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Miami Language Reclamation in the Home: A Case Study

by

Wesley Y. Leonard

B.A. (Miami University) 1998

M.A. (University of California, Berkeley) 2002

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University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Leanne Hinton, Chair

Professor Lynn Nichols

Dr. David J. Costa

Professor Carla L. Hudson Kam

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## Abstract

## Miami Language Reclamation in the Home: A Case Study

by

Wesley Y. Leonard

Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Leanne Hinton, Chair

We are in the midst of a worldwide movement of language revitalization in which indigenous peoples are reclaiming their histories, cultures, and identities. This dissertation reports on a successful example of reclamation. Deemed “extinct” in the 1960s when the only speaker of the language passed away, the Miami language underwent a 30-year period of silence. However, working with 300 years of documentation, the Miami community has begun the long process of bringing the language back. Tribal member Daryl Baldwin is a leader in this process; he began learning the language in the early 1990s and using it with his family. Daryl, his wife, and their first two children have since become conversationally proficient. Two more children were born in the late 1990s and are being raised with Miami as a native language. The family members also play an instrumental role in a community-wide process of language and cultural revitalization.

This study explores the Baldwin family’s language reclamation process. Its special focus is on the two younger children’s language development – that is, how they are acquiring the language and being socialized to speak it in this unique social situation. I adopt an ecological model of studying language

development by considering all factors that play into this issue. These include the history of the language itself, the family's actual patterns of use, their language ideologies, and general cognitive principles of language acquisition.

Part I of this dissertation presents the context in which the younger children's language development is taking place. I describe the history and structure of the language, how this family initially went about reclaiming it, and the design of this project as a participant-observation study in which my presence became a factor. Part II then examines the younger children's actual language development through a series of case studies. I show that they are successfully acquiring the grammar of the language and are also developing a positive orientation toward the language that bodes well for its continued use. In Part III, I conclude that the reclamation of a sleeping language as a language of daily communication is clearly possible.

---

Chair

Date

For my grandparents, Chief Floyd Leonard and Pat Leonard

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## Chapter 1 – Introduction

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*nimehsawina kati kaakisiitwaani mihtohseenia iilaataweeci*

**'I long to preserve the Indian language'**

**-Sarah Wadsworth, Miami speaker**

Many people believe that the death of the only person who knows a given language marks the permanent loss of that language. Crystal expresses this commonly held view when he notes that “[t]o say that a language is dead is like saying that a person is dead. *It could be no other way – for languages have no existence without people. A language dies when nobody speaks it anymore*” (2000:1, emphasis is mine). However, the finality implied by the death metaphor is misleading. This dissertation problematizes the largely unchallenged notion of language extinction through a detailed case study of how a language without any speakers has been learned and is newly being acquired by children in the home.

The “last” native, fluent speakers of the Algonquian language called Miami-Illinois, hereinafter referred to as “Miami”,<sup>1</sup> passed away in the 1960s (D. Baldwin, 2003; Costa, 2003) and the language underwent a period of 30 years where nobody knew it. However, well documented between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Miami started to be relearned and studied in the early 1990s and has since been described and presented in an increasing number of learner-friendly publications (e.g., D. Baldwin & Costa, 2005; K. Baldwin, 2007; Costa, 1994, 1999, 2003; Johnson, 2003). One individual, Daryl Baldwin, is well known among

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<sup>1</sup> Miami-Illinois is a language containing two major dialect groups, Miami and Illinois. The story in this dissertation is specifically about Miami people and the Miami dialect, but the general history of language shift and implications of language reclamation apply to the entire language.

scholars, practitioners, and scholar-practitioners<sup>2</sup> of language revitalization for having taken on the large task of learning the language entirely from documentation and raising his four children with that language (see discussion in Goodfellow, 2003:42; Hinton, 2001b:416).

The language practices of the Baldwins, unfolding outcomes of their efforts in creating new Miami speakers, and the social and theoretical implications of that process are the focus of this dissertation. I report on four years of collaboration with the Baldwins in an ethnolinguistic project conducted between 2003 and 2007. The special focus of the current study is on the two younger children's experience of acquiring, using, and preparing to pass on the Miami language to future generations. The examples and conclusions in this study come from participant observation, linguistic elicitation, open-ended interviews and discussion, and some analysis of primary texts in which the members of the Baldwin family have written or spoken about their own experiences as Miami people and users of the language. While focused on the Baldwins' experiences, this story is supplemented with the experiences of other Miami people – especially my own, as I am also a tribal member and am active in tribal language reclamation efforts.

“Reclamation” is the term adopted throughout the document to describe what I have observed in my interactions with the Baldwins and the larger Miami community. This term encompasses two linguistic processes that are sometimes lumped together under terms such as “language regeneration” or “language

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<sup>2</sup> Through my graduate training, I came to the belief that the field of linguistics overly differentiates “scholarly” theoretical work from “applied” practitioners’ work. As Erin Haynes and I detail (2007), the two are not and should not be mutually exclusive. In particular, many people involved in language reclamation efforts make a concerted effort to blend the two, and I am adopting the term “scholar-practitioner” to refer to these individuals.

renewal". Discretely, both of these terms can be further delineated into "linguistic reconstitution" – that is, recreating a full language from the existing corpus of documentation, and "language revitalization" – that is, creating new speakers and expanding the domains of use for the language. Both linguistic components are clearly important. When one wishes to bring a language back into use, any gaps in the language that impede its communicative ability must be filled in, and that language has to be learned and spoken. However, more fundamental is that a person or community recognize their right to learn, use, and ultimately pass on their language and then claim that right. This social element of self-determination, too, is a part of what I term language reclamation. While access to the Miami language is a right that the Miami people have always had, it has not always been upheld. The Baldwins are realizing that basic right by living their daily lives as Miami people and speakers of the language.

Many with an interest in language reclamation express a special curiosity in the linguistic practices of the Baldwins and how their language efforts unfolded, particularly since the Miami language is notable for having gone completely out of use. Reclamation efforts thus had to begin by learning from documentation (D. Baldwin, 2003). Importantly, however, while the Baldwins offer an inspiring example of language reclamation, the critical theme of their story is not that they speak Miami, but rather that they are Miami individuals who make up a Miami family. Although their story is one of language reclamation in practice, it is also a story of six people trying to live a good life as a family, with positive interactions with each other and their larger environment. Family relations influence almost everything the Baldwins do, and are a crucial element of this story.

## ***1.1 Introducing the Study's Participants***

### **1.1.1 The Baldwin Family**

The Baldwins live on a small farm near Liberty, Indiana, a location they have established as a place where Miami is spoken and Miami culture is practiced. However, they are highly social people and interact with the wider non-Miami community outside their home on a daily basis. Furthermore, their home is regularly visited by relatives and friends, both Miami and non-Miami, often with many visitors coming and going on a given day. Their immediate household, however, is comprised of the following six people: Daryl, the father, who is Miami; Karen, the mother, who is non-native; and four children: an older daughter and son, and a younger daughter and son. Their names and ages are given below:

#### Older children:

older daughter – Keemaacimwiihkwa (18) (Ages in December, 2007)<sup>3</sup>

older son – Ciinkwia (17)

#### Younger children:

younger daughter – Amehkoonsa (Amehk) (10)

younger son – Awansapia (Awan) (8)

Many of the interactions that I report on in this dissertation reflect and are driven by the individual family members' kinship relationships with each other. The parents believe they carry a primary role in the socialization of their children, and the older children actively participate and hold responsibility in the socialization of the younger ones. Thus it is often more descriptively revealing to

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<sup>3</sup> The children were four and a half years younger (13, 12, 6, 4, respectively) when the study started.

discuss examples of the Baldwins' language use in terms of their respective family roles – e.g., father, mother, parent, child, older sibling, younger sibling. Furthermore, within these specific roles, the language use patterns of this family often fall into three cohorts: the parents, the two “older children” and the two “younger children”, and I will also make regular reference to these cohorts throughout this document. However, where I have determined a given example to be more reflective of a personal opinion or better described as an individual language use or trait, I will refer to the family member by name.

The parents and the older children first learned Miami as a second language, primarily by means of Daryl first teaching parts of it to himself from written records, and then sharing his knowledge with Karen and their then-relatively young two children (the current “older children”) beginning in the early 1990s. The older four family members have all since achieved conversational proficiency as second language speakers and use the language for much of their daily communication. Several years into their efforts, another daughter (Amehk, b. 1997) and another son (Awan, b. 1999) entered the family, and both have been raised with the language from birth and are acquiring it as a native language alongside English. I entered the picture in 2003 with some understanding of the Miami language from descriptions in the academic literature, but only very limited ability to actually speak or understand it.

It was with this as a basis that the study commenced, its basic goal being to understand the younger children's language development in early to mid childhood within the special environment of home language reclamation. This study began when Amehk was six and Awan was four, by which point both had already developed significant language skills. At that time, both were speaking

English at a level expected for their respective ages, both were speaking some Miami, and both seemed to understand what their older siblings and parents were saying in Miami. I started participating in their interactions in an effort to learn what they already knew and believed about the language. I wanted to know how their language development was occurring, particularly with respect to the roles of their family members in that process.

### **1.1.2 The “Researcher”**

At this point, it becomes necessary to introduce my role, which was not a passive one. While several people have contributed to this study either by offering ideas and criticisms or by virtue of their participation in Miami language reclamation efforts, it might be said that there were seven main participants – the six Baldwins and me, a person described in academia as “researcher”. Though my academic interest in the social roles of language, affiliation with a research-oriented university, and scholarly investigation into the patterns that emerged from this study do warrant a “researcher” label, in this case my role was far more broad. As the Baldwins grew as people and as users of the Miami language, so did I. My own experience is part of this dissertation; I am both the narrator and a character of the story. I will refer to myself through the first person throughout the narrative, and by name (“WL”) in excerpts from conversations in which I was an interlocutor. My personal background and ideologies also played an integral role in this study and are thus discussed below.

I have always been involved in the Miami nation, my grandfather Floyd E. Leonard (b. 1925) having served as principal chief for most of my life and having instilled a strong sense of Miaminess in me. He has always taught me the

importance of knowing my history and taking an active and positive role in Miami affairs. Researching the process of language reclamation in an attempt to better guide the practice is one of the ways I have chosen to serve my people. As a concerned tribal member and linguist, I believe that members of the Miami community should have access to the language.

Similarly significant in my own background is my experience with multiculturalism and multilingualism. My father is Miami, but my mother is Japanese, and I grew up in Oxford, Ohio, a town where neither component of my cultural background was particularly common. I went to Saturday Japanese school in Cincinnati, Ohio for seven years (1985-1992) and worked for a small city in Japan for two years (1998-2000) as its “Coordinator for International Relations”, a job that involved creating and implementing international awareness programs for the city. Through this background, I observed and experienced cultural misconceptions, but also saw how education and socialization to appreciate diversity could counteract them.

Raised bilingually in English and Japanese and acutely aware of the social challenges of being different from the “mainstream” due to maltreatment and teasing from others, I began this study with an awareness that many children at some point reject their heritage language(s) and associated cultures due to social pressures (see discussion in Hinton, 2001a), as I had to some extent done myself. My academic study of heritage languages and personal experiences with people of many backgrounds also led me to be increasingly aware of the many benefits of knowing multiple cultures and languages. Particularly upon reaching adulthood, I realized that I wasn’t lacking in cultural knowledge, but that I was instead lucky. While stigmatized in many settings, bilingualism and

biculturalism are themselves very positive, and a reasonable hypothesis is that children growing up with their heritage language and culture will not experience such negative experiences as I did so long as their cultural practices are openly valued by the people around them. I thus approached this research with an intent to actively show that I valued the Miami language and culture.

Within my general appreciation for Miami culture, I especially value its focus on personal relationships. This has translated to my belief that an ongoing effort to really understand people and their backgrounds is necessary, desirable, and rewarding for all. It was with these ideas as a foundation that I initially began “working with” the Baldwins and learning from and contributing to their efforts. I met Daryl at the June, 1997 Miami language workshop in Oklahoma, where he was serving as the instructor. I briefly interacted with the rest of the family in the early 2000s but did not formally meet the younger children until December, 2002 when I visited the Baldwins’ home. It was during that visit that I had an extended discussion with the family about the possibility of doing this study and how the process might unfold. We agreed to give it a try, and the study itself began in June, 2003.

This study and the interest and knowledge of language that it sparked resulted in my becoming increasingly involved with tribal language efforts. While the single largest shift in my involvement in Miami language efforts was marked by the beginning of this study in itself, a secondary but nonetheless important shift occurred in January, 2004 when I was asked by the elected Miami tribal leaders to serve as chair of a new language committee. Daryl, whose story is a major topic of the dissertation, and David Costa, a scholar of the Miami language and contract linguist for the Miami Tribe, were also asked to serve as

members of this newly created language committee.<sup>4</sup> All three of us accepted the invitations. The language committee now participates in the creation and implementation of tribal language programs, advises the elected tribal leaders on matters of language policy and programs, creates the budgets for such needs, and collaborates with tribal members who have an interest in language and cultural activities in developing programs and establishing a place for the language.

The Baldwins and I had begun this research already having commitments to developing goals together, to making our language more accessible to our community, and to applying the findings of this study to tribal language reclamation efforts. Serving together with Daryl in a professional capacity brought a heightened sense of importance to those commitments as the study evolved. Our joint efforts within the language committee naturally fostered a situation in which we began having even more discussions about language needs of the Miami community, specific issues in Miami grammar, and general issues of how to best use research to respond to community needs and what the role of tribal cultural norms should be in the research process. The implications of these multifaceted and highly personal relationships among all participants of this study are explicitly examined in Chapter 3 and further alluded to throughout the rest of the dissertation as appropriate to the discussion.

## ***1.2 Overview: Language Reclamation in Practice***

As with the growing movement to revitalize endangered languages with native speakers, reclamation of languages without speakers is becoming more common.

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<sup>4</sup> David Costa is also a committee member for this dissertation.

Cases similar to Miami in that they involve small indigenous communities include efforts with Wampanoag in New England (Ash *et al.*, 2001; Feldman, 2001), Kaurna in South Australia (Amery, 1995, 2002), and Mutsun in California (Warner *et al.*, 2006). Leaders of these and similar efforts often articulate the idea of an initial group of people learning the language so as to be able to raise children with it, hence re-establishing the historical pattern of intergenerational transmission (Hinton & Ahlers, 1999:60).

As simple as the model sounds, however, language reclamation represents a complex process with many obstacles. The strong presence of world languages such as English poses a difficulty for the maintenance of any minority language in the United States. Furthermore, whatever social conditions led to a given language's having declined in use may still be present and must be dealt with. Even in the seemingly "easier" situation in which the target language has a significant number of native speakers, revitalization efforts often do not lead to intergenerational transmission, which is widely taken to be crucial. For example, scholar-practitioner Richard Littlebear notes that the vast array of language preservation strategies used by indigenous peoples such as teaching the language in schools, creating electronic pedagogical materials, and making dictionaries do not in themselves reverse language shift. He notes that what must happen for languages' use to continue is home transmission (1996). Joshua Fishman, a major contributor to endangered language theory and reversing language shift, notes the same (1991:4-5). Both write of languages that have native speakers.

Reclamation of languages without speakers has special challenges beyond those of the situations referenced above because the initial learning has to be

based entirely on documentation. In the case of Miami, significant interpretation of that documentation had to occur in order to make it useable. More crucially, however, reclamation of these languages also necessitates an especially strong level of self-determination because the rhetoric of linguistics and of society place it in an “impossible” category, as I detail later. Despite these challenges, however, intergenerational transmission is where the Baldwins’ efforts have led, thus showing that it is possible.

Important is that this story does not represent the hypothetical ideal scenario of language reclamation where an entire society is committed to reclaim a target language, all initial learners have learned it to near fluency, and there are ample resources to meet reclamation goals. Instead, the Baldwins’ story exemplifies a more realistic example of what a committed family can do within mainstream society. In their case, the original learners learned Miami to a level of conversational proficiency but still have a significant amount of grammar and vocabulary to learn. They use Miami much of the time, but live in an English-speaking society and speak English themselves when they can’t express an idea in Miami. Finally, the Baldwins are not independently wealthy. They have to earn a livelihood and cannot always devote their time directly to language reclamation goals. For all of these reasons, their story serves an applied function in that it is potentially applicable for others who have similar goals and who similarly live in the “real world”.

As the first new native speakers of Miami in around 100 years, the younger children’s language development is of great significance and is the special focus of this study. To understand that process in all of its complexity, this study was guided by the general question of how the younger children’s

language development process occurred within their home environment, which is in many ways unique. The younger children get most of their Miami input from their older family members, who are second language speakers, though some of their language input comes from each other. Both sources of input are dominated by home topics and relatively simple morphosyntax, but some of what their father says contains highly complex morphology, vocabulary, and narrative structure. These occasional bursts of more complicated language were likely not frequent enough to have a significant effect in terms of their acquiring words and new grammatical patterns, but they probably helped the younger children understand that Miami is a complex language.

As the Baldwins are a bilingual family, the younger children's Miami acquisition is also within an environment where English is widely used. However, theirs is a bilingual household in which the members make a concerted effort to speak Miami. The Baldwins have gone so far in actively promoting Miami language use that the parents and two older children have an explicit agreement that they will speak Miami whenever possible. In practice, however, the relative use of Miami to English varies greatly depending on conversational topic and other factors, and English sometimes slips in for ideas that they could express in Miami.

Nevertheless, the family members often enforce their agreement, and refer to this practice of reminding or requiring that somebody else speak in Miami as "correction". *myaamia ilaataweelo* 'speak Miami!' (or its truncation *myaamiaataweelo*) are common phrases. Similarly, the Miami phrase *taaniši ilweenki* (literally, "how is it said?") has come to imply 'say what you just said in English in Miami', as illustrated in the two sample interactions given below:

- (1) Interaction between Awan (at age 4 years, 5 months) and his father:

Awan: What do you have?

Father: taaniši ilweenki?

how it is said [i.e., say it in Miami]

Awan: taaniši ilweenki (Here, he appears to simply be repeating his father. This pattern occurred frequently in the first half of this study.)

Father: moohci

no

Awan: keetwi ahtooyani?

what you have it  
'What do you have?'

Father: keetwi? (instructing Awan to repeat himself louder)

what

Awan: keetwi ahtooyani?

'What do you have?'

This sort of reinforcement where Daryl declines to entertain a question until the child has asked it in Miami was common throughout this study. Importantly, the practice is to not answer until the phrase is said in Miami, not to punish the children for using the “wrong” language. Although Daryl sometimes pretends to be angry, he really isn't and the children know that any admonition for having spoken in English comes in good humor. Karen, too, while not as strict as Daryl in adhering to the family's language policy, also enforces it:

- (2) Interaction between Awan (at age 4 years, 7 months) and his mother:

Awan: Can I eat one?

Mother: taaniši ilweenki?

how it is said

Awan: teepi-nko-hka meeciaani nkoti?

able-QP-DUB I eat it one  
'Can I eat one?'

Similar enforcement comes from the older siblings and from me when I am around. Given this principle and the family's general rule that they speak Miami

whenever possible, the percentage of the Baldwins' conversation time that occurs in Miami falls around 30%, though it varies significantly based on several factors that I detail throughout this document.<sup>5</sup>

More crucially, the younger children's social environment is unique with respect to the status of the languages used within it. Miami is not only minoritized but outright considered "extinct" in the larger world, and yet it is a language of prestige within the Baldwin home and increasingly within the larger Miami community because of explicit efforts to award it social capital. The Baldwins' home efforts, in turn, are within the larger context of language reclamation and its many challenges, but also within an empowering context of cultural reclamation and renewing a Miami tribal community. I examined all of these and other factors in trying to understand the younger children's language development.

That these and other social factors would play a strong role in the children's language development became a guiding basis to this study. I took as an assumption that language acquisition as a cognitive process would be the same for these children as for anybody else. There was every reason to assume this was true, as their acquisition of English followed regular patterns. However, as their specific types of language input and the social values driving the family's language use were potentially very important, I came to focus my investigation around these variables early in the study.

This practice was partially motivated by a relative scarcity of sociological

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<sup>5</sup> This percentage is an estimate for the family as a whole. Within the earlier part of this study, the younger children spoke in English in about 75% of their discrete utterances, but for a higher percentage of their overall conversation time because their English sentences were usually much longer than their Miami ones.

investigation in studies of language acquisition. Slobin (1985) notes that the existing studies of acquisition are heavily biased toward looking at child speech data with limited information about the referential and communicative contexts in which the speech occurred. Pye (1988) calls for a more anthropological approach to studying acquisition and discusses several possible benefits. Ochs & Schieffelin (1996) suggest that social factors are key and hypothesize that grammatical development may not be entirely correlated with frequency or innate cognitive development issues, but also to the expectations of the child to produce or understand language, the type of language used to the child, and the general cultural norms of language use. These factors, I assumed, were likely to be of special significance for this family.

In order to capture the complexity surrounding language development in this setting, I adopted an ecological approach (see Kramsch, 2002) both to investigating the younger children's language development as well as to reporting on it. An ecological approach to studying language development is one that examines that process in light of its full environment, including not only the type of language input that occurs within it, but also the physical environment itself and how it gets created as a social space within which its characters live their lives and articulate their beliefs. Following the spirit of this approach, I also conceptualized "language development" similarly broadly. I use the term to encompass not only the cognitive process of learning a given language in terms of its grammar and lexicon, but also to include the social process of learning to use it and to assign it a given level of social value. I argue that the success of the Baldwin family's language reclamation efforts ultimately lies in how they structured their environment and lifestyles both around speaking the language

and socializing the younger children to feel a cultural need to do so.

### ***1.3 Dissertation Outline***

This dissertation is organized into two major parts and a short concluding section. Part I (Chapters 2-4) describes the ecological context in which the younger children's language development is taking place, and includes the history of the language and design of this study alongside a description of the family's lives and beliefs. Part II of this dissertation (Chapters 5-7), in turn, reports on the younger children's attested language development as it occurred within the environment detailed in Part I. I offer conclusions in Part III (Chapter 8). The specific content of each chapter is detailed below.

Chapter 2 describes the language itself, both in terms of its social context as well as its linguistics. First, I situate the case of the Baldwin family within the larger story of language "loss" among the Miami and within the larger area of endangered language theory, with a special focus on how Miami history and current rhetoric surrounding endangered languages play into this family's language beliefs and practices. That Miami was at one point so close to "extinct" frames the special relevance of the Baldwins' story to endangered language theory, which usually assumes that languages such as Miami cannot be reclaimed. This chapter then summarizes the grammar of the language and outlines the orthographic conventions adopted in this document. I pay special attention to factors that arise in language reclamation and discuss how the family has dealt with various linguistic needs of extending the language into modern society. An especially important issue that I discuss in depth is how Daryl responds to differences that have developed between his speech and that of his

children.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology used in this study, particularly with respect to the ideologies about research guiding the direct methodological practices of collecting language examples from young children. Beyond the issues of how I went about collecting data, this chapter also discusses the meta-role of the study itself, particularly with respect to how my “uncle” role directly and indirectly played into the younger children’s language development. I also introduce and discuss the challenges associated with implementing the collaborative research model that characterized the study, and address some of the benefits and possible criticisms of not following a more traditional research model where the “researcher” is separate from the “subjects”.

Chapter 4 presents a comprehensive overview of life and language in the entire Baldwin family with a focus on how they have made their home into an environment where the language has a natural place. I summarize their farm lifestyle, home language policies, decision to homeschool the children and its outcomes, general language usage patterns, role in the larger Miami community, and the social capital that the Miami language has acquired through all of the above. I give extended discussion of the older children’s beliefs in this chapter, as the older children play a significant role in the socialization of their younger siblings.

Chapter 5 lays out the expectations for acquisition based on general cognitive principles of child language acquisition, the specific grammatical structure of Miami, and the presence of bilingualism in English. As there are neither descriptions of how Miami language acquisition occurred historically nor similar published accounts of acquisition in other Algonquian languages to use

as a comparison, part of this study involved developing a method to understand what the younger children might be expected to do. Especially crucial was the need to determine whether any nonstandard forms they produced were likely reflective of language change, or were instead natural stages of acquisition. This chapter lays out the predictions I was able to make and provides a frame for the following one.

Chapter 6 then outlines the children's early acquisition process through a series of case studies of how they acquired the morphological principle of synthesis and applied it to verbs and nouns. This chapter primarily focuses on the first two years of this study, when Amehk and Awan were not formally being taught Miami but were instead figuring out the language based only on "natural" language input in their home. The pattern that quickly emerged was that there was a strong correlation between their environment and how they were understanding the forms of the language. A finding that emerged partway through this study was that the younger children were acquiring the basic structure of the language in the order predicted by general principles of language acquisition, but were still missing key parts of the morphology at a relatively late age. For this reason, their mother and I developed a series of exercises to address the problem areas that emerged.

Chapter 7 focuses on the language development of the younger children in the last two years of this study after the formal teaching referenced above had entered into the ecological context. I show how we addressed specific areas of difficulty identified in the first half of this study and discuss the outcomes. I argue that formal teaching played a vital and highly beneficial role in the younger children's language development, not only because they were able to

learn the relevant grammar, but also because they came to really appreciate the language and wanted to use it more.

Finally, Part III (Chapter 8) reexamines the entire story and offers conclusions. This last chapter reverses the ecological model to studying language development by looking not at how one's environment affects one's language development, but instead at what the Baldwin family's language development means for the larger environment of scholar-practitioners of language reclamation. While the Baldwins are noted as the first Miami family to have reclaimed the language to such a high degree, others in the Miami nation and elsewhere are following. The movement to reclaim languages is strong and growing. Their story provides one example of how it can happen.

Part I – The Context of Language  
Development

## Chapter 2 – On the Miami Language

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*It's really important that we look at the history of the Miami People because, as a modern tribe, we have been shaped by our past. The events over the last two hundred years have certainly impacted our ability to retain our traditional language, and there are many issues related to that history that we must recognize in order to create an environment in which our language can thrive again. -Daryl Baldwin, 2003.*

The present study reports on a story that revolves around what is seemingly a paradox. Miami is “extinct” according to widely used sources such as the *Ethnologue* (i.e., Gordon, 2005), and as such, the language appears to be something of the past – perhaps an historical relic worthy of scholarly examination. But Miami continues to exist in the linguistic repertoire of the Miami people. A 12-year old participant in the June, 2007 tribally-sponsored *eewansaapita* language and cultural camp, where Miami was spoken, got at the heart of this paradox when she asked “If myaamia was a dead language, how would we be able to speak it?”. Indeed, Miami people not only claim heritage to the language but actually speak it as well, despite its supposed demise in the past. What does it mean for a language to be extinct?

In no way restricted to Miami, a theme of doom and irretrievable loss characterizes much of the rhetoric surrounding endangered languages worldwide, likening them to biological species that become extinct when their last living token dies. This frame of extinction allows scholars and others with an interest in this topic to emphasize the latter stage as one of permanent loss not only to the people most directly associated with the language, but also for general human knowledge (e.g., Crystal, 2000; Hale, 1992; Hale *et al.*, 1992; Harrison, 2007; Nettle & Romaine, 2000). However, current endangered language

theory largely places all languages without living fluent native speakers into the broad category of extinction, and thus misses the important distinction that some languages are “more extinct” than others, and that the potential for a language’s future use and social impact should not be overlooked.

This chapter describes why this is so through a detailed discussion of the Miami language. I first describe the social context of the language with a focus on how it ended up not having any speakers. Using that history as a background, I then describe how the Baldwins have taken the language from a situation of “extinction” and brought it back into use. I devote significant discussion to how they overcome obstacles that they encounter and why language reclamation is so important to them. Finally, I describe the language itself, with an emphasis on the changes it is currently undergoing and the implications of those changes for language reclamation.

## ***2.1 The Social Context of Miami***

### **2.1.1 Miami as a Sleeping Language**

Miami represents a common situation for North American indigenous languages in that it entered a period in which nobody knew it, in this case in the early 1960s, and was consequently deemed extinct. However, like many other languages categorized in this way, there nonetheless existed a closed but sizeable corpus of Miami documentation, and the language was always claimed by some Miami people as a heritage language. That is, the potential for language reclamation always existed. For these reasons, at least during the 30 year period in which nobody knew it, the Miami language might better be described as “sleeping” (Hinton, 2001b) instead of extinct. As I lay out in Leonard (in press),

the criterion for “sleeping language” is the existence of documentation and of people who claim heritage to the language but no individuals with substantial knowledge of the language.

