less than high school degree
   - High school degree or GED
   - Some college but no degree
   - Associate degree
   - Bachelor degree
   - Graduate degree

7. What is your occupation?
   - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting
   - Mining, Utilities
   - Construction

- Manufacturing
- Trade
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Information
- Finance and Insurance
- Real Estate, Rental and Leasing
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Management
- Education
- Health Care, Social Assistance
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- Food Services
- Public Administration
- Other Services (except Public Administration)
- Military, law enforcement
- Unemployed
- Student
- Retired
- Other: _____

8. Do you currently work for the Chickasaw Nation?
- Yes
- No

9. What is your level of annual income?
- I prefer not to answer
- Less than $20,000
- $20,000+
- $40,000+
- $60,000+
- $80,000+
- $100,000+
- $120,000+
- $140,000+
- $160,000+
- $180,000+
- $200,000+

10. Do you participate in the following Chickasaw cultural activities? Check all that apply.
- Indian Church
- Stickball
- Stomp Dance
- Language classes
- Culture and History classes
- Arts and crafts

- Genealogy
- Telling or listening to Chickasaw stories
- Preparing traditional food
- Land activities in Chickasaw Country (harvesting, hunting, fishing, etc…)
- Other activities(specify):_____

_____

_____

11. How important is it for you to know about the following traditions in order to feel Chickasaw?

	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Extremely important
The clan system and genealogy					
Chickasaw history					
The language					
Church hymns					
Chickasaw songs					
Traditional stories					
Traditional food					
Arts and crafts					
Stomp dance					
Stickball					
Having visited the Chickasaw homeland (pre and post removal)					
Other (explain):_____ _____ _____ _____					

12. Children who learn Chickasaw are generally more successful in school than those who only learn English

1. I don't know 2. I completely disagree 3. I slightly disagree 4. I slightly agree 5. I completely agree

Explain why (optional): _____

_____

_____
_____
_____

13. Someone who speaks Chickasaw has more chances of achieving their goals in life
1. I don't know 2. I completely disagree 3. I slightly disagree 4. I slightly agree 5. I completely agree
Explain why (optional): _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

14. Someone who speaks Chickasaw is better prepared to face the hardships of life
1. I don't know 2. I completely disagree 3. I slightly disagree 4. I slightly agree 5. I completely agree
Explain why (optional): _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

15. I am more likely to trust someone if they speak Chickasaw
1. I don't know 2. I completely disagree 3. I slightly disagree 4. I slightly agree 5. I completely agree
Explain why (optional): _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

16. Should non-Chickasaws learn the language, if they are interested in it?
- o Yes
- o Yes, but only if they are Native American
- o Yes, but only if they are married to a Chickasaw
- o No

Explain why (optional):_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

17. How do you feel when you hear Chickasaw being spoken? Check all that apply.
- o I wonder why people do not simply speak English
- o It makes me embarrassed when I hear others use it in public
- o I get emotional

- It makes me really want to be able to speak it
- It makes me ashamed that I cannot speak it
- I feel indifferent, as I would for any other language that I do not understand
- It makes me proud to be a Chickasaw
- Other (explain):_____

_____
_____
_____

18. What makes a good language learner? Rate the following factors as you think they help to learn Chickasaw successfully. Check ONE (1) box per row.

	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Extremely important
Individual talent					
Hard work					
Having Chickasaw ancestry					
Hearing Chickasaw spoken when you were young					
Being involved in Chickasaw cultural activities					
Being educated					
Being willing to make mistakes in public					

19. How well do you understand and speak Chickasaw?

- Not at all
- I understand or can say a few words
- I understand many words and I can produce simple sentences
- I can understand it, but I can't speak it
- I understand it and I can converse fairly well
- I am fully fluent. I can converse in all situations as I would in English

20. Are you currently trying to learn the Chickasaw language?
- Yes
- Not at the moment but I have in the past
- Not at the moment but I might try in the future (If so, go directly to question 21)
- No (If so, go directly to question 21)
- No because I already speak it (If so, go directly to question 24)

21. Which of the following methods are you using or have you used in the past to learn Chickasaw?

	Check all that apply
Community classes	
Facebook and/or twitter	
Word of the day and/or word of the week	
Chickasaw.tv	
Chickasaw iPhone, iPad, iPod app	
Chickasaw Nation employee IDP classes	
Language immersion family camp	
Classes at East Central University in Ada, OK	
A dictionary, textbook, or other printed material	
Other:_____ _____ _____ _____	

22. If you are not currently learning Chickasaw, why not? Check all that apply.
- I do not have time to learn it
- It is too difficult to learn
- I am not interested in learning languages
- There is no use for Chickasaw language in today's world
- I am afraid to make mistakes and to be judged by fluent speakers
- The language classes are scheduled at a time when I am not available
- I live too far from where the classes are offered
- The learning materials are not good enough
- I was not aware that there were resources available to learn it
- Other:_____ _____ _____ _____