Adoption of the sleeping metaphor captures that many languages without speakers have potential for future use – sleep is not terminal – and in so doing differentiates them from the irretrievably lost languages that may be more accurately described by final metaphors of death or extinction. I will adopt the metaphor of “sleeping” throughout this document, and similarly will adopt “awakening” to describe the language and larger cultural reclamation process that the Miami people have been undergoing throughout the 1990s and through the early 2000s. Indeed, while the current focus is on the Baldwin family’s case, their story is part of the larger narrative of *myaamiaki eemamwiciki* ‘the Miami awakening’, which is the metaphor adopted by a segment of the Miami community to describe our cultural reclamation efforts. This idea emphasizes that knowledge, even when not held by living people at any given time, can be learned and put into future practice so long as it is documented in some accessible form or can be newly learned through experience. Much of what the Baldwins do involves performing historical practices as described in written records to see what sort of wisdom comes out of them. For example, they have planted Miami plants following seasonal cycles as described in the records in order to see what happens. The youngest Baldwin’s name *Awansapia* means ‘sunrise’, and thus symbolically situates the role of the children of this family in the larger Miami cultural awakening.

Well into the reclamation effort, the problem with the label “extinction” for the Miami language has a straightforward logic based on attested evidence:

There was a period in which Miami had no speakers but it currently has speakers. Therefore, it was never really extinct. However, important to this narrative is that Miami was once in a very deep stage of sleep and may have appeared to have been essentially lost. The following section describes that situation in order to give context to the implications of the Baldwins' efforts.

### **2.1.2 Historical Language Shift in the Miami Community**

The period of Miami dormancy is thought to have started in the 1960s, but the shift from Miami to (only) English had been occurring since at least the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was driven by the forced division of the Miami community in 1846 and English-only practices in the federal Indian boarding school system, among other pressures (see Baldwin, 2003 and Rinehart, 2006 for detailed discussion).

While the Miami homelands are in present-day Indiana and Western Ohio, Miami was also spoken in Kansas and Oklahoma following two removals.<sup>6</sup> In the initial removal of 1846, the Miami community was split, with many people forced to move west from the ancestral homelands to a reservation in Kansas, and others, for a variety of reasons, being able to stay in the homelands. For this reason, there are two political groups called "Miami" today. Officially, they are known as the "Miami Tribe of Oklahoma" (see [www.miamination.com](http://www.miamination.com)), and the "Miami Nation of Indians of the State of Indiana, Inc." (see [www.miamiindians.org](http://www.miamiindians.org)), though in daily conversation people say "Oklahoma Miamis" and "Indiana Miamis".<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> By the United States government, these migrations are termed "relocations". "Removal", the term used by Miamis, more accurately describes the forced nature of the process.

<sup>7</sup> As the Baldwins and I are members of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, most of the discussion about their current community-level involvement during this study refers to this political group. For purposes of clarity in this dissertation, I adopt the following conventions: "Tribe" and "Nation" both refer to the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma as a sovereign political entity, the former

The group now known as the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma had a reservation in Kansas following the initial removal during a relatively short period which has come to be known as “the Kansas Days”. A second removal took place over a period of years in the late 1860s to early 1870s from Kansas to the northeast corner of Indian Territory (now Ottawa County, Oklahoma). Ensuing circumstances left the nation without any commonly held land, thus furthering a community fragmentation that had already begun when the removals left some Miamis in Indiana and some in Kansas. Soon after the second removal, many Miami children were sent to several boarding schools, at which point they were separated not only from their larger community and families, but also in many cases from their immediate siblings.

The second removal is of special importance not only in that the community lost land in the process, but also in that it coincided with removals of other North American indigenous peoples to the same place. Thus a situation began in the 1870s where people of multiple language and cultural backgrounds were living in a small region. English was the one common language. This demographic makeup, coupled with assimilationist practices in federal Indian boarding schools, played a role in accelerating a language shift among the Miami people. Though not clearly documented as to how late into the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Miami language was still being learned by all children, the dwindling number of speakers through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century suggests that intergenerational

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with an emphasis on the government and the latter with an emphasis on the people. Conversely, I use “Miami(s)” and “Miami people” to refer to all who claim Miami heritage and are recognized by either Miami community (i.e., Indiana or Oklahoma). The early history of the Miami people is shared and the language itself is the same aside from slight differences that developed after the initial removal. Though some community-level language reclamation efforts have been shared between the two Miami groups, both have their own programs (see Rinehart, 2006).

transmission began to cease not long after the second removal.<sup>8</sup>

Fortunately for modern Miamis, despite the ongoing shift to English by the community, documentation of the language had begun in the late-17<sup>th</sup> to mid-18<sup>th</sup> centuries by Jesuit missionaries. Documentation continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by many others, including linguists Albert Gatschet and Truman Michelson (Costa, 2003). Although the historically spoken language is undocumented in audio form aside from two short recordings that contain a few isolated words, the written documentation is vast and includes dictionaries, texts, overt grammatical information such as verb paradigms, and some information about pragmatic norms. However, wide awareness of the existence and interpretability of those materials is a recent phenomenon. Richard Rhodes notes (personal communication, 2004) that Algonquianists had viewed Miami as a puzzle that couldn't be solved until David Costa collected the historical documents and analyzed them into a useable form in his dissertation (i.e., Costa, 1994; updated as Costa, 2003). Furthermore, valuable documentation of the language continued to surface after Costa's initial research, some of which is under analysis as of the writing of this dissertation. For example, a 17<sup>th</sup>-century dictionary discovered in 1999 by Michael McCafferty (see McCafferty, 2005) contains information not attested in any other known records (Costa, 2005).

Moreover, while reclamation of certain languages that have recently gone out of use may be aided by language "rememberers" – those who don't speak the language but were exposed to it enough to have some residual knowledge of it –

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<sup>8</sup> The language fell out of use around the same time both in the new homelands and in the ancestral homelands, though possibly a little bit later in the latter. Julie Olds, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Cultural Preservation Officer, once reported to me that she thought that the last children to acquire the language prior to its period of dormancy were born in the 1890s.

remembering of this type is limited. Miami elders are instrumental in sharing cultural knowledge and supporting the language reclamation efforts, but none can understand novel sentences or serve as language informants beyond isolated words. The relatively small group of elders with memories of the language collectively remember only a few nouns, names, and fixed phrases; one remembers a lullaby about a cat that her grandmother had made up and sung to her. Some can speak in general terms about how the language sounded and what the social contexts of its use were. Immediately before the Baldwins' efforts began around 1990, the aforementioned was the most substantial direct language knowledge held by living members of the Miami community.<sup>9</sup>

Particularly around the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the period in which use of Miami language was declining, the Miami Nation was likewise undergoing hardship. Elders today talk about how the future of the tribe at the time looked bleak, and how attendance at official annual meetings of the General Council (the members of the tribe) was sometimes so low that they struggled to meet the quorum requirements specified in the tribal constitution. Furthermore, there wasn't a Miami place to hold those meetings since, as noted above, the nation had lost its land base following the second removal. At the June, 2007 annual meeting, held at the tribal government office complex and attended by 148 voting tribal members, tribal elder Pauline Brown (née Leonard, b. 1921) reminisced about the 1939 annual meeting of the General Council. That 1939 gathering was held at a public facility in Chetopa, Kansas for lack of a tribally-

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<sup>9</sup> This statement is not meant to imply that elders are not integral in Miami language reclamation efforts or that they lack wisdom about the language. They play an important role, and no major cultural undertaking could take place without the social backing of elders and other tribal leaders. Their support usually comes by means of verbal encouragement, physical presence at language workshops, and in the case of the elected tribal leaders, by their allocation of funding for the development of pedagogical language materials and programs.

owned facility, and was attended by only 18 tribal citizens of voting age. While this is just one specific example, similar stories abound from tribal elders.

Common to all narratives is that the nation went through a very difficult period, particularly around the middle third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but that the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century marks a renaissance.

Indeed, after an economic expansion facilitated by gaming revenues in the late 1990s to early 2000s and the creation of a formal language program that initially began with a grant to create workshops for training tribal members to teach our language,<sup>10</sup> the situation now is greatly different. Despite the history of two forced removals in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the era of federal boarding schools, and other kinds of marginalization, the tribe was prospering in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>11</sup> There is strong support both from the General Council and the elected leaders to promote cultural reclamation efforts. The overall vitality and future prospects of the Miami Nation have made a significant shift from the lack of even a common building as recently as the mid-1970s, to the present situation where there are tribally-owned and operated administrative and community spaces, several successful business ventures, a growing land base, and many social and educational programs for tribal members.

Concurrent with this turn of events, reclamation of the language also began. Although there had been a growing sentiment in the 1980s among tribal members that language was missing in their lives, it wasn't until David Costa

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<sup>10</sup> The initial funding for language reclamation efforts came through a U.S. Administration for Native Americans (ANA) grant and was directed toward a three year program of teacher-training. Subsequent efforts have been administered and funded directly by the tribe.

<sup>11</sup> As of June 2, 2007, there were 3470 enrolled members. Coupled with the Indiana Miamis and members of the Peoria Tribe of Oklahoma, who claim heritage to the Illinois dialect of Miami-Illinois, this means that there are over 10,000 people who directly have this language as part of their heritage, plus many others who have married into or otherwise become part of families where somebody has this language in their heritage.

gathered and analyzed the historical documentation into his dissertation (1994) and funding became available that language reclamation efforts at the tribal level formally began. Teacher-training workshops that began in the mid-1990s continue (now as general language workshops) and have been supplemented by annual cultural immersion camps for Miami youth, language CDs, lesson books, games, other language-learning tools, and some formal classes. Other programs focus more on teaching and experiencing our unique culture and supplement the language-focused activities, thus creating a balance in which language and culture are intertwined and build off each other. Language learning is facilitated by pedagogical materials produced by the tribe and distributed for free to each tribal household that requests them. These include a set of audio CDs, several wordlists, phrasebooks, and a comprehensive dictionary. As of the writing of this dissertation, the tribal Cultural Preservation Office was revising a series of written lessons originally created by Daryl and was also working to create new materials for learning the language.

A dozen years into the reclamation efforts, there are now hundreds of Miami people with some knowledge of the language, and perhaps about 150 people actually speaking it on a regular basis (to varying extents). Many Miami families have incorporated the language into their daily communication and a few children are being raised with some level of use of the language, the Baldwins having incorporated it the most. In this sense, there are two areas of related but discrete language efforts in the Miami community, one being the set of goals and associated programs established at the community level, and the other being the series of efforts that individual people or families have established within their respective homes and daily lives. This study concerns

itself primarily with the latter and with the Baldwin household specifically. However, I also make reference to larger community efforts insofar as the Baldwins play an important role in these efforts and their participation in community programs likewise influences their philosophies and language practices at home.

## ***2.2 The Baldwins' Story***

### **2.2.1 The Legend of the Baldwins' Reclamation of Miami**

Related as above, the extreme shift from a horrible situation to a very positive one in the Miami Nation is striking. Things came together at the right time for the nation: Costa's dissertation on the language was being completed, the United States government had passed versions of the Native American Languages Act in 1990 and 1992 (the latter having allocated the money which provided the funds for the first tribal language program in 1995), and the Baldwins were starting to learn and use the language. However, despite occurring at about the same time, these processes began independently of each other. The first part of the Baldwins' story was largely limited to their home. Daryl did not begin language reclamation efforts as a tribal initiative or with any kind of grant, but rather by learning the language via old word lists and texts. Only later did he have the research done by David Costa and direct support of the tribe. Scholar-practitioners relate the story of the Baldwins' language reclamation process as a fixed narrative; it has become a legend. I myself have heard the story many times and from many people, but always with the basic elements as given below:

**The Legend of how Miami came to be Reclaimed**  
 (underlined portions represent key passages that Daryl has said)

The Baldwin family's language reclamation began in the early 1990s when Daryl Baldwin began looking for and using whatever language materials he could find. He had not known the Miami language growing up aside from a few names, but he wanted his children to know their Miami culture. In Daryl's opinion, using the language is a means to achieve this goal because the language encodes a uniquely Miami way of perceiving the world. Daryl saw other Native children who knew their respective languages, and he thought his children should have the same.

In the early to mid 1990s, the family [then just the parents and the first two children] started out using many token phrases – animal names, kinship terms, and household commands wherever possible. Meanwhile, a dissertation on the Miami language was being written by David Costa at the University of California, Berkeley ...<sup>12</sup>

Daryl was excited to get a copy of David Costa's completed dissertation. But upon receipt of it, Daryl opened it... and couldn't read a word of it, so he had to go and get a Masters Degree in Linguistics – as a means to understand Miami language materials and to be able to work with them. Daryl went on to teach himself the language, pronouncing words and learning from hearing himself say them, and now his children are fluent speakers.

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<sup>12</sup> This part of the story is variable. Sometimes, there is a passage that discusses how David Costa pieced together the documentation of Miami into a noteworthy dissertation – i.e., Costa (1994).

While the last part of the legend is potentially incorrect in that the children are probably not “fluent speakers” under the definition of most people who tell this story, this narrative is useful in that it not only summarizes the story itself but also frames the important themes.

First and most importantly, there is the reason for language reclamation itself, the driving force being Daryl’s belief that the process would help his children live a better life. There is also a strong theme of linguistic relativity – that is, the idea that language influences worldview, or more generally, that language is an inextricable part of culture. Finally, there is the theme that linguistics is a tool and a means to an end, in this case a means of working with and interpreting Miami language documentation. While short, this legend is appropriate in that it captures the essence of the Baldwins’ overall language efforts, and I discuss its themes below in light of specific details of their reclamation process.

### **2.2.2 The Baldwins’ Story Detailed – Motivations & Challenges**

A general question in reference to the Baldwins’ high level of commitment to reclaiming their heritage language was often posed in various forms either to them or to me throughout this study: *Why?* The family’s basic communicative needs were being met with English before they began incorporating the Miami language into their lives. The parents were already moving forward in their lives, having started a family and having secured viable jobs. Karen had earned a credential as a home economics teacher and was teaching public school when their first child was born. Daryl had a successful career in carpentry, and he later made a shift and went on to pursue a Bachelor’s degree in Wildlife Biology as

part of what was then his goal to eventually work for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

One answer to the question of why the Baldwins began their language reclamation efforts is given below, and the philosophy that drove this process is further expanded on throughout this document. In a 2002 invited lecture at the University of Minnesota (published as D. Baldwin, 2003), Daryl offered the following perspective:

Giving up our language, no matter how fragmented or dormant, is no more of an option than giving up our sovereignty or our right to a future where our children are raised by our traditional beliefs and values.

Given this ideological stance, although the commonly posed question is “Why did the Baldwins do this?”, the better question may be “Why wouldn’t they have done this?”

Answering this question requires returning to the beginning of the legend. One way to conceptualize the beginning of any life change is to think about what it is that drives people to search for new things, a common reason being a perception of something lacking that needs to be in place for a good life. The first step in a language reclamation process clearly involves an awareness of the language and a desire to integrate it into one’s life. Here, the narrative unfolds with Daryl’s growing up and realizing in his 20s that he lacked his heritage language. A turning point in his introspection was the birth of his first child Keemaacimwiihkwa. As Daryl notes, becoming a parent naturally raises questions about how to raise one’s children and how one’s own practices will influence their development.

Although he had participated in what he refers to as “the pow-wow

circuit” and other American Indian cultural practices as a child, Daryl’s access to the Miami language was almost nonexistent aside from knowledge of some traditional names and an awareness that the language existed.<sup>13</sup> A key event in this story is that Daryl, when in his late 20’s, received a box of family documents compiled by his then-deceased grandfather in which there were two crucial components. One, there were many documents that chronicled the family’s rights and disposition over treaty lands. In particular, there was a series of letters between the Baldwins and the Bureau of Indian Affairs from which it was clear that the family had been fighting for recognition of their rights during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As Daryl interpreted it, his immediate ancestors had made great efforts to maintain their Miami culture. Second, there was a Miami wordlist compiled by Jacob Dunn, a lawyer who had done significant documentation of the Miami language in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It was through his personal wish to reclaim the language and the culture embedded in it that the process began at the family level. Their initial language learning was based on Dunn’s wordlist. At the suggestion of his father, Daryl did some investigation to see if he could find speakers of the language or other written materials about it. He learned that there were no speakers, but found more and more documentation over the years. As another part of the process of trying to learn a language without access to native speakers or pedagogical materials, it is a given that the learner will have to start with something incomplete. In this case, with the corpus of language documentation he had gathered, Daryl started learning animal names, kinship terms, and a few fixed

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<sup>13</sup> Even when the language was sleeping, many Miami people maintained the use of traditional names and naming practices.

phrases, which he in turn taught to his family. He made up games such as bingo using Miami animals or numbers, and used them as a means of teaching his (then two) children alongside more formal lessons that he and Karen developed for use in their homeschooling.<sup>14</sup>

Karen Baldwin's role in the family's efforts unfortunately has not explicitly been referenced in the legend as I have heard it, but it was and continues to be central. While not herself a tribal member, as a mother, Karen wanted her children to know *their* heritage culture. She began learning the language and working with Daryl to teach it to their then two young children (those I am calling the "older children"). And so the linguistic component of language reclamation began, though the appropriate ideological underpinnings for the process were already present.

Part of the family's language goals were likely heightened by their surroundings. Their reclamation of the Miami language began when they lived in Ohio and the first two children were very young, but grew substantially when they moved to Missoula, Montana in the early 1990s. There in Missoula, Daryl was regularly observing Indian children of other tribes who knew their languages and felt their unique tribal identities, and he wanted the same for his own children. Karen notes that the Indian people in that area would ask the following three questions of another Indian person they were just meeting: What tribe are you from; what family are you from; do you speak your language? Clearly, language was important.

As important as it might be, however, the Baldwins' reclamation process

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<sup>14</sup> Through the middle of this study, all four children in this family had all of their schooling at home. Starting in 2005, the older children started attending public school. I discuss the motivations and implications of homeschooling in Chapter 4.

is not directly driven by or even framed around language goals. Many I spoke to about this study while it was occurring assumed that absolute linguistic fluency in the Miami language was the Baldwins' ultimate goal, but they were incorrect. Daryl told me that he wants for his children to have brains that are "wired" with Miami, but that fluency is not a reasonable expectation at this early stage of language awakening. The linguistic component of their goal is to attain reasonable linguistic proficiency. The parents see their family as being in a process that over several generations may eventually result in full linguistic fluency, but where that fluency would be an outcome, and is not the goal itself. Instead, the parents' primary goal is for their children (and future generations) to know their Miami culture and to have the identity, values, and worldview embedded in the Miami language – a composite they describe as "cultural fluency". Daryl expressed this idea in his keynote address at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference in Berkeley, CA (D. Baldwin, 2004):

When I was asked about a title for this address it didn't take much thought to come up with "Language Reclamation: Is it Really all About Fluency?" The question, "is it really all about fluency?" has been on my mind for some time. I don't want to imply that fluency is not important. I personally believe that a degree of fluency is necessary in expressing and articulating traditional thought and knowledge. [...] When we talk about language and cultural revitalization, we are in essence referring to the revitalization of belief, value and knowledge systems. It is through our language and culture that we express those ways of knowing. This all takes place as one interrelated process. So when I say: "is it really all about fluency?", the answer in my mind is "no". Fluency is an outcome of the collective effort.

In short, Daryl frames his family's language goals as culturally-driven and including language, as opposed to language-driven and including culture. Daryl does not believe that the temporary lack of speakers meant that the worldviews

represented in the Miami language were themselves lost; rather, what may have been missing was the ability to see those views through a Miami lens. Learning the language is one of the ways of associating with those worldviews, and this is an ongoing process, not a telic event. That we who work with the Miami language don't have all of the answers is not a deterrent, but rather part of the process. Key is that we all keep learning and benefiting from what we learn, and connect as a cultural community while doing so.

Many people ask how it was that Daryl ever came to learn Miami so well in the first place, particularly given the absence of people to learn from and initially, also of people to talk to. This is an understandable question, particularly for individuals who wish to reclaim a sleeping language, but it is not an accident that it is not part of the legend. The story of how Daryl taught himself the language is one that even Daryl isn't sure about, so it's no surprise that it didn't make it into the legend. He reports that he "just did it". He studied the records, did his best to reconstruct the pronunciation based on the records and then practiced saying the words himself, thus providing himself with some aural input.

Daryl's initial efforts had already begun before David Costa entered the story, but Costa's dissertation (1994), which was the major analysis and presentation of Miami at the time, plays a special role in the legend because it marks a turning point. This is where linguistics enters the narrative. Costa knew of Daryl's efforts and sent Daryl an unsolicited copy of his dissertation. As the story goes, Daryl then eagerly opened it but found that he "couldn't read a word of it." Though a hyperbole, this part of the story points to a common challenge in indigenous language reclamation where the initial stage of language learning has

to be based on documents or recordings, ones that that were usually created for some reason other than future use by the community. Costa's dissertation is different in that he dedicated it to the Miami speakers whose voices were in the written documentation, and explicitly offered it to the present-day people with heritage to the language (1994:iii) – a principle he put into practice when he sent a copy of the manuscript to Daryl. However, that dissertation is nevertheless a technical, scholarly analysis based on tools of historical and comparative linguistics. As the story goes, this is when Daryl realized he needed to formally study linguistics.

Attempting to read Costa's work may indeed have been the biggest single trigger. However, while the legend points to the specific moment of opening Costa's dissertation as an epiphany, Daryl's awareness that learning about the language would require an intermediate step of interpreting and piecing together the documentation was an ongoing development. Alongside his primary studies in wildlife biology at the University of Montana (Missoula), he was already pursuing a minor in Native American Studies and had an increasing awareness of language revitalization issues through that scholarship as well as through his interactions with the significant population of indigenous peoples around that area. Both from his own realization of this need as well as the suggestion of some of his academic advisors who knew of his interests, Daryl began and completed a Master's of Arts with a focus in Linguistics there at the University of Montana.<sup>15</sup> His goal was to better understand the academic work done on Miami and to be able to apply methods of language reconstruction

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<sup>15</sup> As with this dissertation, David Costa was an advisor for Daryl's M.A. thesis, which Daryl describes as "a short grammatical sketch [of Miami] and a first attempt at a student dictionary."

himself – in short, to use linguistics as a tool to realize his goals. Of the many scholar-practitioners of language reclamation I have met, Daryl is among the strongest in his ability to bridge technical linguistics tools with cultural knowledge. This has greatly helped his family’s language efforts flourish.

As a trained linguist, Daryl has a strong awareness of related Algonquian languages and often is able to make an educated guess even about the usage or form of a given Miami word that isn’t fully described in the historical documentation. With his knowledge of common Algonquianist and linguistic terminology, Daryl can interpret the relevance of discussions in scholarly papers. Using the software Shoebox™, he began compiling his own database of Miami vocabulary, a database that eventually developed into the first major modern Miami dictionary *myaamia neehi peewaalia kaloosioni mahsinaakani* (i.e., D. Baldwin & Costa, 2005). In so doing, he developed a familiarity with the historical sources on Miami and with their relative levels of accuracy.

The level of awareness alluded to above characterizes almost all of the interactions I have ever had with Daryl. Throughout this study, Daryl often explained things to me by noting not only what a given word or grammatical form meant, but would also offer commentary about the source of his knowledge. This included information about whether the form in question was unequivocally and explicitly explained in the records or had been inferred, in how many of the documentation sources it was attested, and how well the person who documented the form appears to have understood the language and culture. This last part is a key theme in the Baldwins’ efforts. As their goal is cultural fluency, Daryl makes a special effort to carefully evaluate written reports about cultural practices or norms in terms of their accuracy, particularly with

respect to their rhetorical context. Many ethnographic descriptions of Miami people are by U.S. government officials who were surveying land and interested in how to acquire that land from the Miamis and other tribes – not in the culture itself. Daryl is especially careful about the accuracy of these.

While not part of the legend itself, the following example is illustrative of this idea. In addition to evaluating the background of the person doing language documentation as described above, Daryl applies a similar notion of cultural knowledge in the question of what constitutes a “good” speaker of a given language for purposes of linguistic research. In a discussion that I had with Daryl and Karen on that topic (December 21, 2006), he noted:

I never really questioned necessarily whether they [potential “speakers”] could hold extended conversation – random conversation – in the language ... most importantly to me is that they knew what they were saying; they were able to explain what they were saying with some cultural context.

Again, this idea of cultural awareness is key in Daryl’s evaluation of potential sources of information, both historic and contemporary. Though it is generally not possible to know the full context in which the historic documentation of the language occurred, Daryl makes an effort to evaluate and understand that context as best he can. Unlike some who favor older documentation on the grounds that it may somehow be more “authentic”, Daryl looks for evidence that the speakers whose voices are in the documentation were integrated into the Miami community and that the person writing down the information had some experience with the community. Particularly given the necessity of elucidating some Miami knowledge solely from documentation, this question of whether a source of information truly reflects Miami culture becomes key. Whether the documentation is old or comparatively new is not in itself important.

Returning to the theme of linguistics being a tool for realizing language reclamation efforts, Daryl uses the tools of linguistics only where they are useful to language reclamation efforts. He is not interested in linguistic theory for the sake of theory, or in letting the literature dictate what is or is not supposed to happen in his family. A prevalent idea in the literature, and one that he has had to learn to ignore, is the one that says language reclamation from a situation with zero speakers cannot be successful. This problem is exacerbated by the potentially dangerous notion that “success” would entail (only) a situation in which the target language is fluently known by a new generation of speakers and used in all domains.

Everybody recognizes that learning a few words is possible, but there is a tendency to focus on the logical extreme of fluency and to frame discussions in terms of that extreme. Although there are notable exceptions in which linguists have explicitly recognized that language reclamation efforts can have goals other than linguistic fluency (e.g., Amery, 2002; Fishman, 2001a:225), this point is often lost. In many discussions that I had about this study as it was occurring, I was often questioned as to *if* the Baldwin’s language reclamation efforts were working. I refer here to the specific context where I had not yet told the questioner what the Baldwins’ goals were. Given that their story is widely known and that many people have directly met Daryl, it is likely that some of these questioners didn’t ask about the family’s goals because they already knew the target was cultural fluency (and could assume that I knew this as well). However, in other cases, the incomplete framing of “success” was more obvious, and whatever it was thought to be, the common rhetoric was that it surely would not be achieved.

Two examples from published sources illustrate this point. In one that Daryl and I found to be particularly inappropriate, creolist John McWhorter states in a *New York Sun* editorial (2006) that he had himself spent some weeks teaching Native Americans their ancestral language, but that their efforts to learn those languages would “almost never get beyond the starting gate.” He speculates that “there was no way that they would learn more than some words and expressions”, and asks, “[f]or busy people with jobs and families, how far were they ever going to be able to get mastering a language whose word for eye is ‘uyqh abe’?” However, he never mentions what the goals of the language learners were, and this omission is common. The motivation of the editorial is suspect in that McWhorter illustrates polysynthesis with a word that means “I should try not to become an alcoholic”, and states that Lenape has not been spoken for “a very long time” even though there were native speakers alive just five years before this editorial was written (David Costa, personal communication, 2007). Beyond falling into a colonialist practice of exoticizing lexical or grammatical forms in a demeaning way, however, McWhorter also underestimates the power of committed people like Daryl, for whom giving up the Miami language was, to use Daryl’s own words, “not an option”.

Conversely, scholar of Australian indigenous languages R. M. W. Dixon takes a different approach in advocating language maintenance efforts for languages that still have fluent native speakers, noting that they have “hope”. However, he also explicitly argues that languages with semi-speakers or no speakers “have no chance whatsoever of survival as a living, spoken tongue” (Dixon, 1989:31). Here at least there is an explicit mention of the specific target that is assumed to have “no chance whatsoever”, though the prediction for

sleeping languages itself is very bleak.

Clearly, beyond a general belief that second language learning is difficult, the amazement in the Baldwins' language reclamation is sociologically driven, partially motivated by the same objections and associated rhetoric discussed earlier. Since Miami is "extinct", the Baldwins' story is not an expected outcome. This may be why the Baldwins' story has become legendlike. Legends are tales of what is seemingly possible in human experience, but not really expected to happen.

While there is the widely known story of how Hebrew became a language of daily use after 17 centuries without native speakers, that story is very different given that people were learning and using Hebrew throughout the period of its "death" as a liturgical language (Spolsky, 2002:50) and the people claiming it represented a much larger and more politically powerful group than the Miamis in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Dixon, in making the prediction referenced above that languages without speakers will never be widely used again, explicitly notes that Hebrew should be considered an exception (1989:31). Even McWhorter acknowledges the Hebrew case but downplays its importance in arguing that Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, the person most widely credited as playing a pivotal role in the vernacularization of Hebrew, was "one of those once-in-a-lifetime personalities" (2006). Despite many acknowledgments by reputable scholars of endangered languages that "dead languages" can hypothetically be brought back (e.g., Fishman, 2001a:222-223; Harmon, 1995:15; Krauss, 1992:4), some people seem to assume that it won't really happen.

Daryl learned Miami because he thought it was important to do so and made a point of doing it. His older children learned Miami because their parents

taught it to them. The younger children are acquiring Miami language and culture because they are being raised with both. It is a unique story, and notable because of the family's unusually strong commitment to realizing their goals. However, it comes across as remarkable partly because people of social power, particularly credentialed scholars, have hypothesized that language reclamation of sleeping languages can't happen – except with Hebrew, which was never sleeping in the same way as Miami. Daryl notes that he went to a number of linguistics conferences in the 1990s and that the scholars he spoke to advised him that his goals were laudable but unrealistic. He remarks today that it was frustrating to hear specialists say such things, and that he sometimes believed them.<sup>16</sup> Of the linguists he met, only Leanne Hinton believed that he could realize his dream of having his children know Miami. Perhaps she sensed Daryl's commitment more than others did, or perhaps others were just incorrect. This observation is not, however, meant to imply that language reclamation is easy. Scholar-practitioner Natasha Warner summed it up well when she remarked to me that reclamation of languages without speakers is possible, but that "it's damn hard" (personal communication, 2006).

Beyond the family's general commitment to language reclamation and talent in language learning, I came to believe that one of the main reasons the Baldwins have been able to actively reclaim the Miami culture is that they have a practice of not paying much attention to what others say they *can't* do, particularly when they're told that their language goals are unrealistic. They are people who try to make things work. A secondary but important additional

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<sup>16</sup> Many of the original naysayers have since rethought their predictions after having heard the Baldwins speaking Miami.

factor is that Daryl is selective about the scholarly literature that he reads. Despite his significant background in academic circles, Daryl is careful not to get caught up in what the literature predicts or claims. He instead focuses on letting needs and goals appear via his ongoing critical examination of what's happening in his home and in the larger Miami community. Daryl recognizes that many good ideas and insights exist in the literature and thus consults some of it, but not always right away. At times, he leaves books on the shelf and lets language needs unfold in the Miami community before he reads up on a given topic to see what others have done in similar situations. He carefully considers the ideas of others and chooses to follow the lead of some, but only after carefully thinking things through. Karen, too, occasionally refers to ideas in applied guides to language revitalization such as *How to Keep Your Language Alive* (Hinton et al., 2002), but has developed most of her language teaching strategies either by herself, with Daryl, and more recently, with me. Again, the theme is that tools are seen as tools. When necessary and appropriate for the family's goals, they make use of a given tool. However, they are careful to not get caught up in what happens to be a trend at a given time.

Beyond the problematically framed question concerning *if* the Baldwins' language reclamation efforts were "working", another problematic issue surfaced in questions posed to me throughout this study about the language itself. Even when I thought it was clear that the Baldwins speak Miami, a frequent question about their efforts – sometimes presented as a challenge – concerned how "Miami" their Miami speech really was. While relevant for various issues such as their ability to read and interpret old texts, the language of which might be termed "Classical Miami", this question often appears to stem

from the much larger issue that Daryl calls “fossilization”.

Daryl has observed that modern descriptions of indigenous peoples and their languages are framed around and compared to early descriptions written by the first colonizers. In my own teaching and discussions about indigenous peoples in wider society, I have observed that citizens of those indigenous nations today are sometimes referred to as “descendants” of the said people – even though we are ourselves those peoples. So too with our languages. Mia Kalish offers the insight that “the languages so central to Indigenous identity have been viewed as objects of study, and represented as research pieces in museums, references of what used to be” (2006:3). While a basic tenet of linguistic theory is that all languages change, indigenous languages are in some social sense not allowed to change, especially if the change is toward a language introduced by colonization. An old description of one of these languages can become something akin to a fossil, a fixed historical entity that becomes the idealized standard and correct version by which the legitimacy of any subsequent versions of the language will be judged. Even when the historical record in question may have reported on only a few speakers of a single dialect and thus could hardly be said to report on the significant variation that is characteristic of any language, differences between a modern speaker’s speech and that of an historical record are often described negatively, particularly if the modern speaker’s grammar is thought to be more similar to English than the grammar as it appears in the old documentation. I observed this pattern frequently in my own graduate studies.

Under the extreme view, new speakers of formerly sleeping languages will thus never be legitimate speakers, not because they don’t command the

language, but rather because they don't speak some established classical version of the language. While the legend of Miami reclamation does refer to the unique worldview thought to be encoded in the language, it is noteworthy that it has no absolutes about the form of the language itself.

Questions guided by a purist ideology do occasionally get posed by a Miami person, but they are relatively uncommon at our cultural gatherings. Rather, we just use the Miami language to the extent that we are able to do so. Spolsky (2002) summarizes a common conclusion made in the literature that reclamation efforts of languages without speakers have the ironic benefit of not having native speakers to challenge or criticize the way the language is used by new speakers. Daryl has acknowledged that this may be true for our community. Scholar-practitioners Warner, Luna, & Butler extend that observation in noting that "objections to the legitimacy of dormant [i.e., sleeping] language revitalization almost always come from outside the community, both from linguists and from members of communities with living speakers" (2007:62). Indeed, there have been objections from both in reference to the Baldwins' efforts as well as to the larger Miami reclamation efforts.

Beyond the examples already given above, Daryl and I have experienced an implicit objection to our efforts in the rhetoric of linguistics. This surfaces in discussions about indigenous language documentation and suggestions about how and why it should be done. For example, there is an emphasis placed on finding the most isolated, monolingual speaker possible for documentation purposes, anglicization is deemed "attrition", and endangered language consultants' native speakerhood is questioned far beyond the degree to which it is in studies of major world languages (Haynes & Leonard, 2007). These ways of

thinking can greatly hurt efforts at language reclamation if taken to mean that second language speakers or native speakers of a notably changed variety of a language lack legitimacy. Such rhetoric is usually implicit. Rarely can one publicly say that anglicized versions of U.S. indigenous languages are not real. However, in putting value on the “most exotic”, least changed version of the language as most interesting to “science”, anglicized varieties can lose legitimacy. Scholars who deem these new language varieties to be uninteresting to linguistic theory exacerbate the problem.

From indigenous people, one striking example was a comment that I heard from a California Indian about Daryl’s speech. This man noted that he didn’t really believe in Daryl because Daryl’s Miami didn’t “sound Indian” to him. Importantly, this person’s heritage language was of the Athabaskan language family and not even remotely related to Miami. Furthermore, this man seemed to have had no previous personal experience with Miami people, let alone the Miami language. Thus his comment was strange from a linguistic standpoint. There was no reason to think that Daryl’s speech would sound like the Indian speech this man was most used to. From a sociological standpoint, however, the underlying attitude was clear. There is an expectation that Indians and our languages are supposed to be a certain way, and deviating from that norm represents something less than speaking the target language.

Another particularly poignant example, one that the Baldwins and I discussed and eventually dismissed, involves a disagreement that I had with Dakota Sioux historian and decolonization activist Waziyatawin Angela Wilson. Wilson noted in a conference talk (2006) that the Dakota language had only 15 fluent speakers and was facing “extinction”, but in the same presentation

described her community's substantial language and cultural revitalization efforts. I noted to her afterward that even when those elderly speakers had passed on, there would still be many second-language speakers, herself included,<sup>17</sup> and that the existing documentation of the language, pedagogical materials, and strong Dakota culture could allow the language to reclaim its place in the future. My point was that Dakota, like Miami, would not truly be "extinct", and I asked her not to use that term. However, Wilson adamantly told me that the language *would* be extinct because it couldn't be fully documented and wouldn't be "the same," and went on to state that she believed Dakota had been bestowed upon her people by a divine source who intended for it be passed on in the home – and that it would be extinct if they failed to do that. In a native newsletter article (Torres, 2000), Wilson is quoted as saying "I think the Creator would not have created our language if it was meant to be lost."

The ideologies guiding the specific anecdotes related above differ greatly from the beliefs held by the Baldwins. They do not hold such absolute beliefs about the form or ecology of the language. Were they to have an absolute belief that a break in intergenerational transmission represents extinction, their home efforts would not have ever developed. Miami ceased to be spoken and by extension, it ceased to be transmitted in the home. As a trained linguist, Daryl fully recognizes that the language Miami people learn and use now will reflect changes due to that break in intergenerational transmission. However, this is not a major topic of discussion in the Baldwin family, as they are people who work

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<sup>17</sup> Among other language revitalization efforts, Wilson is noted for having served as director of a Dakota immersion preschool after having studied the Dakota language herself. Although that effort ultimately fell through for political reasons and Wilson resigned (Johnston, 2002), she nonetheless remains committed to language revitalization as an element of decolonization (e.g., Wilson, 2005).

with whatever they have. Daryl puts great discretion into evaluating the materials that he uses, but as noted in the reclamation legend, his family at least gives consideration to “whatever materials they [can] find”. Where there is a choice, they emphasize those that appear to be more linguistically and culturally accurate.

Fortunately, there was more than enough high quality material to reasonably reconstruct the grammar of the language. Miami has significant written documentation and most of the mechanics of the language such as verb paradigms are either attested or at least inferable. The morphology and other basic components of grammar come directly from the historical language as it was written down. In the relatively infrequent case where a given form is not attested, it is sometimes reconstituted by means of comparative historical linguistics and reference to forms in other Algonquian languages. The core elements of the modern version of the language are very much Miami.

A cursory comparison of the Baldwins’ speech with the language as it appears in more contemporary documentation suggests that these varieties would be mutually intelligible to a high degree. Given that the Baldwins’ Miami has largely been learned from those historical records, this is not surprising. Indeed, while pronunciation patterns and what would be considered idiomatic are likely different, the lexicon of the modern language may be closer to that of the old language than would be the case for indigenous languages that have never gone out of use, simply because there wasn’t anything new to base the initial learning on. Miami tribal elder Mildred Walker (b. 1913), who remembers the language being spoken in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, noted to Daryl that he and other modern speakers “sound good” when speaking Miami. However, she also

mentioned that they sound different from the speakers she remembers. It is not clear if those differences reflect that the modern language is more anglicized, less anglicized, or just otherwise different in its pronunciation from that used by the “last” speakers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup> A detailed analysis of similarity between the modern language and that documented in various historical periods, while relevant to this question, has not yet been done and is not a current priority of the Miami Language Committee because the Miami community already accepts the legitimacy of the language.

I did, however, examine the changes currently occurring in the language as a way of understanding language development and the ideology guiding it. Changes fall into two natural categories. First, there are changes that happen unconsciously. Here, the important question for this study is not so much what the changes are, but rather how those changes are received. The other category of change is conscious – that is, where the ideologies of the family and deliberate actions beget, prevent, or otherwise affect language change. Both areas are part of the family’s ideologies and important to their story. In the next section, I summarize the structure of the language itself with an emphasis on the changes in the language that I have observed between Daryl and his children. Then, I examine how the family consciously changes the language through a discussion of their lexical innovation practices.

### ***2.3 A Sketch of Modern Miami, as Spoken by the Baldwins***

As an invested tribal member, I have personal views about how the language’s role will evolve and likewise have hopes for the Miami people as a whole.

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<sup>18</sup> As mentioned earlier, there are two known audio recordings that contain Miami words, both of which became available to Daryl well after his family was already speaking Miami. The pronunciation of the words in those recordings is very similar to that of the Baldwins.

However, this study is descriptive, not prescriptive. Although the research is framed around the social view that language and culture are positive and that language reclamation can be a valuable part of tribal self-determination, this report attempts to be neutral about the forms of the language. In particular, I do not report on Classical Miami except insofar as the Baldwins' understanding of it has played into their beliefs and practices. Instead, I am defining the language used by the Baldwins and other modern Miamis as "Miami".

For descriptive simplicity, however, I am adopting the following terminology for purposes of reporting on the Baldwins' language usage and acquisition patterns. Where there is a difference between any individual's speech and the form that Daryl has determined to be accurate per the historical records, I will refer to the former as "non-standard" and the latter as "standard". I will use the term "ungrammatical" for forms that, as best I could judge, would have no apparent meaning to most historic or current speakers of Miami. However, this terminology is used with the understanding that the language will continue to evolve. My descriptions of standardness and grammaticality are intended to be descriptively accurate only for the Miami language as spoken during this field study. This document is not intended to fossilize the language, but rather to report on how it is evolving into a vernacular in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **2.3.1 Structural Overview**

The points of grammar relevant to this acquisition component of this study are detailed in Chapter 6 as part of the relevant case studies, but a brief summary is provided here. The most complete account of Miami grammar is Costa (2003). Most points about the structure of Miami are clear from the historical

documentation. At its core, the language remains a relatively conservative language of the Algonquian family and central Algonquian subgroup in its morphology, phonology, and lexicon. Its morphology is highly synthetic, with verbs taking inflectional suffixes in up to eight slots to indicate morphological categories such as subject, object, person, number, negation, and inversion. Nouns fall into two classes, called animate and inanimate in the academic literature, and there is a strong but not absolute relationship between a given noun's semantic animacy (under a Miami worldview) and its grammatical animacy. Animacy and number (singular, plural) are marked suffixally on the noun and also by verb agreement. Verbs fall into four main paradigms which are differentiated by transitivity, the animacy of the subject, and where applicable, the animacy of the object.

### **2.3.2 Phonology**

Unlike the morphosyntax, which is complex, Miami's phonology is relatively simple. The basic sound system of Miami is given below. David Costa adopted a practical phonemic orthography based on the Latin alphabet, which in turn has largely been codified as the standard for Miami language materials, and is what I use throughout this document. Where the phonetics of a given example are important to the point under discussion, I provide a transcription in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as described in the *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association* (International Phonetic Association, 1999).

#### **2.3.2.1 Consonants**

Inventory: p, t, c, k, s, š, h, m, n, w, y, l

**Figure 1 – Place and Manner of Articulation of Miami Consonants**

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop	p	t			k	
Affricate			c			
Fricative		s	š			h
Nasal	m	n				
Approximant				y		
Lateral Approximant		l				

Labial-velar Approximant: w

*p*, *t*, *c*, and *k* become voiced and unaspirated when immediately preceded by a nasal, and are voiceless and aspirated elsewhere. (As this aspiration is predictable and works the same as in English, I do not mark it in my transcriptions.) All obstruents and *w* can also be preaspirated. This is represented orthographically with *h* and in transcriptions with [ʰ].<sup>19</sup> As discussed later, preaspiration is starting to go out of use in the Baldwin children's speech.<sup>20</sup> Sibilants undergo voicing when immediately preceded by a nasal (*ns* → [nz]; *nš* → [nʒ]). Unlike with the stop series, however, where voicing occurs only when the nasal is adjacent, nasal-induced voicing of sibilants can also spread across a vowel (hence *nVs* → [nVz]; *nVš* → [nVʒ]) unless blocked by another consonant or by preaspiration.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> A motivation for not marking post-consonant aspiration in phonetic transcriptions is that the IPA uses the same symbol for pre- and post-consonantal aspiration and differentiates the two only by whether the symbol appears to the left or right of the consonant letter, respectively. All of my superscript-*h*'s in transcriptions mark preaspiration.

<sup>20</sup> A commonly cited minimal pair is the following: *saahkia* 'crawfish', *saakia* 'Sauk (tribe)'. Daryl sometimes emphasizes that preaspiration is phonemic by carefully pronouncing pairs such as this one for his children, but the actual functional load of preaspiration is relatively small.

<sup>21</sup> The IPA guides for this set of examples represent the standard pronunciation of these words. As discussed later, the Baldwins pronounce these and other words in a variety of ways with respect to preaspiration and vowel length. However, their pattern of sibilant voicing, which is key to the point illustrated here, corresponds to the standard pronunciations.

*masaana* ‘thread’ → [mazaɪna] (voicing triggered by *m*)

*taaniši* ‘how’ → [taɪnɪʒɪ] (voicing triggered by *n*)

*maalhsi* ‘knife’ → [maɪ<sup>h</sup>sɪ] (voicing blocked by preaspiration)

*mitemhsa* ‘woman’ → [mɪtɛm<sup>h</sup>sa] (voicing blocked by preaspiration)

### 2.3.2.2 Vowels

Modern descriptions of Miami describe it as having four vowels, with length being phonemic. This document follows modern Miami orthography in indicating vowel “length” as it occurs in the standard version of the language by doubling the appropriate letter. However, with the exception of the short and long pair of low vowels *a* and *aa*, the “long” version of any given vowel is noticeably raised (and slightly fronted), and hence different in quality in the speech of the Baldwins. The younger two children may be parsing their differences as vowel quality differences rather than length for the non-low vowels, hence cognitively thinking in terms of a seven-vowel inventory with length phonemic only for the low vowel, but this was not formally investigated in this study.<sup>22</sup> The older children and Karen, conversely, are metalinguistically aware of vowel length and carefully differentiate certain forms such as the first and second person vowel suffixes in pairs such as *meenaani* ‘I drink’ and *meenani* ‘you drink’, but their realization of the other vowel “lengths” is variable. Finally,

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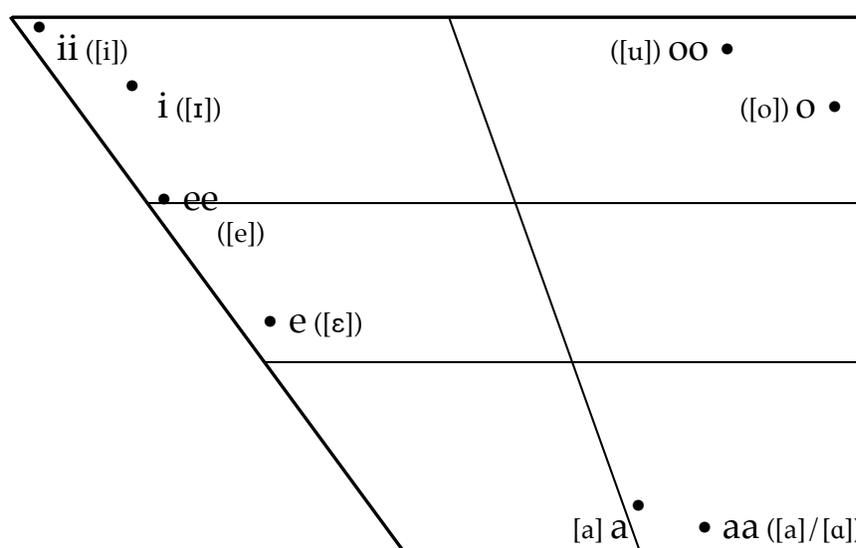
<sup>22</sup> At the very end of this study, both younger children were starting to write stories using as much Miami as possible (and mixing in English elsewhere). While not available in time to be formally incorporated into this study, I did notice that they were using standard Miami spelling for certain words, and what appeared to be their own guesses for others. (Their mother confirmed that this was the case, and that the children consulted the dictionary for certain words.) Standard orthographic *ee* was usually written “*ay*”; standard orthographic *aa* was usually “*a*”, but written as “*o*” in stressed syllables (whether the vowel was phonemically long or not). For orthographic *ii* and *oo*, their spelling matched the standard conventions. Given the multitude of factors involved in spelling, the exact mechanisms at play remain for future study. However, one very clear point was that both children did not normally mark preaspiration. The only time it was indicated was in words that were spelled completely correctly – that is, those that I assume they looked up.

Daryl's speech differentiates vowel length distinctly.

Despite the potential phonemic differences in length as discussed above, all six Baldwins' Miami vowels are about the same in quality. The average approximate height and backness of the Baldwins' vowels as based on impressionistic data is plotted in the chart below:

Vowel Inventory: *i, e, a, o, ii, ee, aa, oo*

**Figure 2 – Impressionistic Height & Backness of Baldwins' Vowels**



Because vowel length was so variable and likely often missed by me, especially early in this study, IPA transcriptions in this document do not mark vowel length except for the low vowels. However, the quality differences as shown in the figure above are sufficiently different as to have different IPA symbols and thus should allow the reader to reconstruct phonemic “length” as needed.

### 2.3.3 Selected Language Changes & Their Social Implications

#### 2.3.3.1 Changes in Pronunciation: Overview

All six family members are dominant in English and the potential for English interference in their Miami phonology is high. However, the effects of language

contact differ between Daryl and the rest of his family. Likely because of the amount of work he does on the language and his training in linguistics, Daryl's Miami pronunciation is close to the reconstructed phonetics of the language. Karen and the children, conversely, exhibit some anglicization in their pronunciation, even though much of their Miami input comes from Daryl. What follows exemplifies some of the main differences.

First, the vowels are undergoing some anglicization. *o*, for example, is often diphthongized to [ow] as in American English – particularly in stressed positions. Sometimes, a schwa appears in non-stressed syllables, though this is more common among the younger children than the older ones. Even the younger children use a schwa far less than many Miami tribal members who have started learning the language more recently, who tend to pronounce Miami fully following English patterns of vowel reduction.

There are also a significant number of words where the standard pronunciation used by Daryl differs from what Karen and the children say in terms of the vowels being different. Examples include the following:

**KEY TO EXAMPLE (3)**

*standard form used by Daryl* → *novel form used by rest of the family* 'English gloss'

- (3) *paapiicihšia* → *paapiciihšia* 'goat'  
*peetilaanki* → *pitiilenki(i)* 'it's raining' (Ciinkwia pronounces it like Daryl)  
*noonki* → *noonkii* 'now'  
*waapanke* → *wapankii* 'tomorrow'

In still other cases, however, the entire family's pronunciation – Daryl's included – differs from the standard form. An example is *miinaawa* 'or', which the family pronounces as if *minaawe*, hence having changed the vowels of all three syllables

in the word. These examples likely developed where the family initially learned one form and Daryl or David Costa then determined a different one to be standard, but the family stuck with the form they were already using.

Interestingly, the entire Baldwin family also exhibits a novel pattern wherein *a* is realized as the high front lax vowel [ɪ] (*i* in the modern orthography) in certain Miami words. To what extent this is a lexical, morphological, or phonological change remains for future investigation, though the current limited corpus of evidence lends itself to a lexical analysis. The change in the example given below is robust and occurs in natural and elicited speech:<sup>23</sup>

- (4) *waapantam-* → *waapintam-*  
look at it

This change yields forms such as *waapintanto* ‘look at it’, *waapintantaawi* ‘let’s look’, and *waapintanki* ‘he looks at it’. However, no vowels in *waapami* ‘look at him’ or *waapanteši* ‘show it to him’, which are formed off the same basic root *waapam-*,<sup>24</sup> change from their standard counterparts. This restricted pattern suggests the shift of *-antanto* to *-intanto* may have been driven by analogy to the following imperative, which in its singular forms happens to end in *intanto*:

- (5) *pooneelintanto* ‘stop thinking of it’

or to a whole array of other words whose endings are slightly different but are

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<sup>23</sup> The one exception is that Daryl uses the standard pronunciations when he is speaking in formal teacher speech – for example, when he is recording his voice for tribal language materials. This goes beyond careful versus casual speech, as Daryl frequently pronounces and repeats words carefully, especially when he is trying to introduce or reinforce a construction with his children, but still exhibits the realization of *a* as [ɪ] described here. Otherwise, I noted just one counterexample where Awan had said “look” to me in English (December 21, 2006), and I said *waapantanto* using its standard vowels, which he then repeated using my vowels. In all other cases, including situations where I had just used the standard pronunciation, the children used their family’s novel pronunciation. Other Miami speakers who learned the language from the Baldwins (in the mid 1990’s and onward) also exhibit this novel pronunciation, and it must have arisen early in the family’s reclamation efforts.

<sup>24</sup> There is an additional phonological process at play here wherein nasals assimilate to the place of articulation of stops that end up following them due to morphological processes. Hence *waapantam-* is internally *waapam+tam*, *-tam* being a suffix for “it”.

similar in phonological shape and have *i* [ɪ] in the appropriate place:

- (6) *paahkinanto* ‘open it’  
*siikinanto* ‘pour it out’

*waapinkw-*, a root meaning “gray”, forms the beginning of many common words.

This, too, may have been a source of analogy.

Notably, a similar process of standard *a* being realized as [ɪ] occurs in certain other words as pronounced by Karen and all four children, but not as pronounced by Daryl:

**KEY TO EXAMPLES (7)-(10)**

*standard form used by Daryl* → *novel form used by rest of the family* ‘English gloss’

- (7) *paapankamwa* → *paapinkamwa* ‘fox’  
*eehsipana* → *eehsipina* ‘raccoon’

However, within my analyzed corpus of the family’s natural speech, the realization of *a* as [ɪ] does not occur in stressed syllables, hence suggesting that it may be some form of phonologically driven vowel reduction, albeit with some lexical restrictions that remain to be definitively determined. As Daryl does not have vowel changes for the words in (7), the children may be patterning after their mother (or perhaps the mother is patterning after her children).

For these and other examples, the existence of a standard orthographic form raises a question of how to write these novel forms in this document – whether to reflect their changing pronunciation or with the standard orthography. An added complication is that my fieldnotes are likely full of errors and missed detail because I was learning the language during the study. I tried to write what I heard, but was undoubtedly influenced by what I knew (or

thought) to be the standard orthography.<sup>25</sup> Other times, I wrote nothing because the speech was either too fast to record or the context made it otherwise impossible. Given all of these inconsistencies, I will adopt the standard orthography as represented in Baldwin & Costa (2005) from this point on, particularly as doing so facilitates further analysis of my examples by others.

#### **2.3.3.1.1 *Changes in Stress***

The children's speech exhibits some (though not complete) regularization of stress patterns to penultimate. Several rules govern lexical stress in Miami, but a common pattern is for words to have primary stress on the penultimate syllable (see Costa, 2003:108-118), as with English. Given the similarity between Miami and English stress patterns, it is unclear as to what extent the changing stress in the examples given above is driven by English or Miami phonology. It is likely influenced by both. The following examples are especially noteworthy because they reflect tokens where Daryl has made a point of emphasizing the standard pronunciation by carefully pronouncing the words and hyper-stressing the appropriate non-penultimate syllable, but where the children nevertheless continue to follow a penultimate stress pattern:

(8) *nihswí* → *nihswi* 'three'

(9) *mahkwá* → *máhkwa* 'bear'

(10) *neeyólaani* → *neeyolaáni* 'I see you' (used frequently in the fixed expression *neeyolaani kati* 'I'll see you later')

#### **2.3.3.1.2 *Changes in Preaspiration Patterns***

As noted above, Miami historically had phonemically preaspirated consonants

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<sup>25</sup> For this reason, my summary of the younger children's earlier speech as given here largely reflects examples for which I have audio recordings or those for which I wrote an IPA transcription in my field notes.

(*hp, ht, hc, hk, hs, hš, hw*). These are largely present in the father's speech (especially when he is speaking carefully), less so in the older children's speech, and usually absent in the younger children's speech.<sup>26</sup> In some cases, historically preaspirated stops are realized as strongly aspirated stops, and at other times are realized as regular stops (sometimes with a slight elongation of the preceding vowel or with slight gemination of the consonant). The following examples give phonetic transcriptions of actual tokens that I happened to record, though the exact phonetic realization of a given word varies from one articulation to the next and the ongoing learning of the language by the children complicates the question of what changes are "complete". Hence the examples given below are merely illustrative of the general trend:

KEY TO EXAMPLES (11)-(14):	
word in Miami orthography English gloss	[father's pronunciation] → [children's pronunciation]

- (11) šoohkwaakani [ʃu<sup>h</sup>kwa:kanɪ] → [ʃukwa:kanɪ]  
sled/train
- (12) eehtwaani [e<sup>h</sup>twa:nɪ] → [etwa:nɪ]  
I have it
- (13) weehkapankia [we<sup>h</sup>kaɲŋɪja] → [wekaɲŋɪja]  
candy ('it is sweet')

Preaspirated sibilants (*hs, hš*) had a tendency to be missed in the historical documentation and were probably never as acoustically salient as preaspirated stops. I didn't hear preaspirated sibilants even in the children's careful speech:

- (14) mihsooli [mɪ<sup>h</sup>suli] → [mɪsuli]  
boat

<sup>26</sup> As for my Miami speech, I try to follow standard patterns with respect to preaspiration and other facets of pronunciation. However, as much of my Miami was learned from hearing the Baldwins speak the language at the same time I was consulting pedagogical materials, my pronunciation was inconsistent throughout the study.