23. What motivates or would motivate you to learn Chickasaw? Check all that apply.
- I want to be able to pray in Chickasaw
- I want to be able to speak to my elders
- I need to speak the language if I am to work in a leadership position for the Nation
- I want to participate in cultural activities more fully

- I can raise my points through IDP classes because I work for the Nation
- I want to understand my culture and my heritage better
- I want to keep the language from disappearing
- I want to be able to deliver short speeches in Chickasaw
- Other:_____
  _____
  _____
  _____

24. Which of the following Chickasaw language skills are you interested in learning?

	Check all that apply
Producing simple, everyday commands	
Talking about one's family and ancestry	
Being able to make a short speech	
Being able to teach the language to others	
Being able to engage in extended conversations on most topics	
Being able to understand most of what fluent speakers say	
Telling a story	
Producing very simple sentences	
Carrying on a simple conversation	
Praying	
Introducing oneself	
Other (explain): _____ _____ _____ _____	

25. The master-apprentice program is a method of language learning. People who have tried it say it is one of the most successful methods of language revitalization. People who have participated in this program say that they are pretty good at conversations within a few years. The master is someone who is a fluent speaker of Chickasaw and the apprentice is a learner. The two spend 10 to 20 hours a week together and they go about their daily activities and conversations, with all of it in Chickasaw. Since learning is through specific actions, it is easier for the apprentice to understand the language. Both master and apprentice are compensated monetarily.

Have you heard about the Chickasaw master-apprentice program?

- No, not until now
- Yes, I am/was part of this program
- Yes, from someone who is involved in it
- Yes, from people talking about it

- Yes, from the language classes I attend
- Yes, from Chickasaw.tv
- Yes, from another source (explain below):_____
  _____

26. Is it something that you would be interested in pursuing at some point in the future?
- Yes (if so, go directly to question 27)
- Yes, only because it is compensated monetarily (if so, go directly to question 27)
- I am or I have been involved in it already (if so, go directly to question 27)
- Maybe
- No

27. What would prevent or currently prevents you from participating in the Master Apprentice program? Check all that apply.
- I do not have time to do it
- I would consider doing it if there was not such a big commitment of time
- The incentives are not high enough compared to my current job
- It sounds too difficult to me
- I would be too intimidated to work with a fluent speaker
- I am not interested in the language enough to undertake something like this
- I do not know any fluent Chickasaw speaker in my area
- I am fine with the other methods of language learning that are already available
- Other (explain):_____

_____
_____
_____

28. In your opinion, how many people can speak Chickasaw in the world today?
- Less than 50
- 50 to 100
- 100 to 500
- 500 to 1,000
- More than 1,000

29. If schooling was available in Chickasaw, which language(s) would you prefer for your child(ren) to be instructed in? Even if you do not have children, which language(s)do you think Chickasaw children should be instructed in? Check ONE (1) box per row.

	All classes in Chickasaw	Most classes in Chickasaw; some in English	About 50/50	Most classes in English; some in Chickasaw	All classes in English

Pre-school					
K-5th					
6th-8th					
9th-12th					

30. If Chickasaw could be revived as a language of daily use, which language(s) do you think should be spoken in the following contexts? Check ONE (1) box per row.

	All in Chickasaw	Mostly Chickasaw	About 50/50	Mostly English	All in English
Chickasaw owned businesses					
Tribal government					
Health care					
TV, radio, and internet					
Letters, e-mails, and text messages					
Homes					
Indian churches					
Social gatherings					
Ceremonies					
Chickasaw public places					
Other public places					

31. Should tribal employees be required to learn Chickasaw?

- o Yes
- o No
- o They should be encouraged but not required
- o Explain why (optional): _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

32. Since 2007, the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program has initiated a number of projects to support the preservation of the Chickasaw language. Have you heard about these projects, and do you approve them? Check TWO (2) boxes per row.

	I have heard about it	I have not heard about it	I approve it	I do not approve it
Community classes				
Chickasaw Nation employee IDP classes				
Classes in Head Start				
*Chipota Chikashshanompoli***,** a children's enrichment program for school children				
Classes at Byng High School				
Classes at East Central University in Ada, OK				
Language immersion family camps				
Sports activities that include learning Chickasaw				
Chickasaw.tv				
Chickasaw iPhone, iPad, iPod app				
TV commercials in Chickasaw				
Announcements in Chickasaw on KCNP Chickasaw Community Radio				
Signage in Chickasaw				
Printed materials in Chickasaw through the Chickasaw Press				

33. What other initiatives do you think could benefit the revitalization of the Chickasaw language?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____
_____

34. What other initiatives would make you want to learn Chickasaw or would make you even more enthusiastic?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____