However, though not realized phonetically, “preaspiration” of sibilants can often be reconstructed from the children’s speech because of the phonological rule alluded to earlier wherein nasal consonants trigger the voicing of sibilants in certain environments. For this reason, the sibilant in the words *mihsooli*, if not phonemically preaspirated, would be realized as [z] in the standard form of the language. The children’s speech is consistent with this phonological rule, though given that there isn’t any phonetic realization of the preaspiration in their own speech, they may be analyzing the sibilant voicing as lexical rather than phonological.<sup>27</sup>

Preaspiration of *w*, conversely, is acoustically salient and has been maintained:

- (15) *mahweewa* ‘wolf’ is pronounced [ma<sup>h</sup>wewa] by all family members, though with some variability in the vowel length of the second syllable.
- (16) *lenimahwia* ‘coyote’ is pronounced [lɛnɪma<sup>h</sup>wɪja] by all family members.<sup>28</sup>

### 2.3.3.2 Other Anglicization

Given their bilingualism in English, it is not surprising that there is some other anglicization in the Baldwin children’s Miami. For the younger children, it is not immediately clear what represents English interference and what represents a natural stage in acquisition, such as young children’s crosslinguistic preference

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<sup>27</sup> Reanalysis of this kind could cause voicing to become phonemic for stops. However, I could find no minimal pairs such as *mihsooli*, which they pronounce as [mɪsʊlɪ], and a hypothetical \**misooli*, which would presumably be [mɪzʊlɪ], with which to investigate this point.

<sup>28</sup> During the second half of this study, Awan started replacing *hw* in these words with an aspirated *k*. Both may reflect an analogy to *mahkwa* ‘bear’ ([makwa]), a word that has semantic overlap with ‘wolf’ and ‘coyote’. He has also translated *mahweewa* both as ‘wolf’ and as ‘coyote’ on different occasions, which is not surprising given the semantic overlap of these animals as well as their common internal morphology. (*lenimahwia* appears to be the initial *len-* ‘common’ followed by the root that means ‘wolf’.) It is possible that Awan omitted preaspiration from his own conceptualization of Miami phonology completely, thus replacing the only place it was occurring in his speech (i.e., in two words that had the sequence *hw*) with a common sound. (While *hw* occurs in other Miami words, *mahweewa* and *lenimahwia* are the only examples I have regularly heard used in the Baldwins’ speech.)



unrehearsed speech, while understanding intellectually that Miami would have historically formed the construction differently. For example, he has noted that he sometimes expresses the concept BEFORE AN ACTION with the word *milohta* 'before' followed by a verb, though Miami historically expressed this idea with a word meaning "while" followed by a negated verb: "before he eats", for example, would literally have been "while he has not eaten".<sup>30</sup> This illustrates the more general point that some change due to language contact will occur, even when the speaker is highly metalinguistically aware.

### 2.3.4 Views About Language Change

Although there is his own effort to be true to the historical language when possible, Daryl recognizes that grammatical, lexical, and pragmatic changes reflect the new social situation of Miami as a language that coexists and will continue to coexist with English. That his children will speak Miami with an English accent is taken as a given and not a large concern of Daryl, or to the best of my knowledge, of any Miami tribal member active in language efforts. Given Daryl's training in linguistics and high level of awareness of his family's language usage, he will sometimes recognize a particular construction as exhibiting anglicization and will make an effort to use the historically standard construction, but he does not criticize the new construction.

Sociologically, this pattern is important and differs from the similar but different situation of revitalization efforts for a language that has native speakers who still speak a more classical version of it. In those situations, the differences that almost invariably develop between the new speakers and the remaining

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<sup>30</sup> See Appendix II, Conversation III, line [3] and Conversation IV, line [4b] for examples where this has occurred in Daryl's natural speech.

elderly speakers may meet with resistance. For example, Goodfellow (2003) discusses the endangered Kwak'wala language of British Columbia, which has a growing generation of younger speakers due to revitalization efforts. These younger speakers speak Kwak'wala with an anglicized phonological inventory: glottalized consonants, uvular stops, velar fricatives, and lateral phonemes have been replaced by their closest English counterparts.<sup>31</sup> Though not unnatural as a phenomenon of language contact, the younger Kwak'wala speakers have developed shame and hesitancy to speak from having the authenticity of their language challenged by elderly speakers. Dorian (1994) summarizes similar challenges faced by young speakers of Tiwi and Mexicano, and argues that purism can greatly hinder language revitalization efforts.

In the Baldwin family, major challenges along the lines of what Goodfellow and Dorian relate do not occur. Correction of the children's pronunciation generally occurs only when the mispronunciation is grammatically or lexically significant. That is, it is restricted to cases when a form expressing a different grammatical meaning was used or when the target was pronounced such that it might have been misheard as a different word.

There is, however, one area where historical similarity does arise in the Baldwins' language ideas and practice, and this is in their beliefs about the semantics and pragmatic norms of the language. They make a special effort to use and understand Miami words to reflect what Daryl best understands to be a Miami worldview. As detailed below through a series of specific examples, this ideology also guides their lexical innovation practices, as their wish is for

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<sup>31</sup> Parallel to the case of Kwak'wala described by Goodfellow (2003), it is a part of Miami phonology that has no English counterpart – the preaspirated consonants – that is most clearly undergoing change in this family.

changes to the lexicon to happen in a Miami way through speakers who have a Miami cultural worldview.

### 2.3.5 Lexical Innovation Ideology & Practice

One notable feature of the Miami language is that there is no evidence of there ever having been any significant borrowing from English. It is not immediately clear why this would be. One would expect some level of borrowing from English to have taken place during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although the experience of colonization may have led some Miamis to keep Miami “pure” and thus avoid borrowing from European languages. It is also possible that the attested data is not fully representative. In particular, the context of language documentation, where the speaker was supposed to be giving “Miami” words and phrases, may have led some to offer only native words even for concepts where there was also a commonly used borrowed term.

Nevertheless, there are a few obvious borrowings in the historical records. These include *kaahpi* ‘coffee’, *wihški* ‘whiskey’, and *ahsalata* ‘salad’. Even among this small set of nouns, however, there are non-borrowed equivalents *kociihsaapowi* ‘bean liquid’ (coffee) and *koteewaapowi* ‘whiskey’ (literally “fire liquid”), which the family tends to use instead of the borrowed terms.<sup>32</sup> The only English word that they have knowingly borrowed into their Miami is *minute* (the noun), which they pronounce in English and inflect as in English (i.e., *nkoti minute* ‘one minute’, *niišwi minutes* ‘two minutes’). It is not clear why this particular word got borrowed. I asked, but the family wasn’t sure why it had

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<sup>32</sup> There is also a native word for ‘salad’ that Daryl found several years into his family’s language reclamation efforts. For some reason, Daryl always has trouble remembering it, but he did note (November, 2007) that they should probably learn and use it. However, new Miami speakers have adopted the borrowed word so fully that it is likely to stay. (It has even been extended to new forms such as *ahsalataapowi* ‘salad dressing’ (literally “salad liquid”).)

happened.

Beyond issues of morphosyntactic or phonological changes, the more salient, and often more socially relevant changes in modern U.S. indigenous languages concern word-level changes in terms of perceived or actual anglicization in the semantics of existing words or in how new words are created. Errington (2003:724) notes that lexicons “can be portrayed as symbolic embodiments of intimate, lived relations among speakers, communities, and environment”, and argues that practices based around this way of thinking tend to place more weight on lexicons over phonological or morphosyntactic systems. Mia Kalish (2006) argues that deliberate language extension into indigenous languages from world languages such as English needs to occur along the lines of how a given concept has been developed within the target culture, particularly with respect to metaphor. Both Errington and Kalish capture the ideology of the Baldwins. The lexicon is seen as an important link between culture and language. For this reason, purposeful changes to the lexicon are done carefully and slowly, and are given far more weight than changes in phonology or morphosyntax.

Daryl often speaks of how he doesn’t want to rush into lexical innovation, and that part of creating words in a Miami way requires some level of personal experience with the language and culture. For this reason, the Baldwins deliberately create words only when they need to and with a concerted effort to make those words authentically Miami, particularly in following the well-attested historical pattern where metonymy played a strong role in creating words. Hinton & Ahlers (1999:63) observe that “authenticity” is widely considered important in situations of what they term language restoration, but note that beyond some sort of adherence to actual forms, authenticity can be

maintained in vocabulary development through the analysis and teaching of traditional processes of word formation. This latter conception of authenticity effectively captures the philosophy underlying the Baldwins' conscious lexical innovation.<sup>33</sup> It falls into the following three classes: calquing, semantic extension, and neologization using Miami roots. Examples follow, and the principle of staying true to the culture is clear.

Calques come from English and from Algonquian languages. English-based calques include *koonii alenia* 'snow' + 'man' for "snowman", and *pakaani pimi* 'nut' + 'butter' for "peanut butter". When the source is English, calquing in the Baldwins' speech usually occurs only where the source form itself already had some level of metonymy in it, as with "snowman" or "peanut butter". From other Algonquian languages, however, Daryl is also interested in incorporating insights from metaphors and cultural practices. In one case, for example, Daryl learned of the practice in a related language where some people would refer to their automobile as a pet. From this came *nintaya keetooiita* (literally, "my pet is thirsty"), a calque from Kickapoo, that in context means "my car needs gasoline".

However, in a few cases, calquing is simply calquing, as with the family's adoption of *palaanikaani* (literally, "eight-building") to refer to the Super 8<sup>TM</sup> motel chain. Calques of this kind usually occur on the fly to accommodate a concept that has come into the context of a conversation held in Miami.

Furthermore, calquing sometimes serves as language play when the children come up with words that are contextually understood to be ridiculous. One such

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<sup>33</sup> Most new words are in a direct sense created by Daryl, but proposals often gets discussed with whatever family members happen to be around, and they all contribute ideas. Throughout this study, I also offered my own perspectives, both as a user of Miami and also as a linguist with some familiarity of how innovation occurs cross-linguistically.

example that we laughed about was *kiišaaipihkitekiki alemwa*, literally ‘it is hot’+‘dog’, to mean “hot dog”, made up on the spot by Ciinkwia when I asked him to relate what he had done the previous evening.<sup>34</sup> (A hot dog had been part of that evening’s meal.) Daryl didn’t like the idea of this term being adopted as an actual new word, but as a joke, it was fine.

With semantic extension, in all of the examples I am aware of, the original meaning of the word still remains and the new meaning reflects a development in modern society. For example, *aahteeteentanto* ‘extinguish it [the flame]’ now means “turn it off” and refers to electric lights and appliances, but maintains its original meaning for fires. Similarly, *šoohkwaakani*, which originally meant ‘sled’, had historically already been extended to mean ‘train’, and was extended by the Baldwins to also mean ‘automobile’.<sup>35</sup>

Some neologization takes an existing word and changes its part of speech. With *weekiwi*, a particle meaning ‘slowly’, Daryl added the singular and plural imperative suffixes *-lo* and *-ko*, hence creating the forms *weekiwilo* and *weekiwiko* to express “be careful!”. This example was probably more motivated by a practical need to express this idea than any direct issue of metonymy, though it

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<sup>34</sup> The noun *alemwa* ‘dog’ is grammatically animate and thus calls for a verb from what is known as the animate intransitive paradigm. Daryl pointed this out to Ciinkwia later (when I played a recording I had made of the conversation in which this calque occurred) and said that the standard verb would be *kiišaaipihkiliwa* ‘he is hot’. The verb form Ciinkwia used in this case refers to a solid inanimate object and makes sense semantically in reference to sausage (NB: *wiiyoohsi* ‘meat’ is inanimate). However, verbs in Ciinkwia’s natural speech usually follow the standard grammar of the language in showing agreement with the grammatical animacy of their referents.

<sup>35</sup> This is the word for ‘car’ that was used by the family throughout most of this study, but late in 2007, Daryl changed the form for ‘car’ to *šoohkwaakana*. This new form has the same root but uses the animate ending *-a*, and this change was motivated by Daryl’s having learned that the related language Potawatomi marks cars as animate. However, the younger children were still using the old form *šoohkwaakani* both in natural and in elicited speech at the end of this study, and it not clear if and when they will adopt the new form. (I did not investigate what form the older children were using.) A general trend that I observed throughout this study was that all four children would learn new forms that Daryl started using to replace existing ones, but that they would usually continue using the initial form they had learned.

does nonetheless reflect a cultural norm of doing things with care and with as much time as necessary.<sup>36</sup> True neologisms, where words are created out of completely novel combinations of existing roots, do tend to be based on metonymy. Examples include *kinteelintaakani* (literally: “the thing that thinks fast”) for ‘computer’, *aacimwaakani* (literally: “the thing for talking”) for ‘telephone’, and *oonsaayosaminki* (literally: “it is fried”) for ‘frybread’. *hohowa*, a hybrid of the English “ho ho” exclamation and an allomorph of the animate suffix *-a*, means ‘Santa Claus’. These and other “descriptive” neologisms are common and well ingrained in the younger children’s speech. To the best of my knowledge, they are unaware that the language didn’t historically have these terms.

In cases where a fixed form to describe something doesn’t exist or isn’t known, the speaker will sometimes use a periphrastic construction, as illustrated in the following example:

(21) (Daryl and Ciinkwia were discussing a bench that they were making.)<sup>37</sup>

Ciinkwia: teepi-nko-hka kiihkikišamawiyani **kinwaaki naahkipioni**  
 able-QP-DUB you cut it on my behalf **it is long chair**

There is no word for ‘bench’ that the family knows, so Ciinkwia simply described the item. Over time, some of these periphrastic collocations may be lexicalized.

Important is that Daryl is hesitant to create words for concepts that wouldn’t fall into a Miami worldview, though there are no absolute restrictions. One example is the concept of vegetarianism, which does not have an obvious

<sup>36</sup> This example represents an interesting story in that Daryl does not remember creating it. The absence of it in the historical records (including Daryl’s own database), however, made it clear that he had. This new usage is so common that the family even reanalyzed *weekiwi-* as a regular verb stem. I heard them use various full forms such as *weekiwiaani* ‘I’m being careful’.

<sup>37</sup> The full interaction in which this example occurs is given as Conversation IV in Appendix II.

place in historic Miami culture, though I have noted that it may still be needed for modern Miami communication, as I am a vegetarian Miami. This particular issue never went beyond initial discussion as there has not yet, to the best of my knowledge, been a context where anybody would have actually needed to express this concept in Miami. If a true practical need arises, a word will probably be created even if it does represent a worldview shift, but I doubt that such a need will arise soon.

Though realized in terms of lexical usage rather than lexical innovation, the general principle of staying true to a Miami worldview is also exemplified by the family's use of the word *(ah)kinki*.<sup>38</sup> This word originally meant 'in the field', but had been extended to mean "outside" in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>39</sup> Daryl believes that using the word to differentiate between being inside or outside of a building is fine. However, he has noted several times that using it to reference "being in the great outdoors" (a possible interpretation of the English concept of "outside") would disregard a core Miami worldview in that the concept of a boundary between humans and "nature" does not occur. Here, it is not an issue of the word itself, but rather of how that word is used.

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<sup>38</sup> The variation in the initial syllable follows a common pattern where word-initial *ah-* is often dropped, for example with *pena* and *ahpena* both being standard for 'potato'.

<sup>39</sup> By the late 1800's, *ahkenki* had come to mean 'in the field', while *ahkinki* (with a different vowel) had come to mean 'outside' (David Costa, personal communication, 2007), though both probably came from *ahki* 'field' plus a locative suffix originally. I did not observe this vowel differentiation in any of the family member's speech, but I wouldn't be surprised to hear it made by Daryl.

## Chapter 3 – Methodological Practices & Outcomes

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The examples and associated discussion in this dissertation are based on fieldwork, particularly interactions with the younger children, conducted at various times over the four year period between 2003 and 2007.<sup>40</sup> Interactions were usually informal and generally lasted a few hours at the family's home, with participant observation and informal elicitation being the primary methods of data collection. This chapter first summarizes the methodologies used in this study and discusses their efficacy in understanding child language development and their cultural and social appropriateness. Second, I discuss the larger philosophy of collaborative research that guided this study in light of its benefits, challenges, and outcomes.

### ***3.1 Research Methods & Their Sociological Underpinnings***

With the younger children, although I did do multiple short sessions of language elicitation and interviewing in the initial stages of the study in order to achieve a record of how they were understanding the language, the primary goal at that time was to foster a positive relationship. I wanted them to be comfortable spending time with me and free to be themselves. Interactions in years three and four of the study primarily involved participant observation, but also included some elicitation and other structured activities as a means to better track the children's language development with respect to the earlier findings.

With the older family members, in addition to elicitation, I personally recorded several Miami conversations and short narratives. I also had the family

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<sup>40</sup> The specific fieldwork dates are detailed in Appendix I.

make several audio recordings of their own conversations in my absence under the hypothesis that my presence might cause them to speak differently from how they would otherwise. We also recorded approximately 15 hours of video, which proved especially useful in that video shows the context of conversation better than other forms of documentation, but also because viewing old videos was fun for all of us.

The audio corpus of their recorded speech includes discrete words, phrases, and short conversations elicited and recorded directly by me. The video portion includes what I took directly, but also includes several activities that one of the Baldwins recorded for me in my absence. An example is a video of all four children playing the board game *Sorry!* right after this study began. It also includes some serendipitous interactions that happened to be on home video because the family was recording something for their own purposes, recognized its relevance to this study, and then later shared the video with me.

Similarly unscripted as that last category of video recordings, in the Baldwins' living room is an acid-free notebook provided by me that I specifically designated for writing down interesting language data, novel uses by family members, or anything else deemed important immediately after it happened. While life got busy and we were no longer using this notebook at the end of the study, they (especially Karen) wrote down several interesting language examples earlier in the study and developed a habit of paying closer attention to their fellow family members' language usage. I established a pattern of asking a lot of questions and we spoke about language issues frequently. Many of the sociological insights of this study come from these discussions in which family members told me how they feel about the language, how they use it, and how

their other family members use it. The Baldwins all knew that I wanted to understand all aspects of communication in their home, including the role of English, and they graciously shared their thoughts and observations with me.

More important than any actual data collection methods, however, was the underlying sociological assumption that I integrated into all of my interactions, especially with the younger children. This was the belief alluded to earlier that being *myaamia* is positive, that being American is also positive, and that those of us who have both backgrounds are lucky but also have to make a special effort to know our Miami culture and pass it on to others. There exists within the Miami Nation Cultural Preservation Office the following mission statement, the spirit of which I tried to incorporate:

The Cultural Preservation Office of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma is committed to the perpetuation of *myaamia* cultural identity through efforts in reclamation, restoration, revitalization, and preservation. Our mission is guided by our belief that 'knowledge is responsibility' and in this truth we bear the important and respected task of learning from our elders today, interpreting written records through Miami cultural understanding, and disseminating knowledge gained to our people thereby ensuring that our Nation will live on.

Following these principles, the study itself was framed around several specific objectives. One objective was to document some modern Miami as well as the process of awakening it both for linguistic theory and also as a part of Miami tribal history and social commentary.<sup>41</sup> A second objective was to use the knowledge gained, especially regarding how Miami is learned by children, to aid in the development of language teaching materials and programs at the tribal

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<sup>41</sup> I shared the preliminary findings of this study through presentations and informal discussions at several tribal gatherings and I wrote several articles on issues of language reclamation for our quarterly tribal newspaper *aatotankiki myaamiaki*, which is sent to all tribal households. Additionally, much of the language data collected for this study may eventually be housed in the Miami Nation Archives.

level. A third and more immediate goal was to help the Baldwins notice patterns in their own language usage, especially in terms of the younger children's acquisition, in order to aid the older family members in identifying problem areas, creating solutions, and realizing their own language learning objectives. Finally, there was my personal goal of attaining higher proficiency in Miami, so that I could be more culturally informed and improve my skills as a scholar-practitioner of language reclamation.

Unlike other research where the goal might be to examine a situation with as little outside interference as possible, this study was not designed to distance my role. Rather, I integrated myself, as a Miami person and as a language learner, into the interactions of the Baldwin family – especially with the younger children. Similarly, while I followed the general practice promoted by most sociolinguists of collecting and analyzing a sizeable corpus of “natural” language use to complement my elicited data, this particular situation was different in that the existing natural context was itself unusual.

In this case, the presence of a person who regularly asked language questions was not as out of place as it might otherwise have been because the family was already actively involved with and talking about their own language reclamation efforts. Second, the level of technicality in the discussions I had with all four children reflected their father's training in formal linguistics. The Baldwins talk explicitly about grammar and semantics, and this is evidenced in how the children explain and talk about the language. Sometimes, even the younger children translated phrases into English for me using descriptions such

as “you-plural” and “we-exclusive”.<sup>42</sup> More importantly, the Baldwins talk explicitly about the social role of the language and of the people who are learning to speak it. It is understood and often discussed within this family, and likewise among other Miamis active in the language reclamation effort, that we are all teachers and have a responsibility to share our language knowledge with each other.

This last view was an especially relevant variable in my time with the younger children, particularly near the beginning of this study. Our sessions were framed around a context of *teaching*, specifically where they were the teachers. I did not know Miami, they did, and they were doing me a great favor by helping me learn it. For practical reasons, this approach made sense. I really did need to learn more of the language, and although I was studying it on my own, the younger children taught me a great deal. Socially, the hope was that this approach would strengthen the sense of prestige associated with the language while also making the purpose of the sessions easy to understand. They already had experience with a teacher-apprentice model from their schooling, and the only different part of our relationship was that the older person was in the apprentice role.

Both children appeared to enjoy the time that we spent together and were usually willing teachers, sometimes spontaneously offering comments about what words mean or when one might say them. At times, particularly earlier in the study when my own Miami language ability was still very limited, Amehk would sometimes say something in Miami and then remark to me that I might

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<sup>42</sup> Miami differentiates number in second person, and differentiates first person into two categories based on whether “we” includes the addressee (inclusive) or does not (exclusive).

want to write it down, thus demonstrating her awareness that I was cataloging words, phrases, and meanings in order to revisit them later. She also grew to frequently offer metalinguistic commentary about a given word or phrase. I took these explicit comments about language as especially good evidence of her conscious language knowledge. I thus gave these and other unsolicited comments comparatively more weight in my acquisition analysis than I did to answers that she gave to questions that I had posed, some of which may have been confusing, inadvertently worded in a way that might have biased the answer, or otherwise problematic for measuring linguistic knowledge.

Framing the initial interactions as ones where Amehk and Awan were teaching me *myaamia* likely facilitated the explicit dialogue about the language that came to characterize many of my interactions with them. This allowed me to learn about patterns and ideas held by the younger children that their parents were not aware of. Daryl noted to me many times that there were things that I found out that he wasn't aware of, especially in terms of how his younger children were thinking about the language. Daryl told me that a common reaction from Amehk to his questions about the language was that she would roll her eyes and protest with "noohsa ..." ('Dad ...'). Presumably, the children found it pragmatically odd to answer language questions from their father, whom they assumed to know the answer. Conversely, it was more natural to answer language questions that came from me, a self-identified language learner. Particularly around the beginning of this study, I truly was asking questions to which I did not know the answer, and the children greatly aided me in figuring out what the other family members were saying. Thus, they became experts and teachers, a role that we wanted them to experience in preparation to be teachers

of the language as adults – again, part of the notion discussed earlier where knowledge entails responsibility.

Given the young ages of the younger children at the beginning of this study, I largely avoided long, structured elicitation sessions and instead tried to ask questions that were motivated by something that had just happened or was otherwise contextually relevant. To offer a specific example, when I overheard somebody said “I’m sorry” in English, I asked Amehk “How do you say ‘I’m sorry’ in *myaamia*?”. Similarly, I often asked about what to call things that I saw around their house, which is similarly natural in that language learners often ask about the names of things in their immediate environment. This general pattern of asking contextually relevant questions occurred frequently. My questions came in many forms.

Sometimes, I pointed to something and outright asked what I should call it. I also made similarly direct requests for them to explain (in English) what one of their family members had just said in Miami. In other cases where there wasn’t a natural opportunity to ask about something I wanted to know, I created a context and framed a question around that situation. For example, on several occasions, I mentioned or otherwise alluded to my younger sister and then asked the children what I should call her in Miami to see what word or commentary they would offer.

There were also occasions when I followed the elicitation/interview method common to linguistic fieldwork and sat down with the children to ask a series of prepared questions about how to say things in the language. The difference from fieldwork with adults was that I purposefully kept these sessions relatively short because of the age appropriateness factor alluded to above. I also

tried to make the sessions fun, with occasional funny tokens or jokes integrated into the sessions. I always mixed a few words or phrases that I knew the children could translate among tokens that I suspected would be harder to ensure that the task would not be overly intimidating. I also asked questions about usage norms. These questions generally came in the form of my offering words and asking for explanations of how or when they might be used – for example, “When would you say this word?” or “If I wanted to do \_\_\_\_\_, could I say \_\_\_\_\_?”.

Throughout the study, some of my questions asked for translation from English to Miami, while others were the other direction. Earlier in the study, due to my own limitations in Miami proficiency, the latter category primarily came from words and sentences taken verbatim from conversations by the older family members that I had recorded at some point earlier. At times, I also took sample words and phrases from existing pedagogical materials on the language, examples which to an extent were removed from the family’s daily speech. However, as the Baldwins were directly involved in the creation of most of these pedagogical materials, even these examples in some sense came from them originally.<sup>43</sup>

Although I always tried to at least say *taaniši ilweenki* ‘how is it said’ in Miami when I asked questions, most of my early elicitation was primarily in English. Similarly, the questions from the first part of the study primarily asked the children to translate English words to Miami, not the other way around. However, as I became more proficient in the language, I began to do more

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<sup>43</sup> One source that I consulted frequently was a booklet and two accompanying CDs (“Myaamia iilaataweenki: Audio lesson 1”, 2002) of common Miami nouns, household phrases, and sample conversations. Daryl contributed heavily to the production of this resource and he and both older children recorded their own voices for more than half of the CD tracks.

elicitation using Miami words and phrases. This “reverse elicitation” occurred in various forms, some of which was framed as actual elicitation, but much of which was more akin to a language learner’s solicitation for assistance. For example, I sometimes questioned whether or not I was trying to learn, particularly to clarify minute details of pronunciation (and in doing so, creating contexts where the children were likely to speak carefully). At other times, I said a phrase in Miami and asked them what it meant in English. As noted above, some of these were phrases that I took from the other family members’ speech, but I created some of them on my own. Not surprisingly, the younger children tended to do best in translating phrases that their family members were regularly using.

### ***3.2 Methods for Assessing Productivity***

A classic problem in acquisition studies, particularly of highly synthetic languages such as Miami, is that it is often not immediately apparent when children have acquired productive use of a given morpheme versus when they are using unanalyzed collocations that happen to contain that morpheme. For this reason, I also had to develop ways of testing morphological knowledge. This section details the methodologies I employed.

One of the most commonly used methods for determining morpheme acquisition is what has been termed the “90% rule” (Brown, 1973; Cazden, 1968). This is the idea that if a “functor” – a grammatical part such as an inflection that does not make reference – is correctly used in at least 90% of the contexts in which it is obligatory, then it can be assumed to have been acquired. For example, if a child acquiring English were to correctly add the -s to third-person

singular indicative verb forms in at least 90% of the grammatically required contexts, this methodology would consider that aspect of the English grammar as having been learned. Brown points out that there is often a long period of time in which the use of a given functor is probabilistic (1973:257), but that once children reach the 90% criterion, they usually do not drop below it. In many acquisition studies, the point of acquisition is specifically defined as the first of three consecutive speech samples where the child produces the morpheme correctly at least 90% of the time. This method can be illuminating, especially when there is earlier data of the same child having used the given functor significantly less than 90% of the time, thus providing a base of comparison. However, this method fails when the corpus being considered is small or any time a given functor occurs infrequently or only in common expressions, which may be known as unanalyzed collocations.

Pizzuto & Caselli (1992) propose several other criteria to refine the 90% rule. These include that a given verbal affix must be used with more than one root in order to count, and that the verb root with the possible productive affix must in turn be used with a different affix. Furthermore, each of the three samples must contain at least *five* tokens of obligatory contexts in order to count as having been acquired or not having been acquired. Essentially, theirs is a more rigorous version of the 90% rule, and one with clear benefits. However, there is again the problem that this methodology may fail for a small corpus where a productive morpheme may not occur enough times. Furthermore, this method is far better at substantiating that a given functor has been acquired than to substantiate that it has not, especially when one is considering specific morphemes that are clearly productive but infrequent in use.

Although the refined version of the 90% rule summarized above would theoretically be valid for assessing Amehk and Awan's productivity, the majority of Miami morphemes would be untestable because so much of the children's speech was in English. Additionally, much of their unsolicited Miami speech involves nouns or fixed expressions – particularly household commands, which are likely to be known as fixed units. Hence I was only able to formally incorporate this method to assess Amehk and Awan's acquisition of English, which as discussed in detail later, appeared to be normal.<sup>44</sup> However, I did incorporate the spirit of the 90% rule in my investigation by using other similar methods that investigated their ability to recognize and manipulate morphemes.

One such method was to elicit several phrases that were clearly grammatical but that were semantically or pragmatically unusual and thus unlikely to have been used. Sometimes, I combined verb roots with person/number suffixes with which they would not commonly occur and that I had never heard the older family members use. For example, I tried collocations such as putting the second person plural suffix on the verb "to urinate". Here, the idea was that one would almost never be in a context of saying "you guys are peeing", but the internal morphology of this form is productive and relatively transparent. Inclusion of these sorts of tokens allowed me to better gauge if and how the younger children were understanding Miami verbal morphology.<sup>45</sup>

Second, I listened very carefully for morphologically incorrect forms both in natural and in elicited speech. One of the better clues that a morpheme has

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<sup>44</sup> The 90% rule, or some modification of it, may be useful for future research once Amehk and Awan are able to tell whole stories in Miami.

<sup>45</sup> While there were some situations where I did similar elicitation with the older children, I did not do much. It was clear to me early in the study that the older children had a metalinguistic knowledge of Miami's verb structure.

been acquired is, ironically, the “incorrect” use of that morpheme via overregularization. Vihman notes:

Where a marker is used with a variety of word-bases and where that usage contrasts with use of another marker on the same word-base in appropriately contrasting contexts, we can assume that the child has at least begun to acquire the markers in question. When the marker is overgeneralized to word-bases which fail to be so marked in adult usage due to arbitrary idiosyncracies of the grammatical system, we are more confident that the child has begun to develop a productive system which includes the marker in question (1982:145).

English examples include the younger children’s relatively common overextension of the *-ed* suffix to irregular verbs such as *go*, *catch*, and *fly* – yielding *goed*, *catched*, and *flyed*. As I discovered later, they did something similar in their Miami, thus showing productivity, at least for the forms in question.

The initial elicitation sessions firmly established the protocol where talking about the Miami language and telling me about it became a regular part of my interactions with both younger children. Amehk and I had a particularly spirited elicitation session on her birthday in March 2004, and I followed up with her using similar tasks during my visits for the rest of that year.<sup>46</sup> With Awan, conversely, beyond several exceptions of short sets of words or phrases that I was able to ask about, larger scale elicitation didn’t become feasible until around the last year of this study. Prior to that period, his younger age and much shorter attention span made structured sessions difficult. I often wasn’t sure if he was ignoring a question because of lack of interest, because he didn’t know the answer, or for some other reason. For this reason, Part II of this document reports far more conclusively on Amehk’s language development than on Awan’s.

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<sup>46</sup> Although there was some birthday celebration on that day and there was a general festive mood, the elicitation itself was not unusual. We just happened to have a very good time and I learned a lot of language that day.

As useful as it proved to be even within limits of age appropriateness and personal levels of interest as discussed above, however, elicitation-based analysis has a number of inherent problems. A major problem is that it may coerce an adherence to the structure of the language of elicitation even in the situation where the speaker would use a different structure in natural speech. Cook & Mühlbauer (2006) describe a particularly extreme example in which obviation, a part of Cree (and Miami) morphosyntax that marks certain third-person entities as more distant than others, was completely absent in their language consultants' elicited speech – even when grammatically required. However, the same consultants invariably used obviation in natural speech, not only when it was grammatically required but also for additional discourse purposes. Given this issue, I tried, within the limits of my own knowledge of Miami and how its structure differs from English, to avoid eliciting tokens for which such a problem seemed likely to occur. Where I knew there to be major structural or semantic differences between English and Miami, I attempted to avoid direct translation-based elicitation and instead asked questions along the lines of “If I wanted to say \_\_\_\_\_, how should I say it in *myaamia*?”.

Another shortcoming to translation-based elicitation is that it actually tests translation ability, not language ability. A related problem is that an individual may not recognize a discrete elicited phrase that they would nonetheless understand or be able to explain if it had occurred in a real conversation with more context. For purposes of my time with the younger children, their learning to answer specific and sometimes contextually incongruous language questions was part of their socialization as teachers of the language, and thus there was some potential social benefit even when the elicitation method was itself poor for

measuring language knowledge. However, it also meant that elicitation data could not always be taken at face value.

For this reason, while I took the ability to “correctly” answer elicitation questions as evidence of language knowledge, I did not take inability to translate a word or construction as clear evidence of non-acquisition. Instead, my conclusions about the younger children’s linguistic knowledge were confirmed and/or further supported by observation in a variety of contexts.<sup>47</sup> Beyond noting what the younger children said in their own unsolicited speech, I also carefully observed and noted how they responded to the Miami (and English) speech of others.

Almost always, the younger children’s reactions to their family members’ Miami speech demonstrated a basic understanding, but this method often did not indicate exactly how the children were understanding any given string of words. As with the translation tasks discussed earlier, it was usually not clear if and how they were breaking down a verb into its internal morphology or whether their understanding of a given word matched its standard semantics. Therefore, I also created several activities that included carefully designed tokens and observed how the children responded to language cues within that context. This strategy normally entailed playing a game.

For example, early in this study we played several rounds of a Miami version of “Simon Says” called *paapankamwa iilweeta* (‘Fox says’) in which I had structured *paapankamwa*’s commands ahead of time as a test – but where the

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<sup>47</sup> Though primarily done for purposes of assessing language acquisition, the use of observation also counteracted yet another problem of elicitation, which is that it has a tendency to impose a formal register and may evoke what people think they (should) say instead of what they actually do say.

activity was just a game from the younger children's point of view and would more likely be fun. For example, I would include a few tokens where knowledge of possessive marking on nouns would be necessary to correctly follow the commands. A similar motivation guided a game that entailed my lining up flashcards with pictures and then having the children fetch the appropriate one in response to a verbal command. Some games also called for the children to actually say and respond to phrases in Miami. One example was "opposite day", a game characterized by saying the opposite of what one was observing or wanting to relate to others. This particular game proved to be useful for creating scenarios that called for a large array of negated verb forms.

Finally, most studies of language learning focus their investigation on linguistic competence in terms of morphophonology, lexicon, MLU (mean length of utterance), syntax, and semantics. This study, as noted earlier, conceptualized language development in very broad terms and was especially motivated by a need to understand how social factors guide the process. Schieffelin & Ochs capture the essence of my approach in noting that "language socialization has as a goal the linking of microanalytic analyses of children's discourse to more general ethnographic accounts of cultural beliefs and practices of the families, social groups, or communities into which children are socialized" (1986:168). For this reason, I recorded the entire family's beliefs about the language as evidenced in what they said and did, particularly with respect to how the older family members' language usage and expectations correlated with the competence and performance of the younger children. Furthermore, I paid close attention to how all family members talked about the Miami culture and Miami language.

Most of all, as a participant in the study, I paid close attention to how *I*

talked about the culture and language. I tried to speak the language, with the understanding that I was going to say many things incorrectly, but with the belief that any potential interference in the younger children's acquisition of standard forms was less important than giving the language value. The parents and I regularly thought about and discussed the meta-questions of my role and how the existence and framing of the study itself were themselves important variables in its implementation and outcome. The philosophy guiding this research model is discussed next.

### ***3.3 Collaboration as a Model of Research***

This study was guided by a belief that the traditionally strong distinction between "researcher" and "subject" was culturally inappropriate. The Baldwins and I instead adopted a collaborative model of research. While most directly instigated by me as a dissertation project, Daryl had already been talking about the need to document and better understand what was happening in his home and this research evolved from our previous interactions. From my end, in originally thinking about how the study could occur, I put significant thought into its design in order to foster collaboration. The design of this study was such that anybody could articulate goals and ideas, not where an expert had an upper hand or the prerogative to overly determine the agenda. The actual analysis of the younger children's language development is largely my own, but the research questions and philosophical underpinnings to the methodology developed through ongoing discussions.

The one area in which my academic background significantly affected the ongoing development of the study was that I made a conscious effort to integrate

my specialized knowledge of child language acquisition into conversations with the family. In particular, I shared my working analyses of how the younger children were acquiring and understanding the language with the parents. I framed my explanations within the scholarly literature on acquisition as a social and cognitive process, especially in terms of whether I thought any given trend I was observing was only a stage within the younger children's acquisition process, or more likely representative of something that was fully acquired. Similarly, as a linguist with specialized knowledge of Miami grammar, Daryl regularly explained points of Miami grammar to me, and included with those explanations some background as to where his analysis came from and how certain he was about its accuracy.

Māori scholar and activist Linda Tuhiwai Smith offers an important distinction that effectively captures how Daryl and I used each other's expertise. Sharing information, Smith notes, refers to the disclosure of surface facts or conclusions, while sharing knowledge extends beyond these to include "the theories and analyses which inform the way knowledge and information are constructed and represented" (1999:16). Smith further notes that sharing knowledge is an expectation of indigenous researchers "as we live and move within our own communities" (ibid). Such was the practice of this study. The Baldwins and I shared ideas and concerns openly, and potential findings were discussed regularly. That is, we shared knowledge so that we could understand each other's motivations, interests, and concerns, and empower each other to meet goals.

The "empowerment" framework of linguistic fieldwork (Cameron et al., 1993), which advocates research not *on* or *for* but rather *with* research

participants, has emerged as a powerful model that subsumes the ethical and advocacy frameworks dominant in discussions of fieldwork ethics. However, as presented by Cameron et al., the empowerment model was theoretical. Although we did not use the term “empowerment model” in originally framing this study as I had not seen the relevant literature until the third year of this study, in retrospect, this model, too, effectively captures the nature of this study.

While the term “empower” sometimes carries a connotation of somebody with social power (“researcher”) then imparting it onto somebody with less power (“subject”), this study was always one where the empowerment was multidirectional and unconstrained. The Baldwins’ story and their willingness to share it empowered me to challenge models I had been taught in academic circles – particularly, endangered language categorizations in which languages like Miami are called “extinct”.<sup>48</sup> They empowered me to become a more active learner of the language, not only because I had an obvious need to understand what they were saying, but also because they welcomed me into their Miami family. In turn, I feel that my involvement empowered the older members of the Baldwin family to make more refined language goals through their increased awareness of what was and was not happening in their home. It also provided the younger children with another adult in their lives who greatly valued their heritage language and culture.

### **3.3.1 The Baldwins as “Human Subjects”**

Bert Vaux (Vaux & Cooper, 1999:16) discusses the problem of treating language informants as sources of information instead of friends, a practice which he terms

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<sup>48</sup> This led to my eventually developing a revised categorization of endangered languages in which sleeping languages are differentiated from those that are irretrievably lost, as detailed in Leonard (in press).

the “Parrot Syndrome.” He notes that it can lead to failed fieldwork experiences. I add that treating people like parrots is outright inappropriate, irrespective of whether a fieldwork session is able to happen. This is wrong to them, and also contradictory to the ecological approach to investigating language development that guided this study, wherein my own role as a friend was part of the equation. In particular, I wanted to avoid a research model in which I was a “principal investigator” and the Baldwins were “human subjects”, as this was not meant to be a study framed around doing research *on*, but rather *with* people. This, however, proved to be easier said than done.

The main challenge of implementing the collaborative design and philosophy underlying this study involved working through the requirements of the University of California, Berkeley Institutional Review Board (IRB), known as the “Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects” (see [cphs.berkeley.edu](http://cphs.berkeley.edu)). While gaining approval for the study was not in itself a problem, the paperwork involved in the process assigned the very roles I was attempting to avoid. The imposed narratives involved describing the intended study and drafting a letter inviting potential “subjects” to participate using terminology that was incongruous with the collaborative philosophy underlying this study. The rhetoric seemed to imply that I was a king and the Baldwins were my subjects. Furthermore, references to collaboration within the paperwork applied only to collaboration with researchers at other academic institutions. While researchers have the option of proposing different categories and are expected to address relevant cultural norms under which the proposed research will take place, the default rhetoric of the IRB paperwork and approval procedure assigns such roles.

The process became increasingly difficult for me on a personal level. I appreciated the need for protections in human research and saw benefits in having to draft a research plan. Being required to do it certainly made me think more carefully about my role and about the study's methodology and goals. However, going through the process of working with an IRB also made me more aware of how research is structured and who gets to make the decisions about the roles of people within it. I was embarrassed to present the Baldwins with my consent forms because the stamp on the letter itself, which was required to be on the form in order for the study to be approved, said "human subjects". The IRB did ask me if this study required approval from the tribal council and this recognition of tribal sovereignty came as a pleasant surprise, but there was no similar recognition of the agency of the Baldwins in contributing to the goals and methodology of the study. They were subjects.

Even worse, the Baldwin children were outright termed a "vulnerable population" simply because they were not 18 years of age at the time this study began.<sup>49</sup> The parents and I understood the legal motivations of these categorizations, and it was fortunate that all of us already had a lot of experience in university settings and official practices of doing research. Nevertheless imposing such blanket categories in some sense places the category ahead of the individual. It also firmly established United States policy as the framework even for this study, which was conducted in the United States but along Miami

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<sup>49</sup> In July, 2007, the University of California, Berkeley Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects published a guide to policies and procedures in which "vulnerable" is explained as intended to refer only to the ability to give informed consent to participate in research ([cphs.berkeley.edu/content/policiesandprocedures.pdf](http://cphs.berkeley.edu/content/policiesandprocedures.pdf), accessed October 26, 2007). However, no such guide was available at the beginning of this study, and defining "vulnerable" differently does not address the larger issue that its default semantics implies a lack of agency and social power among "subjects". "Vulnerable" should be rephrased, as should "subject".

cultural and ethical norms.

In practice, this study was characterized by a reasonable balance wherein I ensured that United States and University of California, Berkeley guidelines for human research were met (particularly in my being careful to not coerce participation of the younger children), but where my efforts to follow the underlying important human research protocols were not framed around what to me was a highly patronizing rhetoric. I always thought of the Baldwins, children included, as “active participants” and not “subjects”. This distinction is an important one, as it was not only ideological but also realized in practice as discussed above.

U.S. guidelines dictate that researchers working with other people have the responsibility to use what they know to increase the possibility of benefit and to decrease the possibility of harm. Here, I was able to easily agree with the principle, and I endeavored to meet its spirit. I decided that if my presence or the study itself, with all of its ongoing questions about language, were to stress the Baldwin children, the research would be postponed until the issues could be rectified – or cease if they couldn’t be. However, I viewed this responsibility not as being guided by my academic affiliation or pursuits, but rather as something that anybody would do as a responsible person, a friend, a collaborator, and a fellow tribal member. Conceptualizing my role in this way instead of as “a researcher working with subjects”, I was able to approach my federal reporting and documenting requirements, as we say in Miami, with a good heart.

### **3.3.2 Results of Following This Research Model**

Following this model of research and the philosophy behind it led to several

important social results. First, it fostered a sense of openness and trust, which is fundamentally important to any extended interaction among Miami people (and clearly applicable in other cultures as well). Second, the discussions and interactions originally generated by this study begat collaboration on a whole host of other issues in tribal scholarship and community-based language programs. These include the development of annual language immersion summer camps for Miami youth, which we began in 2005. That same year, Karen proposed to start creating language learning materials for the larger tribal community and was hired by the Miami Tribe Office of Cultural Preservation to do so.<sup>50</sup> These new efforts, in turn, empower more Miami people to have access to the language. Seeing others embrace and learn the language then empowers the people involved in the initial language efforts, thus creating a situation where building the fire creates more fuel. The whole enterprise follows a cycle of positive feedback.

Another major point of this research design was that my active presence in the research, as already alluded to, clearly became a variable in its outcome. I regularly and openly discussed patterns and potential problems that I observed with the family (especially with the parents), and certain changes ensued. The major one was that the older family members started to make changes to help the younger children acquire Miami. Their efforts were based on needs that emerged from preliminary findings in this study.

Specifically, in terms of daily speech, in situations where the younger children appeared to not be acquiring an important construction, the older

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<sup>50</sup> Her first major product was a phrasebook that was completed in the last year of this study, *kaloolitiitaawi: a myaamia phrase book* (K. Baldwin, 2007). Karen was continuing to work on the second volume in the phrasebook series as of the writing of this document.

family members started to make a concerted effort to increase the input in the problem area. This happened by their using a given construction more, in some cases by their purposefully using verb roots in different collocations, or in other cases by using a given full form in as many different conversational contexts as possible. At times, grammar or meaning was even explained outright to the younger children (in English), though this sort of explicit explanation occurred relatively infrequently because their father preferred to “show” the language in context.

Early findings of the acquisition sub-study also led to more formal efforts at intervention. Where the children seemed to be experiencing difficulty in acquisition, Karen and I created several formal language teaching exercises (games) for the children to aid with their learning. The lessons began in October, 2005 and are detailed in Chapter 7.

Finally and most importantly, our collaborative model of research fell in line with the core Miami philosophy that relationship is everything. Daryl often refers to how the Miami term *eeweentiinki* ‘relatedness’ is the basis for the term *eeweentioni*, which means ‘peace’. He has noted that it is through relationships that we develop our ways of knowing and create a climate of understanding and respect. A corollary to this cultural principle is that we address each other in ways that reflect and reinforce these relationships and the social responsibilities and prerogatives they entail. This was why I came to be called *nišihse* ‘my uncle’ by the younger children and addressed as *niihka* ‘my friend’ by Daryl.<sup>51</sup> I took

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<sup>51</sup> Daryl decided that *nišihse*, technically a vocative for “maternal uncle”, would be an appropriate kinship term for the children to use to address me after we had known each other for awhile. He explicitly taught them to use the word, and its use quickly became natural. *niihka* is a vocative form of *-iihkaana* ‘friend’ and is used to address close friends of the same gender. Daryl and I

both roles seriously, but was especially guided by my understanding of the ‘uncle’ role. Uncles, I realized, care about the social and cultural wellbeing of their nieces and nephews and can be active in promoting that wellbeing, so long as the parents’ wishes are not in conflict.

Taking this role to heart, I was comfortable contributing to the linguistic socialization of Amehk and Awan in ways more direct than simply expressing an interest in the language and talking about it positively in general terms. The Baldwin parents and I share the philosophy that Miami children should know their culture and history and be socialized not only with a general positive view of Miaminess, but also taught specific facts about the language and culture. Active efforts of this kind are necessary because the default views presented in the mainstream are often misguided, if not outright wrong and dangerous. The next section details how this is so and how I tried to counteract it.

### ***3.4 Direct Socialization as a Method in this Study***

A particularly striking anecdote occurred before I knew the family, but I heard the story several times. Daryl and his older two children were at a grocery store and were speaking in Miami. A man nearby overheard them and commented that this was America, and that they should be speaking in English. We laugh about this anecdote now as the irony is striking; English is actually a “foreign” language in the United States, while Miami is an indigenous one. However, laughing away the misconceptions of others does not negate their existence or potential for harm. Beyond language learning, language reclamation entails

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naturally came to use this term to address each other. While I also consider Karen Baldwin to be a “close friend” (per the default American semantics of that term), it would be culturally inappropriate for a man to call a woman by this term and I have always addressed Karen by her first name.

socialization to be prepared for such challenges and commentary.

Daryl captured the essence of this socialization need when he related and discussed the anecdote given above in a 2007 radio interview.<sup>52</sup> Daryl remarked that when the man in the store issued this directive about language use, he felt it was important to respond – not to the man, but to his children. He took them aside and told them *niiši išiliniciki* ‘that’s just the way they are’, and the family continued to speak Miami in public places. Later in that radio interview, Daryl noted that “[p]art of the process of language revitalization, for us, anyhow, is to begin to re-instill value in that language – purpose and value.” His recognition of this need was motivated by incidents such as the one in the store.

Indeed, instilling purpose and value is a key component of language reclamation. This represented an area in which I aimed to play a positive role as the study’s seventh participant and as an uncle figure. This research occurred during a period in which nativist rhetoric was pervasive in the United States. There were heightened movements toward declaring English the official language of the United States and adopting an amendment to the United States constitution to ban desecration of the U.S. flag. It was a period of hostility toward anybody deemed not to be “American” enough. That social context made creating a positive context around Miami even more important.

As with sociopolitical rhetoric, written histories about the “other” are often similarly problematic – often outright wrong – and notions of primitiveness about American Indians are pervasive. This pattern extends to the Miami people

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<sup>52</sup> This interview was part of the following story on indigenous placenames: Weekend America. (2007, October 6). “Where Does that Name Come From?” [radio broadcast] [http://weekendamerica.publicradio.org/programs/2007/10/06/where\\_does\\_that\\_name.html](http://weekendamerica.publicradio.org/programs/2007/10/06/where_does_that_name.html) (accessed October 8, 2007)

and to our language. For example, a publication from the early 1960s suggests that Miami speakers “possibly used no more than one hundred [words] in common conversation” and that the language was “very imperfect”, the noun, the verb, and the adjective being about the only parts of speech used (McClurg, 1961:159). Even today, some Miami people incorrectly assume that the language is primitive and rhetoric to that effect occasionally creeps into conversations.

Fortunately, the younger children seemed to always know better. This may explain the response that they regularly gave throughout this study to questions that I asked about Miami forms that they did not know. They rarely assumed that there wasn’t a way to say something or that a word for a given concept didn’t exist. Rather, they told me that they had not yet learned the form I was asking about. Presumably, the assumption was that the language itself would allow somebody to express the idea at hand. Further, within a context where we were talking about made-up languages and play languages in December 2006, Amehk reported to me that *myaamia* is a “real language”. While much of this understanding likely comes from their parents and their having several copies of a Miami dictionary (with over 3000 entries) around the house, the following dialogue that I had with Amehk illustrates how I played a part in the younger children’s socialization:

This discussion between myself (WL) and Amehk (then age 8) occurred on May 8, 2005. The concept of bilingual education was a theme in my other academic work at the time, and I was talking to Amehk about what it was and asked her what she thought about language use patterns in her own education. She had mentioned that she wanted to learn Spanish and that she liked that her family spoke *myaamia*.

[1] WL: uh-hum. Let’s see ... Like in California they used to have bilingual education, you know, where kids would learn stuff in school in more than one language,

- [2] Amehk: oh
- [3] WL: and then, and then that was voted out. People in the state decided they didn't want that anymore, so they still had some, but not as much as before. They thought that people could only, or should only use English at school. What do you think of that?
- [4] Amehk: Well, I think they should use Miami instead of English.
- [5] WL: I think so, too. In California, sometimes people have this idea that if you're using a different language at school at all-
- [6] Amehk: -uh-hum
- [7] WL: ... then you won't learn English. But of course that's not true, because people learn English just fine. ... Some people also said that languages like Indian languages – that Indian languages aren't – that you can't talk about science and math and stuff. Do you think that's true?
- [8] Amehk: No.
- [9] WL: It's not true, but sometimes people have that idea – that Indian languages are primitive. Do you know the word *primitive*?
- [10] Amehk: No.
- [11] WL: It means something like it's not sophisticated; it's not modern – you can only talk about old things, can't talk about-
- [12] Amehk: -new things
- [13] WL: can't talk about politics or the Internet or science. But that's pretty silly because, you know, if we don't have words for some of those things we can always make new ones. Sometimes people think that Indians have to live the way we did 300 years ago, you know, that we can't drive cars or have computers. Has anybody ever said things like that to you?
- [14] Amehk: ummm, ummm ... no.
- [15] WL: That's good. But I bet you'll hear those sorts of questions someday.
- [16] Amehk: Yeah, when I'm older.

[17] WL: Yeah, and you can tell them that it's silly.

[18] Amehk: Like when I'm 10 I'll probably hear those words.

[19] WL: Well, if you ever went to public school you'd probably hear ... sometimes people don't really understand-

[20] Amehk: -Miami?

[21] WL: or just Indians in general.

Here, one can see me taking the "uncle" role and preparing Amehk for a question and misconception that is likely to come up in her life – one that came up several times for me while teaching undergraduates at the University of California, Berkeley, and one that I know to be real. This and other similar discussions were largely motivated by my personal experiences. While most examples were far less direct than this one in that I normally didn't introduce the misconceptions as I had in this case, we did have several other discussions in which similar themes arose.

### ***3.5 Response to Possible Criticisms of This Research Design***

While there may be other findings that one could glean from a study in which the "researcher" played a more outside role, this study was never intended to follow such a model. As already discussed, it was my hope that my active presence would positively affect the younger children's language development, particularly by giving the language a higher sense of prestige in that somebody was coming all the way from California to Indiana in order to learn more about it. However, as with any method, this research design is not without its potential flaws. I address the main ones below.

One common occurrence during this study was that I was questioned, particularly by other linguists, as to whether or not I would be able to do an

unbiased study of the Baldwins' language reclamation process. Insofar as the beliefs and background of a study's participants guide its execution, the answer is "no". All research is biased in the sense that it is motivated within a social context. The context here was that this family and the larger Miami community needed to know how Miami children acquire and understand their language and culture under current social circumstances. In this sense, the study was different from other scholarly studies because it wasn't directly motivated by the major academic questions of the time, though it was nonetheless informed by them.

As I am Miami and carry professional and social responsibilities to help other Miamis in our quest for self-determination and cultural wellbeing, it was never a secret that my hope was and still is for Miami children to acquire Miami and to lead a better life for having done so. However, this study was guided by a firm commitment to the truth, which in turn entailed every effort to make the report on the study similarly honest. Specifically, I determined that if I were to find that Miami language reclamation was yielding negative outcomes, I would report that information, even if doing so might offend some members of the Miami community. My commitment to the truth was guided by that logic that if something negative were to come out of the language reclamation efforts, such a finding would need to be disclosed not only as part of responsible science, but also because giving a skewed view of the process would not help anybody develop more refined language goals or better methods of realizing them.

That noted, while the Baldwins have experienced and will undoubtedly continue to experience moments when speaking the language gets hard, the results of their efforts and of this research are both overwhelmingly positive. I have not yet had to offend my community, and the plan is for this and similar

research to continue. Nevertheless, my commitment to obtaining a true and holistic picture of home language reclamation did translate to two specific practices that played a concrete role in this study's methodology. These methods and their associated findings are discussed next.

First, throughout the study, I made every attempt to let the story speak for itself and to let the examples of real usage speak for themselves. I began this study with no explicit linguistic theoretical underpinning, and instead took the approach of asking a lot of open-ended questions, collecting a lot of examples of language usage in different settings over a long period of time, and sharing my thoughts with many people from different backgrounds in order to better examine the situation from multiple perspectives. One of this study's contributions to endangered language theory, namely its challenge to the notion of language "extinction", was an idea that I developed midway through the study. It stemmed from the constant contradiction I experienced in seeing this family speak Miami (and speaking it myself) while hearing others talk of our language as if it were gone. However, while this idea became a motivating factor for me to report on this research and my discussions of the topic may have indirectly influenced the Baldwins' practices, arguing against the extinction label was not the motivating factor for the study itself.<sup>53</sup>

Second, given my hope that language reclamation would prove to be positive, I explicitly considered and looked for possible negative outcomes suggested by others. The most common concern, which I will briefly address

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<sup>53</sup> Deeming languages such as Miami to be "dead" or "extinct" bothers me (and some other Miami people) more than it does the Baldwins, though Daryl has increasingly come to view the term as inappropriate and makes a point of saying so when he speaks to public audiences. The Miami Language Committee has started referring to "extinct" as "the e-word".

here, is that practices such as those of the Baldwin family could cause incomplete acquisition of English (as discussed and refuted in Hinton, 2001a:12). A related hypothesis is that the children would be isolated and thus suffer socially or professionally from a lack of background in wider American culture.

Interestingly, both of these topics are predicated on the notion that mainstream culture somehow represents something to be lost, which in turn stems from some special value being assigned to that culture relative to others. That this is a value judgment, however, is rarely discussed. Regardless, I explicitly looked for indications that such processes were happening as a way of making this research more comprehensive. However, despite my actively listening and looking for such examples, both of these concerns proved unwarranted. The findings are briefly discussed below.

### **3.5.1 Associated Findings**

This family's English represents the dialect spoken in their region of the United States and is undistinguishable from that of others in the community. This is fully expected for the parents, as they didn't learn Miami until adulthood. It is almost a matter of course for the older children, for whom Miami was an early second language but not their first.

The real question involved the younger two children. They are certainly fluent English speakers and this was never in doubt, but I wondered if there might be small differences in their English that could result from Miami interference. I did in fact note several non-standard patterns in their English. Amehk and Awan both had a relatively high level of overregularization in their English morphology until around the age of seven, but forms such as *goed*,

*catched, heared, falled, hurted, standed, borned, drawed, stinked, and teached* were slowly replaced with their standard counterparts throughout the period of this study, and are best analyzed as a stage in the children's English development.<sup>54</sup> As is common for children who have not fully acquired the standard form (see Brown, 1973:257), they sometimes used both the standard forms and the overregularized forms within the same conversation. For example, in one conversation that I overheard when he was five years old, Awan used *hid, hided, taked, and took* in less than one minute.

Beyond the nonstandard words discussed above, Amehk also had some novel grammatical constructions. Through the middle of this study, she had a nonstandard construction for what in English is normally expressed "as ADJECTIVE as ...". Her construction was "how ADJECTIVE ...". For example, instead of saying "she ran as fast as she could", Amehk would say "she runned how fast she could". By the end of this study, however, she was using the standard construction. Other idiosyncrasies that persisted through the end of this study include Amehk's use of "why" in place of "because", and a pattern of using only non-negated verbs in tag questions.<sup>55</sup> Importantly, none of these non-standard English constructions have parallels in Miami grammar and they likely did not come from there, except perhaps in some very indirect way. These examples are more likely idiosyncrasies of the younger children's English

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<sup>54</sup> In one case, Amehk, while watching an earlier video I had taken in which she had said "gooder", corrected herself to "better". The original video was from Fall, 2003. Amehk's self correction occurred when she watched the video two years later.

<sup>55</sup> An actual example of the former is "Well, that's why he didn't read the directions" (Amehk, September 26, 2005, offering a possible explanation for why Ciinkwia had not played a game according to the rules). An example of the latter is "You changed really quick, did you?". Both nonstandard constructions were originally very common in her speech, but she was increasingly using their standard counterparts by the end of the study and appeared to be close to switching completely to the standard forms.

acquisition.

Additionally, both sons took a long time to pronounce the English *r*-sound, dropping it entirely postvocally and substituting it with [w] elsewhere. By the middle of the study, Ciinkwia was making standard *r* sounds. By the end of the study, Awan was starting to as well.<sup>56</sup> As with the examples given above, it is not certain what caused these variations in their speech, but there is no good reason to think that they stem from Miami interference.<sup>57</sup>

In addition to speaking regular, Indiana English, the Baldwin children are integrated into larger society. For example, at various points over the four year period of this study, Ciinkwia played on soccer and football teams, he and Keemaacimwiihkwa ran track, and Amehk took ballet lessons. Keemaacimwiihkwa went to her high school Homecoming and Prom, Ciinkwia and Keemaacimwiihkwa both began a part-time job at a horse stable in 2006. Both older children pursued individual academic interests, Keemaacimwiihkwa in areas of animal rearing and Ciinkwia in computer science.<sup>58</sup>

In terms of family events, the Baldwins do many “American” things at home, too. Friends of all cultural backgrounds regularly visit, and extended family members (especially from Karen’s side of the family, which is larger) similarly frequently visit. They make cookies and crafts at Christmastime and other holidays, largely following established American traditions. Gameboys™,

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<sup>56</sup> In careful speech, Awan was fully pronouncing English *r*’s when I visited the family in November, 2007 and he was age eight and a half. However, in rapid speech, he sometimes was not.

<sup>57</sup> Miami has no rhotic sounds and this speech impediment cannot occur. (The very few Miami words (primarily proper names) that come from languages with *r* replace this sound with *l*.)

<sup>58</sup> The only conspicuous difference was that the Baldwins homeschooled all four children up until 2005, at which point the older two started attending public high school because they wanted to have the social experience of doing so. The motivations for homeschooling and associated practices are detailed in Chapter 4.

Playstations™, and other common electronic gadgets have made their way into the home via grandparents and other relatives. Although the family does not have cable, they do own several TVs and the parents permit their children to watch TV within reasonable limits of age-appropriateness and balance with school and other obligations. For Christmas 2005, the children received a subscription to the mail-order DVD (movie) rental service Netflix™ from one of their aunts. They watch movies regularly, sometimes with friends over to watch with them and where most interactions are in English, but some words are in Miami and where the snacks might be Miami foods. The home is filled with books on a variety of genres (especially fantasy novels, which Ciinkwia reads) and the mother and children make regular trips to local libraries. In effect, the children are bilingual and bicultural. The “American” side is largely what one would expect. The Miami component of the Baldwins’ lives is what is different from the mainstream, and it is detailed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 4 – Life & Language in the Baldwin Home

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Given that the Miami language and certain cultural practices had been dormant for a period of time, the Baldwins had to create a place for the language and its associated cultural practices, both figuratively and literally. They have met this need through a series of lifestyle choices that facilitate their goal of incorporating Miami culture and relationship practices into everything they do. Daryl recognizes that he cannot control what happens outside of his family, but has noted several times that he can at least ensure that his own children know their culture.

For this reason, Miami culture and language are integrated into the family's daily lives. The Baldwin children are being raised as Miami people with the language as part of their identities, rather than as just a communication-oriented tool. This chapter discusses how they have facilitated this outcome through a series of lifestyle choices and practices. I first outline the family's beliefs and then describe how those beliefs get realized both in and out of their home through discussions of their daily life practices, schooling in and out of the home, and involvement in tribal activities. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of how the Miami language has gained prestige by being valued in all of these areas.

### ***4.1 Guiding Ideologies***

The Baldwins are very much a 21<sup>st</sup> century family and make ample use of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology. For example, they have several computers, broadband

internet, digital recorders, and they all have highly developed skills for researching topics using modern tools. However, the whole family – especially Daryl – is guided by a strong belief that the centuries of wisdom integrated into the Miami culture is what has allowed it to continue for so long. They thus have a pattern of looking to those historic cultural norms as a model for leading a good and healthy life, making adjustments to reflect modern society as necessary. While their lives have evolved over the four years reported on in this study, this core belief has been constant.

One immediate consequence of valuing Miami culture as a guide is that Daryl's language beliefs and practices largely follow what he understands about the roles of different languages in Miami history. Daryl describes that historic pattern as one where all Miamis spoke Miami (in many cases alongside other indigenous languages), a later period of bilingualism in Miami and European languages – especially French and English – and then only recently a pattern of monolingualism in English. Similarly outside the linguistic realm, Daryl reports that Miamis have always borrowed ideas and practices from other cultures. This principle guides today's larger tribal language and cultural reclamation efforts. Our reclamation efforts work toward establishing a stable multilingualism and multiculturalism, not monolingualism in Miami or isolation from larger society. Likewise in the Baldwin family, these principles guide the socialization of the children by the parents. The children are being raised as bilingual and bicultural people, with an emphasis on Miami values and language, but also with a full command of American culture and American English.

In addition to his general belief in the value of traditional culture, Daryl's existing ideas and associated practices in raising his children as Miami were

augmented by what he has heard or observed among some other Miami people – namely, reports that they do not feel a strong Miami cultural connection. As discussed in Chapter 2, there is a concentration of Miamis in northeast Oklahoma, but there are also indigenous peoples of many other nations due to removals of multiple other indigenous nations to the same place. One result was a development of intertribal traditions. Thus while there are Miamis who maintain a strong Miami-specific identity, a sense of pan-Indianness is also strong in Oklahoma. Furthermore, many individual people whose tribal citizenship is with the Miami Tribe also have heritage in other indigenous nations.<sup>59</sup> The common “Indian” language is now English, and many Miamis do not practice Miami-specific cultural ways, or may practice them but do not think of them as “Miami”. This situation became apparent to Daryl through his work at the tribal level, especially when the family briefly lived in Oklahoma, and he became especially cognizant of the need to incorporate specifically *Miami* – as opposed to “Indian” – perspectives in raising his children.

However, Daryl’s wish that his children be brought up as Miami does not come in place of an awareness, a practice, or an appreciation of their own non-Miami backgrounds. Daryl rejects the notion that one would have to choose being Miami or being American as if it were a required choice based around a binary categorization. He sees as a misunderstanding the idea that practicing aspects of one culture implies a lack of knowledge or integration into another one. In a discussion he and I had on that topic (December 21, 2006), Daryl offered

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<sup>59</sup> Per our tribal constitution, one can be a member of only one indigenous nation, and this requirement is common among the tribes of Oklahoma. However, this clearly has no direct bearing on how somebody identifies culturally; many people identify themselves as having multiple indigenous heritages, and by extension multiple heritage languages.

the following perspective:

It's that whole notion of 'walking in two worlds', which I completely don't agree with. Walking in two worlds is nothing more than being bicultural or bilingual, in my mind.

What Daryl does consider very important for himself and his children is an explicit awareness of cultural and linguistic differences, as he spelled out later in the same conversation:

I think the people, the individuals that have taken the time to understand the difference, in other words, when you know how your language or culture differs from whatever other language or culture you happen to live in or speak in, that you're better prepared to maintain two unique worldviews.

This principle of understanding and maintaining a conscious awareness of cultural differences guides many of the daily practices of this family. Often, Daryl explicitly tells his children which ideas and practices are Miami and which are not.

An example that came up frequently in my interactions with the family, one that Daryl also often brings up when talking to Miami children other than his own, is the idea that snakes are supposed to be left alone. When a snake ventures into an area where it may be harmed, Daryl will pick it up and take it into a safer area, but he otherwise emphasizes that "snakes like to be left alone", as this belief is attested in Miami history. Violations of this cultural practice may carry an admonishment along the lines of "That's not what a *myaamia* person would do". Both younger children explained this principle to me several times.

Sometimes, the underlying philosophy of being aware of culture extends into the family's use of English. A specific example to illustrate the point is that Daryl does not condemn but clearly dislikes for his children to use the English metaphor of "buying" to refer to believing or accepting. Daryl views this

metaphor as stemming from an American overemphasis of money over relationship and knowledge. Indeed, this metaphor falls into a large set of metaphors about buying and selling that are thought to come from American English and stem from capitalism (Tottie, 2002:133-134). Conversely, as discussing natural body functions is not taboo in Miami culture, Daryl has outright pointed out to his children that it is okay to talk about these things in Miami.

In terms of the conscious awareness of cultural differences that Daryl values, the two cohorts of children differ. The older two were always very aware of Miami practices and Miami ways throughout this study, and could articulate how their culture differed from other ones. At the beginning of this study, the younger two seemed less aware of what was Miami, what was non-Miami, and what was shared by both. However, they became increasingly aware of cultural differences as this study progressed. This change very likely was a factor of age and increased experience with a variety of people, and also influenced by the study itself with its regular discussions about language and culture. Even when this study began and she was only six, however, Amehk already had a keen awareness that some people were not Miami. She called them “English people”, a name that she continued to use throughout this study. This label suggests not only an awareness of others’ linguistic repertoires, but also of cultural groups and their associated norms. On one occasion (July 23, 2005), Amehk was pondering what to take as a gift to a four year-old’s birthday party, and I suggested that she take something Indian. Amehk replied, “no, she’s English.”

## 4.2 *Tapaahsia Farm as myaamionki*

The most important lifestyle choice for language reclamation is that the Baldwins live in a relatively rural area a few miles south of Liberty, Indiana. There, they run a small farm with organic vegetables, broiler chickens, layer chickens, and rabbits primarily for their own consumption, but also with some sales to the public during the first two years of this study as a means of paying for the farm operations.<sup>60</sup> The farm setting facilitates interactions with the land, awareness of its various beings, and observation of natural cycles whereby things are born and die. These ideas are all core to Miami culture. In this sense, one can say that language reclamation is facilitated by their home's geographic location and especially by the farm setting. However, it is not just the setting, but what they do in it that make it so crucial to language reclamation. The Baldwins make explicit efforts to think about, talk about, and interact with the environment in Miami ways. They have established their home as *myaamionki*.

The term *myaamionki* (literally 'Miami' plus a locative suffix) refers to places where Miami people live or otherwise have a significant association with the land, whether in the past, the present, or both.<sup>61</sup> Tapaahsia Farm, home of the Baldwins and named for the *tapaahsiaki* (Canada geese) that fly over it and visit a neighboring pond, is one of those places. It lies within the ancestral Miami homelands, the geographic place where the language developed. Most weather, plant, animal, and other landscape terms that naturally come up in that

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<sup>60</sup> Their original intent was that the income from public sales would facilitate their paying for equipment and other large costs. However, as their financial situation improved, they were able to reduce the time-consuming business aspects of their farm. In reference to the farm business and the time it took, Karen notes that "the one thing that suffered the most was the language".

<sup>61</sup> Part of the larger Miami cultural reclamation has involved defining and describing Miami places and emphasizing the role of land in Miami culture. Importantly, while the term *myaamionki* is lexically ambiguous as to whether "place" is singular or plural, it is invariably understood as plural and is likewise understood to not be geographically fixed, as new places can become *myaamionki*.

geographic region are thus usually well documented in the historical records, hence facilitating a level of usage that may be diminished were the family to live elsewhere. Animal names, names of plants that the Miamis historically gathered, and comments about the weather naturally lend themselves to being talked about in Miami and most often are.

Furthermore, Tapaahsia Farm itself is a microcosm of physical environments. It encompasses six acres, an area which includes not only their immediate home, garden, and barn, but also a wooded area and a grassy area. Though relatively small, the farm thus has different ecosystems, each of which has its associated vocabulary and cultural uses. Adjacent properties to which the family has access include a pond and a creek, both important in that they are home to a different set of flora and fauna, each plant and animal with its own Miami name and cultural relevance.

Beyond its geographic appropriateness to Miami language reclamation, Tapaahsia Farm is also a Miami place in that there are Miami things everywhere. Going far beyond the idea of establishing “the home” as a domain where Miami is spoken, the Baldwins have literally added Miami language and culture to their environment. The house itself is decorated with Miami and other indigenous items, with Miami language materials, tribal newspapers, and other written materials scattered among the bookshelves and end tables. Additionally, there are Miami labels taped on or next to objects and dotting the walls, many of which give the name for an object, as in the example below:



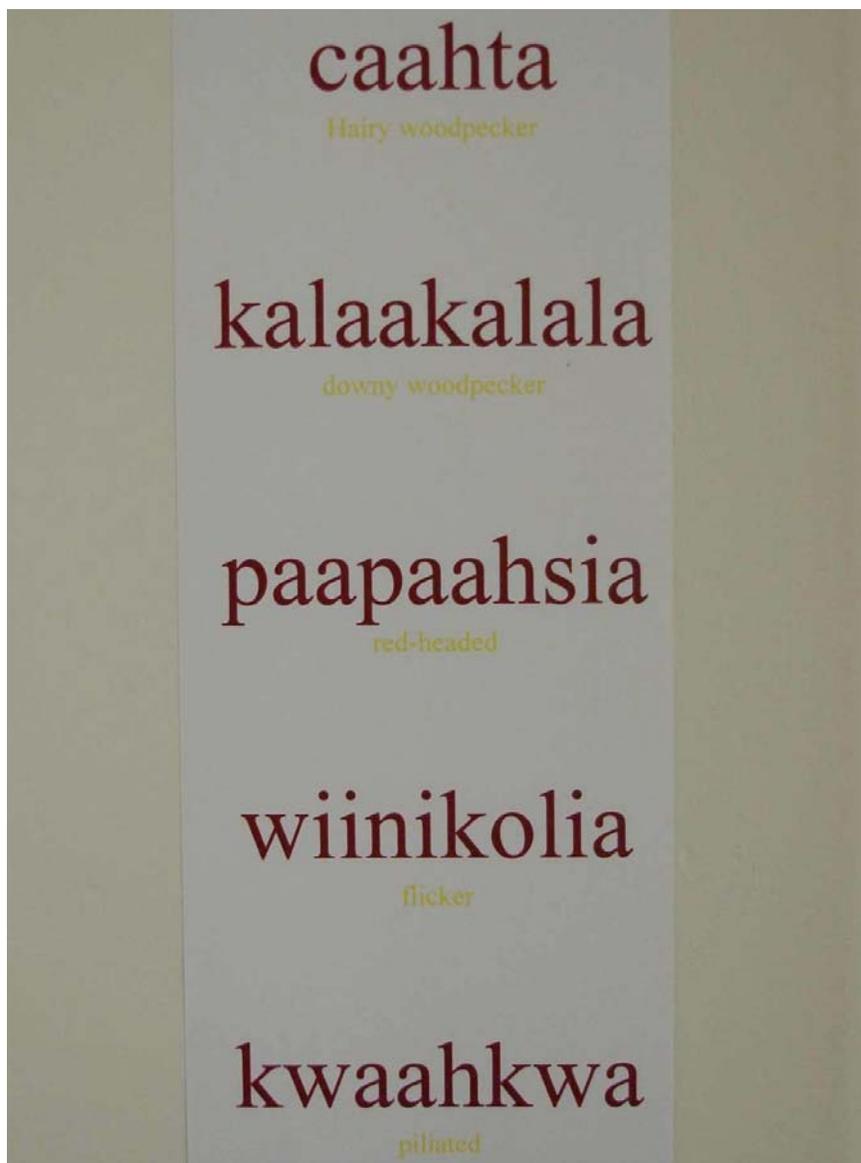
**Image 1 – A *kiinteelintaakani* ‘computer’ Label**

Throughout the four year period of this study, I noticed that several labels were made by the children. These fell into two natural classes. Some of them appeared to have a direct pedagogical purpose; the children would look up a word they didn't already know and make a sign as a means of learning it. However, other labels listed vocabulary that they clearly already knew and used with facility. Though these signs for known words may have still had some pedagogical role (for example, to reinforce spelling), I interpreted them as more symbolic of Miamianness than anything else. By making these signs, the children, too, were establishing their home as *myaamionki*.

In the last year of this study, I noticed a new type of sign in which target Miami vocabulary items were in big and easily readable text, and English translations were provided – but in small, hard-to-see text underneath the Miami words. In the example below, the Miami names of birds are in large red text, hence viewable from across the room, but their English translations are in small

yellow text such that one would have to get very close to the sign to read them.

This list was taped next to a window from which one could see two birdfeeders:



**Image 2 – Bilingual List of Bird Names on Wall in Baldwins’ Dining Room**

The signs with English translations largely served a pedagogical role, but also facilitated the family’s speaking Miami whenever possible. There are always Miami words that they are still learning, and a little bit of English can help.

Actively adding Miaminess to Tapaahsia Farm occurred outside the immediate house as well. For example, the Baldwins are making an effort to

restore native plants to the landscape and to understand the seasonal cycles in terms of their cultural significance. Toward the end of this study, they were starting to restore part of their farm to natural prairie and were reintroducing native grasses and other plants as a means of doing so. Daryl increasingly spoke of a desire to try burning some of the grasses in the fall. This is something our Miami ancestors did to restore the health of the plants. While this desire had not yet been realized at the end of this study and it is uncertain if it ever will be due to possible legal restrictions on open burning, the basic principle is clear: alongside their efforts to reclaim the Miami culture and language, the Baldwins are performing acts of land reclamation by restoring the native habitats that play a key role in Miami culture. Daryl was once questioned about this practice by an anthropologist who noted that the idea of “restoration” may imply a Western notion of human control over the land, which would conflict with a Miami worldview. However, Daryl sees his family’s efforts not as a way to control the land, but rather as an effort to restore balance to it. He often speaks of how Miami culture revolves around land, and he thus considers the health of that land to be especially important to facilitate cultural reclamation.

Along with restoring native habitats comes the idea of integrating historical land uses into daily life. Corn (maize) has a particularly important use in the Miami culture and a large place in the ecological cycle. Thus not only does *myaamia miincipi*, a variety of corn that is unique to the Miami people, grow in the Baldwins’ garden, but they also harvest it in Miami ways and use it in Miami cooking. Around the property grows a number of native plants, which the Baldwins use for food and traditional practices such as basketmaking. All of the children have a familiarity with culturally important plants such as *ahsapa*

'dogbane', and usually refer to them by their Miami names.<sup>62</sup> Again, all of these practices establish the home as *myaamionki*, hence as a place where the Miami language has a role.

#### 4.2.1 The Farm Lifestyle

That the Baldwins have adopted a farm life is in itself also highly significant. It not only requires daily tasks of animal and garden care where the family members spend time working (and talking) together, but it also reinforces the traditional Miami strong tie to land and a certain give-and-take relationship with it that may be harder to experience in an urban setting. The children understand that much of their food comes from the land, and that the gathering and butchering practices have to happen in ways their father has taught are culturally appropriate. In the specific case of butchering, for example, the killing itself is done by males, and remains are buried with cedar and Indian tobacco.

With hands-on activities such as working in the garden, home construction projects,<sup>63</sup> and performing daily chores in the home and around the farm, Miami is spoken a great deal of the time. While the chores are not completely fixed, the father has the primary responsibility over the animals, and the mother has the primary responsibility over the garden. The older children themselves carry significant responsibilities, particularly in direct care for the animals. The younger children helped with daily tasks as appropriate for their ages and had increasing responsibilities over the four years of this study. Their

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<sup>62</sup> Earlier in the study, I observed the younger children regularly embedding this and a few other words into sentences that were otherwise in English. Originally, it represented involuntary code-switching; they were not able to give English translations for these words. However, they later were able to give the English translations, but were still using the Miami words in most of their natural speech, including in sentences that were otherwise in English.

<sup>63</sup> As noted in Chapter 2, Daryl had a successful career in carpentry before he became heavily involved in language reclamation. Even today, he continues to do some construction work and enjoys making furniture and doing similar projects. Ciinkwia often helps him in these projects.

responsibilities included collecting eggs, helping with planting in the summer, and performing other chores around the home. Some chores such as routine animal care take only a few minutes per session and may involve only one family member – hence no speech aside from that person telling their family members what they’re about to do, saying, for example, *waarwa naatiaani* ‘I’m going to fetch the eggs’. However, many tasks involve more than one person and thus facilitate family interaction and conversation.

Some special times such as butchering days entail the family working together for a stretch of several hours, each person being assigned specific tasks with frequent communication necessary for the process as a whole to happen correctly. The aim in butchering is to pack meat on ice very quickly after slaughtering the animal, and this requires everybody to work as if on an assembly line where every member has to constantly communicate to ensure that the task happens efficiently. Though some of the communication in these situations occurs in English, there is a real effort to use Miami and they do so most of the time, particularly for routine comments.

Where possible, Daryl makes an explicit point of introducing and using new vocabulary relevant for a given activity. For example, during a butchering day in July 2003, the four older family members made reference to a list of words posted on the wall that included new vocabulary such as the root of the verb DUNK HIM. This allowed their usage of full verbs such as “I dunked him” and “dunk him!” as necessary for dunking broiler chickens in hot water to facilitate defeathering. In this context, this verb root was useful; it was an appropriate time to learn it. As Daryl put it, it is sometimes hard to speak Miami without certain contexts, but “if the situation is there, the language is there” (March 30, 2004).

Many of their efforts thus revolve around creating such situations.

#### 4.2.2 Other Miami Language Domains

One important area where the situation is always “there” for this family is with kinship address terms, which are invariably in Miami, and which became a special focus of the acquisition component of this study. As discussed earlier, continually reinforcing kinship ties is fundamental to Miami culture, which emphasizes a constant awareness of one’s relationship to others and to one’s environment. The only time they ever use English kinship terms is when the family members refer to each other when speaking to non-family members.<sup>64</sup> The purposeful incorporation of these sorts of cultural practices and values are extremely important in that they have yielded four children with a strong identity as Miami people, an identity that calls for the Miami language.

Similarly, activities such as playing games, especially traditional games for which there is a preexisting Miami vocabulary, also involve a high usage of the Miami language relative to English – sometimes approaching 100%. While it is true that other Miami families might play the same games entirely in English, the Baldwin children learned many games in Miami from the beginning, and playing them in English would require a conscious language shift. Two relevant examples are the moccasin game and the bowl dice game.

The moccasin game involves one person hiding an object such as a bean under one of several moccasins, and then the other person guesses where it is hidden. This game is culturally relevant in that its focus is on heightened

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<sup>64</sup> It was my understanding that even the older children had only ever used Miami kinship terms to address their immediate family members but in June 2007, Keemaacimwiihkwa mentioned that she could remember having said “mom” and “dad” as a very young child. However, the family was using only Miami address terms during the entire period of this study. I once asked Amehk if she had ever used English to address her parents, and she said that she had not.

awareness and understanding of people. The hider tries to bluff their opponent, who in turn touches each moccasin and tries to read the hider's body language for cues that might indicate the bean's location. Beyond the nonverbal aspects, however, the logistics of the game also call for interaction through speech. As the Baldwins usually play it, commands to hide or find the bean must be overtly stated (in Miami), even though the actions are themselves routine.



**Image 3 – Amehk, Ciinkwia, & Keemaacimwiihkwa (right to left) teach another Miami child (far left) how to play the Moccasin Game (June 3, 2004)**

Similarly in the bowl dice game, which involves rolling a special set of dice by throwing them in a bowl and earning points based on how they land, routine tasks such as counting the number of points, asserting whose turn it is, and declaring oneself the winner tend to be in Miami. Sometimes, the parents or older children will instruct the younger children to say things as a way of incorporating more language. For example, on several occasions I observed the parents instructing Awan to count the points in the bowl by saying each number aloud.

More complicated communication regarding a given game's rules or what

specific hand will beat another hand is often in English, and even traditional games tend to involve more English when non-Miami friends are visiting and participating in them. Nevertheless, the Baldwin children usually teach their friends the most important vocabulary in Miami. Furthermore, as the stakes get intense or a game gets otherwise heated, the older children tend to switch into Miami even when non-Miami speakers are present. As such, they exhibit strong association with Miami; it is the language they default to under emotionally charged circumstances.

For the younger children, the default is Miami for “Miami games” but when they play mainstream board games (some of which involve complex directions in English), they use both languages. However, following their older siblings’ lead, they appear to increasingly think of games and play as a Miami domain. For example, while playing the electronic educational game Leapfrog™, which teaches children reading and mathematics through ongoing commands (in English) as they follow along in a book, Awan once remarked to me (December 21, 2006) that he wished he could make the prompts come in *myaamia*.

Unlike their older siblings, however, the younger children currently use both languages in heightened emotional states. Currently, complex statements of complaint or distress are in English, but their short directives or complaints such as *poonanto!* ‘stop (it)!’<sup>65</sup> are almost always in Miami. For Awan, *šoowilakišiaani* (literally, ‘I have a bellyache’) at one point functioned as an all-encompassing means of complaining that he wasn’t getting something that he wanted. It

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<sup>65</sup> Daryl learned partway through this study through new analysis that the standard semantics of *poonanto* is ‘leave it [an inanimate object] alone’. The standard form for ‘stop it’ is *poonilo*, and both parents started incorporating this alternate form into their conversation. However, while the children understand both and occasionally use the new word, an ongoing pattern throughout my interactions with the family has been that all four children stick with the first form that they learned or acquired to express a given concept.

appears that their default is actually Miami, but that they haven't yet learned how to express certain complex ideas in Miami and thus have to resort to English. My prediction is that they, too, will tend to revert more to Miami as they get older and their Miami proficiency increases.

Both parents, however, tend to revert to English in situations of heightened emotion, which is not surprising given that it is the only language they grew up with. Conversely, they (especially Daryl) stay in a Miami mode when they are consciously controlling their choice of language. This sort of pattern is likely inevitable in situations of language reclamation where the initial learners already have a firmly established native language other than the target language, but it is important to note that the children's early exposure to Miami is leading to their having a different pattern.

### ***4.3 Language in School***

An important factor in the Baldwin's language usage and socialization patterns is that they are a home-schooling family.<sup>66</sup> While both parents play a role in it, most of the formal teaching is done by the mother, who used to teach home economics in public school. Importantly, despite the assumption of many scholar-practitioners who know of the Baldwins, it is not the case that this family chose to home-school directly for purposes of teaching Miami. Rather, their choice to do so was motivated more by general beliefs that parents should be very involved in their children's education and social development during the formative years. This was to ensure security, self-empowerment, confidence, and a set of values and beliefs – as Daryl put it (November, 2007) “all of those things

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<sup>66</sup> Early in this study, they also occasionally attended a weekly cooperative educational program for local homeschooling families.

[that] facilitate the making of a strong individual.” Additionally, they have a cultural belief that older children should help to socialize and educate younger children, and feel that students in the mainstream education are overly split up into grades to the point where this pattern of socialization is impeded.

Hinton & Ahlers summarize the motivations of the Baldwin parents in noting that “[v]alues are transmitted through the actions of social living. School itself, taking up so much of a child’s day, removes the child from the family and community aspects of education that transmit those values” (1999:66). Were there a tribal school with tribal values in which people of all generations were working together and fully interacting with the natural environment, I have no doubt that the parents would have eagerly sent their children there. While it is the hope of many in the tribe that we will eventually have our own schools, we currently do not. For this reason, all four children started their formal schooling at home.

When this study began, school subjects were taught in English with textbooks and most other teaching materials in English. However, the language of informal interaction within the school day was often Miami. For example, routine commands such as “turn off the light” that occur during school time are often in Miami, and of course the home itself was *myaamionki* and Miamianness was everywhere, even when the language wasn’t being spoken. However, I learned their protocol of using mostly English for schooling purposes had not always been the pattern.

As young children, the now older children had studied the Miami language as one of their school subjects, but that practice had temporarily ended before I knew the family. Karen talks of how she had had more time to design

language lessons when the older children were younger, but that their 2001 move to Indiana and adoption of a time-consuming farm lifestyle left her shorthanded. However, they were able to cut back on the farm tasks partway into this study, and formally got back into language study to a limited extent. Keemaacimwiihkwa began studying Miami again for high school “foreign language” credit as part of her homeschooling. Ciinkwia began studying along with her.<sup>67</sup>

During this more recent period of formally studying Miami, the older children’s homeschool training in Miami was designed around their being teachers. Teaching Miami to other tribal members is an ongoing responsibility of the older children. They serve as language teachers to other Miami children for tribal language camps and workshops, and have served as the speakers in audio language teaching materials created for tribal members. In homeschool, a common lesson pattern motivated by this goal involved learning new vocabulary and practicing it in ways that could be used to teach others. While they were already conversationally proficient well before I ever knew them, I know that the children learned some new vocabulary through these exercises.

For example, one major lesson that developed over late 2004 and early 2005 involved creating a video in which they make cornbread and speak in Miami. The idea behind the lesson was that the actions of naming, sorting, mixing the ingredients, and interacting with each other through these processes would naturally elicit various types of useful language. As noted earlier, cooking with corn is a fundamental Miami practice, and that made this lesson especially

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<sup>67</sup> This was in late 2004. The younger children did not study Miami in any substantial direct way at the time.

culturally relevant. In its various stages, this project involved all family members except for Awan (who was nonetheless present for most of it). First, Daryl filmed Karen and Amehk making cornbread and trying to speak Miami, the focus being on identifying what kinds of vocabulary were involved in the task. Second, Daryl and David Costa wrote a script that was intended to be used as a basis for a videotaped cornbread making session to be done by the older children. Finally, the older children were then provided with that script and instructed to study it.

In the initial video shoot, however, the older children ignored the script entirely and adlibbed the entire interaction, their father chiming in to prompt them to use the language and, as this was a school context, also offering several grammatical corrections. This example is representative. The older children learn new vocabulary and grammatical structures through such fixed examples as scripts, but they are proficient enough in the language that they end up just talking spontaneously, albeit with some incorporation of new vocabulary. The text of the cornbread script and a glossed transcription of their initial practice shoot are provided as Appendix III.

Other lessons of this kind continued, but in Fall 2005, a major change occurred. The older children elected to go to public high school because they wanted to experience it. While the younger children continue to be home-schooled at the time of writing this document, the change in their older siblings' life is nonetheless important for the younger two. Not only does it mean that their older siblings are gone for much of the day, the shift to public school also begat a significant change in family roles. Language usage, for example, is far less determined by the parents. When this first happened, we all wondered what the ramifications of public school were going to be and worried that one outcome

would be less usage of Miami. Indeed, the formal study of Miami for purposes of high school “foreign” language credit ended, as Keemaacimwiihkwa and Ciinkwia began studying Spanish and French, respectively. However, as it turned out, the more basic concern that the older children’s usage of the Miami language would decrease was unfounded. It at least stayed the same, and my impressionistic observation was that it actually increased in that they seemed to be speaking in Miami more to their younger siblings. I explore some of the possible reasons later.

The older children’s move to public school also meant that their mother had more time, as she was teaching two instead of four, and didn’t have to teach increasingly complex high school-level subjects. This was when the younger two children started formally studying Miami, partly at my suggestion, but with their mother’s increased time being the facilitating reason. When this change occurred, Awan was just turning six and had not had that much formal education, though he had participated in several lessons with Amehk and was thus exposed to the idea of formal teaching and lessons. Amehk, conversely, had had somewhat more exposure to school, which had primarily been in English, but she didn’t appear to have developed any idea that school was inherently an English domain. She eagerly embraced Miami instruction. Language lessons were created by the parents and myself in order to reinforce commonly-used language and especially to help the children discover the morphology of the language. These lessons and their results are discussed later in Part II with respect to the younger children’s language development. Next, I discuss the family’s life beyond the home and school, as they do not stop being Miami when they go elsewhere.

#### ***4.4 Myaamia Beyond the Home***

Daryl has extended his goal of having his children know the Miami language and culture into his professional life. He serves as director of the Myaamia Project at Miami University (Oxford, Ohio), a public institution that has a special friendship and collaborative relationship with the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. As with the story of how the Baldwins came to reclaim the Miami language, the story of how Miami University and the Miami Tribe developed a relationship has also taken on a legend-like quality.

As the narrative goes, that relationship between Miami University and the Miami Tribe was spawned by a visit in the early 1970s to the university by the then (Oklahoma) Chief Forest Olds. Chief Olds was in the area on unrelated business, swung by the university President's office, and said that he was chief of the Miami Tribe and that he would like a tour. A staff member of the office then relayed this request to then-university President Philip R. Shriver, who in turn replied, "Well, give him a tour". This began the strong relationship that exists between the Miami nation and the public university that bears the Miami name.

As a legend, this narrative is probably somewhat glorified and differs slightly in its details depending on its narrator, but it is always framed around how a series of fortunate events fostered a strong partnership between the university and the tribe. A key component to that relationship is that Miami University created scholarships for tribal members, a significant number of whom began attending Miami University in the 1990s, myself included. While a series of visits by the university community to Oklahoma and of the tribal community to Ohio had already started in the mid 1970's, things really changed when there was a core group of tribal members on campus. Around that time, a

pattern emerged where university classes would do research related to tribal affairs and would then actually go to Oklahoma as part of their coursework, with field classes having occurred in anthropology, linguistics, architecture, and business, among other areas. From that trend emerged the Myaamia Project, which was founded in 2001 with the following mission statement:

The Mission of the Myaamia Project at Miami University is to facilitate and encourage the preservation, promotion, and research of Miami Nation history, culture and language. The Project will bring awareness of Miami culture and history to the university community and continue to nurture tribal and university relations.

The agreement between the tribe and the university was that the research would be instigated by the tribe, but that the infrastructure and project director's salary and benefits would be paid by the university. In return, that director would be expected to visit classes and involve the university community in the research, teaching, and service projects chosen by the Miami tribal community.

Meanwhile, as the story goes, the Baldwins, who had made two moves for jobs that ended up not providing adequate salary or benefits, were looking for something better around the time that this project was being set up.<sup>68</sup> Daryl then became the first director of the Myaamia Project at Miami University, and continues to serve in that position today. It was for this job that the family purchased and moved to their current home, which is within driving distance of Miami University. Daryl performs research on Miami language and culture as a career, and does so in the unusual situation where he is working at a major

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<sup>68</sup> In the legend as I have heard it, the story is presented as if Daryl just happened to be in the right stage of life when the Myaamia Project was independently being set up. In reality, Daryl was part of the initial negotiations, having already established himself as a Miami community member with a significant interest in language and culture.

national university, but for an indigenous nation.<sup>69</sup>

The importance of the Myaamia Project cannot be overstated. The design of the project as tribally-driven supports the philosophy that community needs should guide research activities. This is a philosophy that Daryl and others involved in Miami cultural reclamation efforts had already had, but that has arguably gotten stronger over the years that the Project has been in existence. By design, the Myaamia Project begets research that is driven by the Miami community. Every step and every proposed project gets explicitly worked out per community needs and cultural values. Proposals for new initiatives are evaluated by Daryl, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Cultural Preservation Officer Julie Olds, and sometimes also by tribal members who attend Miami University or who do research on Miami issues at other institutions. We all have developed a greater meta-awareness of research protocols and motivations through participation in the Myaamia Project. Learning about community-driven research made me more eager to implement and evaluate this study via Miami cultural needs and values rather than the theoretical models I had been trained in. Daryl was placed in a unique situation where his employment description and his personal goals increasingly overlapped. The Myaamia Project also led more and more Miami people to come on board in the research initiatives that facilitate the Miami awakening.

An ensuing consequence of the Myaamia Project and the increasing body of Miami tribal students was the development of a weekly class for the tribal students on campus. In this class, the Miami students get to know each other and

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<sup>69</sup> For a detailed account of the development and philosophy of the Myaamia Project, see D. Baldwin & Olds (2007) and the project's website: [www.myaamiaproject.org](http://www.myaamiaproject.org)

they explore the cultural, historical, political, and economic issues in the tribe. A year-long Miami language class happens every third year. There were approximately 20 tribal students attending the class in Fall, 2007, one of those students being Keemaacimwiihkwa, who was in her first semester at Miami University.<sup>70</sup> In fact, she, along with Ciinkwia, had already been attending that class since its inception with their father, but as of 2007, was doing so for university credit. Occasionally, the mother and younger children attend and participate also. When I am in the area, I do so as well.

The effects of the class have extended far beyond the classroom. For example, the Baldwins host occasional gatherings for the entire tribal class at their farm. Beyond these organized gatherings, several tribal students visit on their own, particularly those who are involved with one of the research projects occurring within the Myaamia Project. One relevant example is that Karen, some of the tribal students at Miami University, and a few others are creating a cookbook that not only gives Miami recipes, but also provides relevant language and cultural information. Karen has taken on the task of photographing native plants that appear in the cookbook, largely using specimens around Tapaahsia Farm, and has had to learn new vocabulary as part of the process. Others come by the farm to practice cooking and to work on the project. In addition to the immediate result that the presence of other Miami people around the Baldwins' home for this and other projects facilitates the use of more language, carrying out such projects onsite also more firmly establishes that Tapaahsia Farm is

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<sup>70</sup> She is living on campus as of the time of this report. Clearly, this represents a potentially significant change in family dynamics. While it is too soon to tell what the effects will be in the long term, as of her third month as a university student, things were going well both for her and for the rest of the family. She was still seeing (and speaking Miami) with the rest of her family regularly, and she was also getting involved in various activities for American Indian and other minority students on campus.

*myaamionki*.

At these gatherings of tribal members, there are many instances of what Jocelyn Ahlers terms “Native Language as Identity Marker” (2006:62). Ahlers notes that at many gatherings of indigenous peoples, individuals who don’t fully speak their heritage language may nonetheless greet each other, introduce themselves, and start and end presentations that are otherwise in English using their (indigenous) heritage languages. So too is often the case at the Miami class at Miami University and at other Myaamia Project events. In this sense, even though the direct Miami language input that the younger children receive at these gatherings is usually limited in scope or quantity, they are increasingly in situations, both cultural and academic, where the Miami language literally frames the discourse of the activity. These regular events have very likely contributed to the increasing sense of prestige that both younger children were attributing to the language by the end of this study.

Furthermore, the research that begins within the Myaamia Project almost invariably extends into the home and larger tribal community. An obvious example is the annual *eewansaapita* language and culture camp for Miami youth that began in 2005. The camp was partially developed and administered via the Myaamia Project in that both the direct curriculum development as well as some of the cultural and language research that went into that curriculum occurred within the Myaamia Project. Daryl then used new knowledge that came out of the associated research in his interactions at home. For this project and other similar examples, beyond the obvious example of using newly discovered vocabulary, Daryl talks about new developments with his children and they collectively try things out so as to test new lessons before formally using them

with a larger group of Miamis.<sup>71</sup>

In terms of more direct family involvement in tribal activities, both older children started serving as junior counselors at the first camp in 2005, and as of the 2007 camp, became regular counselors. (The other counselors were mostly students from Miami University who had participated in the Miami class.) In 2006 and 2007, Karen was one of the camp cooks and dietary consultants, one theme of the camps being that dinners would be all traditional foods and that the participants would have to name those dishes in Miami before being allowed to serve themselves.

Both younger children were present for the camp in 2006 and 2007. In 2007, Amehk was an official participant, having reached the minimum eligibility age of 10. I told both younger children that part of their role was to help other children learn *myaamia*. Unfortunately, I was not able to track to what extent this happened, as I, too, had responsibilities within the camp and was taking care of administrative tasks for much of the time. However, it is clear that the June camp has become a fixed entity that the children look forward to. It is just one of many tribal events that are becoming part of their habitual life routines as Miami people.

The camps, which happen at the tribal cultural grounds in Oklahoma, have been focused on connecting with the landscape and with each other. While this was already a theme in the Baldwin home, Daryl's beliefs seemed to get stronger during the years of this study; his employment and home life were increasingly mixed, and played off each other. At the 2007 camp, the theme was

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<sup>71</sup> This is something that Daryl had already been doing over the years with language lessons that he had developed for tribal programs, but it may have increased somewhat because his everyday job now involves the language so directly.

*kiiloona myaamiaki* ‘we are Miamis’, and among other activities revolving around this theme, camp participants created posters in which they featured their Miami relatives, many of whom they learned to be other camp participants. Through events such as these, the younger children are increasingly integrated into a larger Miami network, both in terms of actual participation in the activities but also through the socialization that occurs within them.

#### ***4.5 The Prestige of Miami***

Within all of the life activities in which Miami plays a role for the Baldwin family, the language can be said to have “social capital” (see Bourdieu, 1991). Though there are notable exceptions such as the anecdote discussed earlier where a man in a store chastised the family for not speaking English, the general trend is that the children are in environments where Miami is prestigious. Daryl has taken the older children to venues such as language revitalization workshops and conferences where they can demonstrate their language ability and be praised for it, and they are greatly admired within the network of language revitalization scholar-practitioners. I encouraged that the parents involve the younger children in similar roles. The first such instance occurred just before the end of this study (November 8, 2007) when the parents and younger children visited a Miami university class on narrative where Daryl read some traditional stories, and Amehk read the translations.<sup>72</sup>

While is it not absolutely certain exactly how the younger children’s

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<sup>72</sup> The traditional stories he was reading in this particular instance had complicated grammatical patterns and vocabulary and may have been too difficult for simultaneous translation, so Daryl provided Amehk with an English translation that he and David Costa had prepared ahead of time. With everyday speech, however, Daryl has often addressed an audience in Miami and had one of his older children translate to English on the spot. I expect he will someday do the same with Amehk and Awan.

socialization will continue beyond this study, there is every reason to think that the current patterns will continue. Their older siblings, despite the concern expressed by many scholar-practitioners that they would reject the Miami language upon going to public school, were instead continuing to set a positive example for their younger siblings at the end of this study by speaking Miami and talking about it in a positive way. The attitudes and associated practices of the older children are of utmost importance to the younger children's development and are discussed next.

#### **4.5.1 The Older Children**

Around the time that they started attending public high school, both older children acquired cellular phones as a means for their parents to reach them during the school day. Karen notes that Ciinkwia, when calling home from school (presumably with some of his peers in his proximity), would often speak in Miami. Given that the family lives in ancestral Miami homelands where being Indian – especially Miami – is “cool”, there may be an unexpected benefit to public school. I grew up just 12 miles from where the Baldwins live, and in my own experience as a child in the 1980s, I was made fun of for speaking Japanese and being Asian, but my peers in school invariably valued my being Miami. Twenty years later, that pattern may still be true.

In this sense, while there is in many cases some relative ease in speaking English, direct pressure to speak it instead of Miami is relatively low for the Baldwins. However, some amount of indirect pressure to be “mainstream” exists and is almost inevitable in a situation of indigenous language reclamation in the United States, particularly given the prevalent American ideology of assimilation

being a desired practice and outcome. Though I never observed any situations where any of the Baldwins declined to speak Miami when somebody asked them to do so, the following anecdote stuck out both to me and to the family.

In her Spanish class at (public) school, Keemaacimwiihkwa had an assignment that involved making a family tree as part of a larger lesson of kinship terminology. Miami follows an Omaha kinship pattern (Costa, 1999) and the FATHER word is the same both for one's biological father as well as the biological father's brothers – likewise for the MOTHER term. For the Baldwin children, this difference from English is realized for the FATHER term, as they were taught to address Daryl's brother by the same term they call Daryl.<sup>73</sup> However, Keemaacimwiihkwa decided not to bring up the point that Daryl's brother was somebody she called *noohsa* 'my father', and instead completed the exercise as based on Spanish kinship organization.

With respect to the goal of mastering Spanish, this was appropriate, but the anecdote also represented how the Miami culture is not integrated into mainstream education and raised the question of whether the children should mention that their family is different in situations such as this one. The parents and older children had a discussion on the topic later, and Ciinkwia noted at the time that he likely would have done the same as his sister and not said anything. However, when I brought up the topic with him again one year later (November, 2007), he said he felt differently, and that he probably would say something.

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<sup>73</sup> As is common in many multicultural families, kinship roles and names follow the cultural norms within the each parent's extended family. Thus while the Baldwin children could, for example, address Karen's sisters by Miami's MOTHER term, they usually follow standard conventions of American English, addressing their relatives by "aunt", "uncle", "grandma", "grandpa", and by first name in the case of their cousins. As Daryl's extended family is relatively small and the relatives the children see most are from the non-Miami part of Daryl's family (Daryl is of mixed heritage), the opportunity to use Miami kinship terms doesn't normally arise except with Daryl's brother, whom they know well.

Their story reminded me of my own experience in kindergarten and how the students in my class were divided up into “Pilgrims” (with black paper hats) and “Indians” (with two paper feathers) as part of a Thanksgiving Day activity. I was a “Pilgrim”, and while I knew in my heart that I actually *was* an Indian, I didn’t say anything either – though as an adult, I most certainly would. There may be a similar issue of personal development at play here.

The family tree exercise was just one incident, and it was minor. In this case, there was a possibility of pointing out one’s different cultural background, but it was not essential to do so for purposes of the assignment. As part of the “senior exit” that was required for her to graduate from (public) high school, conversely, Keemaacimwiihkwa chose to introduce herself to the panel of teachers in Miami.<sup>74</sup> Similarly, during her first semester of college, she wrote an essay for her composition class which she titled “niila myaamia” (‘I am Miami’) and wrote about her identity as a Miami tribal member, both in terms of what it brought to her life as well and also with respect to the responsibilities it entailed. She wrote, “I am proud to say that I am Miami ... I grew up appreciating my identity, and I never want to change it.”

Both older children clearly appreciate having been raised as Miami people and have incorporated their culture into their public personas. However, they sometimes get tired of having to repeatedly explain their culture to others. These forces play against each other, but the cultural pride is stronger than any negative pressures. The relative prestige of Miami culture and positive sense of Miami identity is further exemplified in the following passage, which contains

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<sup>74</sup> The older children’s high school requires all graduating seniors to put together a presentation on a theme of their choice to encompass what they learned in high school. This presentation is made in front of a panel of teachers.

excerpts from a conversation that I had with Ciinkwia (March 25, 2005) on the role of language:

[1] Ciinkwia: I speak English out with my friends when I go to movies, or anywhere else I go, and I speak myaamia here at home with my family and other ... other members of myaamia and sometimes even with my friends; I try to teach them some myaamia.

[2] WL: How responsive have they all been to that?

[3] Ciinkwia: Well, umm, I did know a friend [in Montana, where the family used to live] [...]

And umm he – he’s Navajo, so he was – he really liked learning what I knew from the myaamia language so

[4] WL: Now does he speak Navajo?

[5] Ciinkwia: I’m not sure. He might.

[6] WL: He probably does some.

[7] Ciinkwia: Some, yeah. [inaudible segment] And then some of my other friends are interested in learning just myaamia.

[8] WL: Now do you have any friends who think it’s silly to learn My-[mi] myaamia?

[9] Ciinkwia: Well they haven’t said out loud, no; but, they’re all pretty ... they all like it n’, you know, and I try to teach them.

The attempts to teach Miami that Ciinkwia referred to in this conversation appear to have worked. Many of the children’s friends, especially those who come for extended visits, use a few words of Miami. Beyond the overt teaching of necessary terms alluded to earlier, for example, for game vocabulary, certain common commands like *poonanto!* ‘stop!’ are widely used by non-Miami visitors, especially by the older children’s friends when they are speaking to the younger children. However, Ciinkwia’s comment in line [9] (“they haven’t said out loud, no”) demonstrates his awareness that somebody somewhere would not have a positive view about the language. Still, that he tries to teach Miami illustrates his

own positive stance toward the language.

As that conversation continued, Ciinkwia expressed his thoughts on the social role of the language:

[10] Ciinkwia: It brings you closer – together as a group. And to do activities together in the Myaamia language and to learn and to teach each other through Mia- [maj.æ] myaamia [mijaːmija] language.

[11] WL: But yeah, let's say with Amehk and Awan, you know, as the older sibling, what do you think would be the best for them in terms of

[12] Ciinkwia: They could s-

[13] WL: being raised with myaamia language or having their schooling in more than one language, and

[14] Ciinkwia: I think it gives them a different point of view on-on the world today. And it gives them a something ... more social; they can do more within a social group like teach – teach others to use it.

The social capital of the Miami language and identity is clear in Ciinkwia's remarks. Further of note is line [10], where Ciinkwia has a false start on the name of the language, first starting with the English name and then correcting himself to the endonym. The politics of naming become an interesting and important aspect. Though they sometimes say "Miami", the Baldwins usually refer to their language as "myaamia". As noted by Leanne Hinton, "[n]aming is an act of power [...] By retaking their own names, [Indians] are asserting power over their own identities, redefining themselves in their own terms (1994:163). Particularly for Daryl, having and using his heritage language functions metaphorically as a statement of tribal sovereignty and of the Nation's right to self determination. Just as I gained a heightened awareness of these issues during this study, so too, I believe, did the Baldwin children. This may have been why Ciinkwia made a point of saying *myaamia* to reinforce his personal association with the language.

Though people sometimes report that a heritage language is “forced” upon the children by the parents (Hinton, 2001a), in this case, the entire family has a stake in their reclamation efforts. Furthermore, reinforcement to speak the language happens from multiple directions in this family. However, this pattern of multidirectional language reinforcement evolved over the four years reported on in this study. Both parents enforced language use for all four children at the beginning of the study. However, I observed that tapering off with the older two children at the end of the study, as they were becoming young adults and were already good about using the language. The older children, in turn often reminded their younger siblings to use Miami and occasionally corrected their parents. This pattern held throughout the study. The younger children, however, made a significant shift.

#### **4.5.2 The Younger Children**

When I first knew the younger children, they did not usually enforce each other’s Miami usage.<sup>75</sup> In early 2007, however, the entire family began playing a game to promote language use, and things quickly changed. The game worked as follows: Each family member, plus a friend and fellow tribal member who was frequently around the Baldwins’ home at the time, got a jar labeled with their name. Each person started with several coins (provided by the parents), and the game involved adding or moving around coins based on language usage. Whenever Person 1 caught Person 2 using English in a situation where it was understood that Person 2 could have said the same thing in Miami, the rule was that Person 1 could take a coin out of Person 2’s jar and place it into their own.

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<sup>75</sup> They did occasionally correct me, but our relationship was somewhat different because they were in a teacher role where they were supposed to be helping me learn *myaamia*.

Additionally, whenever any person said something judged to be really good (e.g., an unusually complicated sentence) that person got to put a coin into their own jar from a stash of unclaimed coins.



**Image 4 – Jar Game (picture taken March 30, 2007)**

While this game involved the entire family, the younger children were especially active and interested in it. Both younger children – especially Awan – got interested in the language and started paying more attention to their own language usage and that of the people around them. The important sociological component was that this game spurred the younger children to make what was originally their parents’ and older siblings’ language policy into their own. This self awareness and desire to speak Miami may be the most important thing they developed during this study. In Part II, I further discuss the socialization that contributed to this development.

Part II – The Younger Children's  
Language Development

## Chapter 5 – Acquisition: Overview & Predictions

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As discussed earlier, the language development of the younger children, the first native speakers of the Miami language in over 100 years, is of great interest to communities trying to reclaim their languages. It sheds light on the question of how children develop language skills in situations of limited input from second-language speakers, and thus also has potential applicability to others who have similar language reclamation goals. Amehk and Awan's story provides a model of what can be expected to happen and how variables affect that process.

However, there were special challenges in assessing what I was observing throughout this study. First, I found no literature on child language acquisition of Miami or of other Algonquian languages. Second, there was a case of acquisition of a morphologically complex language in a situation of limited input but high social value associated with the language.

An understanding of the basic cognitive mechanism was highly important to this study because the parents and I took this part to be a foundation and unchangeable. However, the parents and I were interested in identifying how social factors came into play and guided that process. These factors, we assumed, could be changed if they were not facilitating the acquisition process. This chapter details how I used others' findings and analyses to reconstruct what might be expected for Amehk and Awan's language development. I consider both what would be expected in a situation of full Miami language immersion as well as what would be expected for the special circumstances of bilingualism with English, limited input, and the unique set of social factors.

### 5.1 *Operating Principles of Acquisition*

Of special importance to this study are “Operating Principles” (Slobin, 1973, 1985) or “heuristics” (Peters, 1983, 1985) of acquisition. Hereinafter referred to as OPs, these provide a framework, based on cross-linguistic acquisition evidence, for how a child goes about figuring out his or her native language(s).<sup>76</sup> The OPs also predict an order of acquisition in that phonological and semantic salience play universal roles. Similarly, grammatical functions marked in certain morphophonological ways will usually be acquired before others. This section discusses the OPs with the most immediate relevance to this study, though my analysis was also informed by other OPs not directly referenced here.

Based on cross-linguistic acquisition evidence, the ends of words, the beginnings of words, and other salient phonological strings such as syllables (especially when stressed), all figure into the acquisition process (Peters, 1983, 1985; Slobin, 1973, 1985; Vihman, 1982). The following OPs from Slobin (1985) summarize these patterns:

OP (ATTENTION):SOUNDS. Store any perceptually salient stretches of speech.

OP (ATTENTION):STRESS. Pay attention to stressed syllables in extracted speech units. Store such syllables separately and also in relation to the units with which they occur. (based on Peters’ SG:STRESS)

OP (ATTENTION):BEGINNING OF UNIT. Pay attention to the first syllable of an extracted speech unit. Store it separately and also in relation to the unit with which it occurs. (Based on Peters’ SG:BEGIN)

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<sup>76</sup> Within the larger set of OPs, researchers often recognize two major categories – those which help the child segment parts of the language, often by phonological clues, and those which guide the child in figuring out the language from a cognitively-driven process. Slobin (1985) differentiates these classes as “Perceptual and Storage filters” and “Pattern Makers”, respectively. The second class may have been especially important in that the cognitive processes underlying the “Pattern Makers” can only yield the standard morphology of the language if all of the forms within a given paradigm are used in the child’s environment.

OP (ATTENTION):END OF UNIT. Pay attention to the last syllable of an extracted speech unit. Store it separately and also in relation to the unit with which it occurs. (based on Peters' SG:END)

Between the last two OPs referenced above, there is a crosslinguistic bias toward the end of the unit being of comparatively higher salience than the beginning. As Miami stress patterns are often penultimate, the last syllable is set off from all the others, thus making this general trend even more true.<sup>77</sup> Phonologically, it was thus a prediction that the children would acquire suffixes before prefixes. As Miami's verbal morphology is entirely suffixal and functionally extremely important, there was a word-end bias functionally as well.

Another set of important OPs have to do with how children associate semantic notions with particular phonological strings that they segment using the principles described above. Slobin notes that "[e]verything we know about the beginnings of child language shows that the first meanings are relatively unanalyzed and tied to particular narrow communicative routings and concrete references" (1985:1170). Furthermore, Slobin notes that there is "repeated evidence of children's attempts to adhere to one-to-one mappings between semantic entities and speech forms" (ibid, 1207). As detailed later, the younger children's Miami acquisition largely paralleled these findings. This pattern was apparent in the younger children's earlier acquisition in that they were often understanding inflected verbs and nouns only in terms of the root's lexical

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<sup>77</sup> Amehk and Awan's truncation of certain common words provides evidence of the general trend of salience of word-ends over word-beginnings. Particularly in the first half of this study, they (especially Awan) often left off the initial vowel of a given word, but they rarely leave off the final vowel. Examples from Awan include *seensa!* for *ihseena!* 'older brother!', *lenia* for *alenia* 'man, person', and *mehk* for *Amehk*. However, this process is attested diachronically in the Miami language; initial short vowels were optionally deletable in early-20th Miami. This calls into question to what extent Awan's speech reflects a phonological process of Miami and/or general language acquisition principles.

meaning, the inflections presumably being taken as part of the root itself.

A third set of OPs, which have some overlap with the one-to-one mappings between semantics and speech forms mentioned above, are those that predict language structure. Most important to this study is that there is overwhelming evidence from general acquisition studies (e.g., Slobin, 1973; Slobin, 1985), studies of late acquisition (e.g., Singleton & Newport, 2004), studies of language attrition (e.g., Campbell & Muntzel, 1989; Dorian, 1983), and studies of linguistic change under language revitalization (e.g., Goodfellow, 2003; Goodfellow & Alfred, 2002) that there is a bias toward developing analytic grammatical structures in place of or in addition to existing synthetic ones. Slobin summarizes this finding as OP: ANALYTIC FORM (1985:1229).

Slobin finds not only that children use analytic constructions in early stages of acquisition (as shown by case studies from Polish, Hungarian, Turkish), but also that even when children begin to control the corresponding synthetic construction, they may still use only the free morpheme form OR use both in a sentence (1985:1204). Children will sometimes also accept redundant marking fairly late – after the age of 3-4 at a late stage of acquisition (1985:1205, originally from Kuczaj (1978)). A related OP of production norms summarizes this point:

OP (PRODUCTION): MAXIMAL SUBSTANCE. While you are mastering the linguistic expression of a Notion, mark that Notion with as much acoustic substance as possible, with maximal phonological separation of the form in question from adjacent speech units. (Slobin, 1985:1202-1203)

That is to say, even in cases of synthetic language acquisition in a situation of “normal” input, there is still an analytic stage in production. For example, Slobin finds that “[c]hildren seem to prefer a separate, rather than a bound morpheme for clausal negation, often moving the negative operator outside of the verb

complex or clause” (1985:1239). Data also shows children creating an analytic means of negating verbs even in languages where such an option doesn’t exist.

Furthermore, this change away from synthetic and toward analytic structures has even been attested in Miami specifically. Within the corpus of historical documentation, Daryl found that one of the more recent Miami language informants always had unnecessary overt pronouns to mark the subject of verbs (personal communication, 2004). Costa gives an example where one of last speakers of the historically spoken language has lost verbal morphology entirely (2003:30).

Given all of the facts discussed above, there was every reason to assume that the younger children would work through an “analytic” stage in understanding and speaking Miami, and they did. For example, this showed up in negation. Miami allows both analytic and synthetic negation, though the latter is the common form and more importantly, is the way the older children and parents negate verbs.<sup>78</sup> Both younger children, however, were using only an analytic construction when this study first began.<sup>79</sup> Several examples follow:

- (22) Awan said *moohci weehsinitaawi* ‘NEG let’s eat’ in the theme of the game “opposite day” when his mother said *weehsinitaawi* ‘let’s eat’<sup>80</sup>  
(standard negative form: *wihsinihsootaawi*) (Awan, 5:6)
- (23) It’s not raining: **moohci peetilaanki** (Amehk, 7:0)  
piitilaansiinwi not it is raining
- (24) I don’t have it: **moohci eehtwaani** (Amehk, 7:6)  
ahtoohsiwaani not I have it

<sup>78</sup> The former may exist only due to historic contact with English, as the inflectional negative is used the “vast majority of the time in running texts” (David Costa, personal communication, 2007).

<sup>79</sup> The older children were using primarily synthetic negation for verbs throughout this study, but they were well beyond an “analytic stage” of acquisition when I first met them, and they had formally learned much of their Miami so their case is less relevant.

<sup>80</sup> The mother’s form itself was nonstandard. Standard for ‘let’s eat’ is *wihsinitaawi*.



- (28) I'm thirsty: **niila keetoo piaani** (Amehk, 7:2)  
 I I am thirsty

These examples are a small sampling of a robust pattern that I observed.

Slobin's OP "Maximal Substance" predicts an under-use of ellipsis where it is allowed by the language. This is a case where ellipsis is not only allowed, but actually preferred. While grammatical, the person is fully marked on the verb and pronouns are used only for emphatic purposes, as is common for synthetic languages. Given the context of my having elicited these forms in English, a translation effect may have also been a guiding factor, but the examples are nevertheless suggestive of a bias toward analytic forms. The contact with English, where overt NP subjects are required even when the verb form ending in -s unambiguously indicates third-person singular, provides yet another cause.<sup>83</sup> Amehk rarely added pronouns to full verbs in natural speech and for that reason, the counterexamples in elicitation were likely at least partially a translation effect. However, she did tell me that the pronoun was obligatory when I asked her about it (age 7:0), and may have had an anglicized argument structure for her Miami verbs on a conscious level.

This pattern got extended to command forms, where the suffix in the imperative already includes the object or addressee. The following was in elicitation contexts and may have primarily been an artifact of translation:

- (29) help me: **wiiciilamilo niila** (ungrammatical) (Amehk, 7:0; 7:6)  
 help me-IMP me

That there was a crosslinguistic tendency for this phenomenon became

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<sup>83</sup> Throughout this study, the family has been consistent in not redundantly marking person, and the older children have even explicitly explained to me that pronouns are not necessary because the verb ending indicates the subject.

especially important to this study. The question arose as to whether the younger children's early analytic structures reflected language change (toward English), or were simply a stage in their Miami acquisition. That Amehk later gravitated toward synthetic structures suggests the latter. She eventually lost these redundancies. With the example of "I'm sorry", for example, where Amehk had corrected herself at the age of 7:0 by adding a redundant pronoun, she started giving the standard form just six months later in September, 2004:

(30) I'm sorry: šoowiteehiaani (Amehk, 7:6)

Not long after that in January, 2005, Amehk (7:9) still sometimes gave redundant pronouns under elicitation, but indicated that the pronouns were not obligatory when I asked.

## ***5.2 Age Predictions as Guided by Studies of Other Synthetic Languages***

Another underlying question to this study was "when?" – here, in reference to whether a given part of language could be expected to have been acquired by a given age. A related question lies in the order of acquisition. Though it may not be possible to make accurate predictions in this area because of all the unique variables in this family's language usage, I did use the literature as a guide to developing a rough approximation of what might be expected for Miami. These expectations are discussed in this section.

While there exists a popular belief that (poly)synthetic languages might pose difficulty in the acquisition process (Mithun, 1989), all evidence suggests that it happens quickly and easily (Honda & O'Neil, 2004). Although the earliest acquisition of polysynthetic languages involves words instead of morphemes, the principle of synthesis appears to be acquired relatively early in situations of

full input. Case studies also suggest an early grasp of actual morphemes.

For example, Fortescue reports on a 30-minute conversation in which a Greenlandic Eskimo-speaking child at the age of 2:3 uses 24 derivational affixes, 40 grammatical inflections, and 3 enclitics “productively”. Productivity, in this case, is measured by a given affix having occurred with more than one root (1984/85:103). Although it is possible that more a given affix might appear in more than one memorized collocation and the size of Fortescue’s corpus is limited, the data is nonetheless striking.

In a more thorough acquisition study of a similarly highly polysynthetic language, Mithun (1989) reports on data from four Mohawk-speaking children of differing ages. The children in her study acquired the morphological system at the relatively young ages of 2:9 and 2:10. Hyams (1984), in reporting on Italian, which is not polysynthetic but nonetheless marks person and number on verbs in much the same way as Miami, suggests that the Italian-speaking children in her study had acquired the present tense Italian verbal paradigm by the age of 2:0. There were methodological problems with Hyams’ study in that it assumed that usage of correct forms demonstrated acquisition and a subsequent study using more careful methodology (Pizzuto & Caselli, 1992) found that children were still acquiring the paradigm at the age of 3:0, but the trend of relatively early morphological acquisition still holds. These studies would suggest that both Amehk and Awan might have been expected to have largely acquired Miami’s morphological system before this study began, by which point they were already 6:3 and 4:1, respectively.

However, theirs was a bilingual environment in which much of the Miami component involved fixed phrases, commands, and short statements that used

only a certain subset of morphological forms, while English was used in a lot of ways and with full complexity. Furthermore, all of the Miami input that Amehk and Awan were receiving was from bilingual speakers, who in turn were all also learners of the language. I was especially interested in how these variables would affect the younger children's acquisition, and some patterns are discussed next.

### ***5.3 The Bilingualism Factor***

That bilingualism would play a significant role in the younger children's development was the general hypothesis of this study, though it was not immediately clear how it would factor in. One general question involves which language's morphology they were expected to learn first. Here, there are competing theories, as discussed below.

#### **5.3.1 Bilingualism's Effect on Morphological Acquisition**

The "lead-lag" pattern in the emergence of verbal morphology refers to the attested process of how children bilingual in English and in another more morphologically rich language "invariably" develop productive use of inflected verb forms in the morphologically rich language before they do in English (Serratrice, 2001:43). The lead-lag hypothesis and observation would predict that, other things being equal, Amehk and Awan would acquire Miami morphology before English morphology. However, the actual attested pattern was clearly the opposite; they acquired much Miami morphology during this study, while their English morphology was already intact before the study started.

Vihman (1982) offers an explanation. She suggests that bilingualism may slow the acquisition of inflectional morphology and provides an example where this is the case. Vihman's study looks primarily at the bilingual acquisition

milestones of her son in Estonian and English, the former being a highly inflected language, and the latter a predominantly analytic one. She writes that “[w]e might argue that, for a child who must deal with two languages from the start in his daily experience, inflectional morphology is in a sense less functional than word-size morphemes, which can more easily be fitted into the structure of either language” (1982:155). Furthermore, Vihman notes that the structure of the languages in question may play a role, and that having dominance in a more analytic language such as English may hinder morphological development in a synthetic language if it is the less dominant one for a bilingual child. This clearly encompassed the pattern with both Amehk and Awan.

### **5.3.2 Bilingualism’s Effects on Lexical Acquisition**

Beyond the question of morphology, there is the equally important question of lexical acquisition and the effect of bilingualism. As discussed in Chapter 3, many language reclamation efforts, the Baldwins’ case included, place a high level of importance on words and their semantics. For this reason, this question of lexical acquisition becomes even more important. It is not questioned that bilingualism where the child is significantly dominant in one language over the other can guide their lexical acquisition and usage in general. The question is how. This section outlines some of the principles and associated findings.

Presumably, in most cases of acquisition under “full” input, there are enough contexts to figure out the standard semantics of a given word. However, with any kind of restricted input as with endangered language acquisition where the domains of use may be restricted and the quantity of input similarly constrained, this may not be the case. Sometimes, both younger children offered



meaning that was reasonable as a general translation for certain specific contexts, but that didn't capture the full semantics of a given word or phrase. Here, let us consider the general mechanism for creating a lexicon as described by Slobin:

OP (MAPPING): DICTIONARY. Pay attention to sound sequences that have a readily identifiable meaning and store them in a Dictionary, along with a representation of the context in terms of available semantic and pragmatic Notions in Semantic Space (1985:1168).

Slobin's explicit mention of context is important, as it certainly plays into the acquisition of the younger children. The following examples are illustrative:

- (33) meelweelintansiwaani: **I don't feel good** (Awan, 5:5)  
I don't like it
- (34) Amehk told me that the demonstrative *ooniini* 'this (inanimate) object' meant "here you go" (6:7) and "here!" (7:0) and was likely thinking of how the word is used when somebody hands an object to somebody else.<sup>86</sup>
- (35) teepi: **stop** (Amehk, 7:6)  
able (used in the context of "enough!", as a directive to children to stop doing something)<sup>87</sup>
- (36) nintaya keetooipiita: **he's thirsty** (Amehk, 7:6)  
my pet he is thirsty (fixed expression meaning 'my car needs gasoline')

However, in the majority of cases, both younger children gave the standard semantics for words and phrases, sometimes with extra information about specific possible interpretations or additional meanings:

- (37) WL to Amehk: neepiki? (I was asking her to clarify if it meant "he's dead".)

Amehk: **It just means "dead"**.

Later, Amehk said it could mean "**he's dead**" and "**it's dead**".

<sup>86</sup> This was and continues to be a very common usage of this word by the Baldwins, as the common Algonquian pattern is to say "this" when handing something to somebody. However, prior to the translations referenced here, this particular word was also used in other contexts, and especially common in the fixed phrase *ahtooyani-nko ooniini?* 'Do you have this?', a question used in the Miami version of the card game *Go Fish*.

<sup>87</sup> *teepi* is also translated as "enough" in the records, and this is one of the few words that several currently living elders remember.

- (38) WL to Amehk: plate is 'alaakani'?  
 Amehk: **Yeah. 'alaakani' is "bowl", too.** (correct) (Amehk, 7:7)
- (39) Context: I was walking with the younger children and trying to describe my actions in Miami. I had just said *peempaliaani* 'I'm walking', and was asking for confirmation that I was saying the appropriate word:  
Does that mean walk or run?: That means 'I'm walking.' That can also mean 'I'm walking to the tree' or 'I'm walking to the car'. (Amehk, 8:6)
- (40) frog: maamaahkiihsia. That actually means "toad", but it still means frog. (*maamaahkiihsia* does mean 'toad'; *kooka* is 'frog') (Awan, 5:1)
- (41) WL to Awan: What does *ihkipanki* mean?  
 it is green/blue  
 Awan: **blue** (Awan, 5:3)  
 WL: Is that all it means?  
 Awan: **also means green** (correct)

#### 5.4 A Language Socialization Model

Ochs & Schieffelin contend that "[a] language socialization perspective yields a more sophisticated model of grammatical development, that is, one tuned into certain cultural realities that influence when, how, and why young children use and understand grammatical forms" (1996:73). For example, they point out that white middle class America tends to use baby talk, but that the reason for doing so is usually to encourage the young child to communicate with the interlocutor, not to help the child acquire English. This pattern is not universal. For example, in K'iche' Mayan and Kaluli, children are not expected to speak much and rather are expected to acquire the language by being overhearers.

Importantly, the authors find that the outcome is the same – children become competent speakers of the target language. However, "the acquisition of specific grammatical constructions can be profoundly impacted by the cultural

organization of language. Children produce certain constructions and not others and come to an understanding of constructions in part because of their significance" (84-85). The authors go on to make three generalizations, which are paraphrased below:

- 1) If the construction/ grammatical form is used a lot around the child but the child doesn't use it, it is because the form is socially inappropriate.
- 2) If a form is infrequently used but the child picks it up early anyway, it is because it is socially appropriate.
- 3) If a grammatical form is used to express specific stances and speech acts in the child's verbal environment, it will be acquired early as part of the acquisition of those stances and speech acts (85).

While it is not clear if the authors' claims fully apply in this case, it is true that socially encouraged forms such as kinship terms are *used* the most by Amehk and Awan, and that taboo topics are almost always in Miami because the parents have always taught that it is okay to talk about these topics in Miami. While it was very clear that their understanding of the semantics of Miami words reflected how those words were used in their environment (in that they sometimes got incorrect meanings that had a clear mapping to patterns of usage), their acquisition of morphology gave mixed results. As I show later with the pronominal prefixes on the forms, the younger children didn't achieve productive use until after formally learning how to use these forms through language games.

#### **5.4.1 Socialization & Lexical Choice**

Along the lines of the socialization model and with specific reference to lexical choice, Genesee (1989) notes how earlier studies "have suggested that in some cases bilingual children identify a referent with the lexical item in the language that was first or more frequently used to label it. They might insist on using that

word at all times when talking about that referent regardless of the linguistic context" (333).

This principle would account for Amehk and Awan's embedding of certain Miami nouns into English sentences even when they were able to give the English gloss of the word(s) in question. In particular, Miami flora and fauna terms, kinship terms, numbers, and a few other nouns – ones that the younger children probably first learned in Miami – tend to be embedded into English sentences, as shown in the following examples:

- (42) **That's why** [intended: because] **the minca is there.** (Amehk, 6:6)  
(*minca* is the younger children's truncated form of *miincipi* 'corn')
- (43) **Give that book to iinka.** (Amehk, 7:2)  
mom!
- (44) **niila blind.** (Awan, 4:5)
- (45) **kinšimi we're going.** (Awan, 4:8)  
soon
- (46) **Can I have my [mangisi]?** (Awan, 4:10)  
(intended: *mankiiši* 'medicine')
- (47) **I jumped [sic] niišwi times.** (Awan, 5:4)  
two
- (48) **We found a big wiinkwa in there** [the greenhouse]. (Awan, 5:4)  
moth

In some cases, Awan took a commonly heard form of a given verb and used it like an English verb root. The following are all imperative singular forms of Miami verbs embedded into English syntax.

- (49) **Are you pyaalo-ing?** (Awan, 4:7)  
come-IMP

Also attested (according to Daryl):

**Are you going to pyaalo?**  
**Are you going to aantišilo?**  
go there-IMP



other hand, if what they can't say is more than a couple of words, they will generally switch to all English. "There isn't much of a point [of trying to say it in Miami if there's too much English there]", noted Daryl. The pattern they described was the one I observed.

Although this pattern may be reasonable for Daryl and Ciinkwia given their relatively high level of proficiency in Miami, Daryl's beliefs about what is appropriate for others are different; he thinks any usage of Miami is better than none at all. In narrating the introduction to a language learning CD ("Myaamia iilaataweenki: Audio lesson 1", 2002), Daryl explicitly expresses this view:

We are working hard to bring our language out from the pages of historical documents and back into the voices of our people. We have learned a lot from our community as we continue to move our language efforts forward. Probably, one of the most important things we've learned is that language reclamation is a community effort and a healing process. We encourage all of our members, their families, and our many friends to help us in this effort by speaking Miami whenever they can, even if it is only a single word.

Often, Daryl has pointed out that there is a difference between what happens in the larger community and what happens within his own home. In this case, he realizes that people have different levels of proficiency, but that the social benefits of speaking the language have value for all. Similarly, although he holds his own speech to a different standard, the notion of any Miami language being better than *no* Miami language is manifested in his relationship with the younger children, whom he doesn't expect to speak only in Miami.

As shown earlier, the younger children sometimes insert Miami words into sentences that are otherwise in English. Importantly, these code-switched sentences are accepted with no overt correcting or negative body language or facial expressions by either of the parents. This is an important factor because it

has been noted that parents' reactions to their children's code-switching usually reflect how they socialize their children linguistically (Lanza, 2001:206). For the Baldwin parents, any use of the language indexes the younger children's Miaminess, and they embrace all attempts by their children to speak Miami.

For these reasons, I didn't expect any major sociological hang-ups in the younger children's language development. Miami was valued in their home and increasingly in their larger social network, it was a language of prestige, and they were encouraged to speak it, but when they mixed it with English, that was accepted, too.

#### **5.4.3 Language Input as Guided by Socialization Practices**

A clear finding in language acquisition research is that positive evidence, such as hearing grammatically correct and pragmatically appropriate words and sentences, is far more effective than correction of nonstandard form or usages in helping children become proficient speakers (Honda & O'Neil, 2004:5-6).

Children often do not pay much attention to corrections or may misunderstand what was wrong with the original utterance even if they are paying attention. In this sense, correction of form would be predicted to do little for the younger children's language development. This prediction was borne out.

As noted in Chapter 1, however, "correction" for the Baldwins usually refers to a given individual's practice of requiring or reinforcing Miami language use by another family member. The exact mechanism by which this occurs is important in that it yields what might be called positive evidence, but does so in an unusual way. From the mother and older siblings, correction of language choice for the younger children usually involves a command to speak Miami,

and the younger children then come up with a phrase on their own. This type of prompting also comes from Daryl, as illustrated earlier in example (1).

However, Daryl also has established a pattern where the children will say a sentence in English, he will say the corresponding Miami translation, and then the children will repeat their father's translation verbatim. By repeating their father, the children are saying an entire Miami sentence, in this case juxtaposed to its English counterpart. This practice likely creates a very strong association between certain English phrases and Miami ones, thus facilitating using only the Miami phrase in the future if and when doing so becomes the norm.

However, I observed the younger children repeating phrases without seeming to fully understand them, especially in the earlier part of this study. Furthermore, Daryl's corrections are usually a direct translation of what either child just said in English. For example, if Amehk or Awan were to say "I \_\_\_\_\_", their father's correction would be expressed from the same point of view, hence "I \_\_\_\_\_" – not "**you** \_\_\_\_\_". This type of correction clearly contributed toward the target of speaking Miami whenever possible in a sociological sense, and it had the added benefit of helping Daryl in that he got more practice saying Miami sentences. However, especially for the younger children, who were still acquiring the structure of the language, this practice was potentially problematic in that first-person forms could be misinterpreted as second-person forms. This did not occur, but Amehk treated second and third person forms as a single category in one stage of her acquisition. It is possible that a general lack of consistency in person marking contributed to her novel analysis of the verb system. I discuss this phenomenon in Chapter 6.

### ***5.5 Mixing the Models***

In evaluating what I was observing and eliciting, I found that both the more cognitive models and the socialization models informed the study. I found that the children's acquisition occurred in the order predicted by general principles of acquisition with respect to the structure of the language. However, there was also a strong relationship of their understanding to how exactly the language was being used around them. This was especially true in the nonstandard grammatical analyses and semantic understandings that I observed.

For this reason, there is no discrete "cognitive model" or discrete "socialization model" of language acquisition; the elements that have developed out of these traditions need to inform each other. I propose that mixing these models is the appropriate way to study language development, and it is how I conducted this study. The next two chapters detail how such a mixed model informed my understanding of the children's language development through a series of case studies. In Chapter 6, I show how Amehk and Awan began to decipher the morphology of Miami on their own. In Chapter 7, I discuss how formal teaching designed to address specific areas of difficulty not only allowed the younger children to acquire certain target forms, but also had an important socialization effect.

## Chapter 6 – The Younger Children’s Acquisition

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What quickly became clear in this study was that the children’s understanding of the Miami language had a strong correlation with the principles discussed in Chapter 5. This chapter details this finding through three case studies of the younger children’s morphological acquisition as it occurred during the first two years of this study. I summarize my case studies of how the younger children were acquiring pluralizing noun suffixes (Section 6.3), person/number-marking verb suffixes (Section 6.4), and possessive prefixes on nouns (Section 6.5). The chapter is concluded with a summary.

The three case studies are each presented in three subsections. First, I give an overview to the relevant grammar and major patterns that would play into the acquisition process. Second, I give an overview of the younger children’s actual acquisition of the said area.<sup>88</sup> Third, I examine novel forms and usages that I observed and discuss how they might have developed due to patterns of how the language was being used in the home at the time. For all three cases, I give several examples to illustrate the trends that I found, but the findings themselves were informed by hours of observational data and several informal sessions.

### ***6.1 Preliminary Predictions***

These three areas were chosen for several reasons. First, all are obligatory in certain contexts, all carry a high functional load, and all are fully productive in the speech of the older four Baldwins as evidenced by their use of these affixes in novel forms such as:

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<sup>88</sup> As noted in Chapter 3, I have a far larger corpus of data from Amehk. For this reason, this chapter covers far more detail about her acquisition process.

- (51) **teepi-nko-hka**                      **changiaani?**                      (Keemaacimwiihkwa)<sup>89</sup>  
           able-QP-DUB                      change (with 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix)  
           ‘Can I change [the channel on the TV]?’

However, while the affixes under investigation are all phonologically salient because they fall at the edges of words, the first two are suffixal and usually contain a stressed syllable, and might be expected to be acquired at about the same time from a phonological standpoint. The last area, conversely, is prefixal and unstressed, and thus likely to be acquired after the first two.

Factoring in functional importance, it is a prediction that the verb suffixes would be acquired before the noun suffixes. However, Slobin (1970) notes that plurals tend to be acquired relatively early cross-linguistically as a general phenomenon.<sup>90</sup> Given these competing trends, my prediction was that the noun suffixes might actually come first because of the additional factor that plural marking on nouns in Miami parallels that of English, while verbal morphology is completely different. The system of noun prefixation in Miami, however, not only has less phonological salience than the other two areas under investigation but also does not have any English counterpart. For this reason, this was clearly expected to be the last area to be acquired within the three areas reported on in this chapter.

## 6.2 *Summary of Findings*

The findings of this study largely paralleled the predictions referenced above.

Amehk had discerned that Miami marks number on nouns suffixally prior to the time I began formally eliciting forms from her. However, the added complication

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<sup>89</sup> This particular example was noted by the parents as something that Keemaacimwiihkwa had said prior to the beginning of this study and that had stuck out to both of the parents to the point where they made a point of telling me about it.

<sup>90</sup> Amehk and Awan clearly had acquired the concept of plural and were applying it correctly in English more than 90% of the time as of the beginning of this study, so I assumed any lack in Miami to be an issue of morphological nonacquisition, not of cognitive development.



grammatically animate. Furthermore, body parts and plants vary idiosyncratically, with some being animate but most being inanimate.

Both noun classes differentiate number through obligatory suffixes. The general principle of marking number parallels English aside from a few lexical differences where English mass nouns correspond to Miami count nouns and vice versa.<sup>91</sup> For purposes of this study, I follow the general convention of Miami pedagogical materials where nouns are described as taking suffixes that mark both animacy and number, as detailed in the following figure:<sup>92</sup>

**Figure 3 – Number Suffixes**

Inanimate nouns:	sg: <i>-i</i> ; pl: <i>-a</i>
Animate nouns:	sg: <i>-a</i> ; pl: <i>-aki</i> sg: <i>-wa</i> ; pl: <i>-ooki</i> or <i>-waki</i> (lexically determined)

One specific detail of the morphology is especially noteworthy for purposes of the discussion here. The inanimate plural suffix is homophonous with the animate singular suffix, hence facilitating potential reanalysis of inanimate plural forms as animate singular forms or vice versa. This process has been attested with the older brother Ciinkwia for the pair *tawaani/tawaana* ‘tree/trees’, where he at one point started saying *tawaana/tawaanaki*. A similar process occurred with Amehk for the ‘egg/eggs’ pair, *waawi* and *waawa* in standard Miami:

(52) egg: **waawa**  
waawi

(Amehk, 7:7)

<sup>91</sup> Miami also has the added complication of obviation wherein some animate nouns have different endings (*-ali* and *-ahi*) in sentences with multiple third-person participants. However, obviative nouns are rare in the Baldwins’ speech and I left them out of the systematic part of my acquisition investigation.

<sup>92</sup> There are other possible analyses – for example, that for animate nouns, *-a* marks animacy in all cases and that *-ki* marks plural, with singular being unmarked. (*-ki* also appears in certain plural slots of various verb paradigms, thus possibly creating a stronger association between [ki] and the concept of PLURAL than it might otherwise have.) Regardless, the Baldwins and I always talk about the animate plural as being the single unit *-aki*, and as shown later, Amehk came to think of it this way as well.

(N) eggs: waawaki???  
waawa

Amehk's answer was clearly a guess and incorrect, but also clearly showed that she had a general understanding of plural marking at the age of 7:7.<sup>93</sup> The rest of this section outlines how this understanding developed over time.

### 6.3.2 Acquisition of Nominal Plural Marking

Amehk seemed to be fully aware that Miami nouns have singular and plural forms but could not always provide the actual forms and went through various stages of incorrect forms as a process of learning the standard ones. Noteworthy in Amehk's acquisition of plurals was her differentiation of the two noun classes (animate and inanimate), her trend toward a relatively productive use of the pluralizing suffix *-aki*, and her creation and use of a novel suffix, which is discussed below.

She had differentiated the two noun classes throughout the period of this study, although was not able to produce any of the morphology for inanimate nouns under elicitation until the age of 7:7. This analysis is primarily based on her almost always having given answers to elicitations that required differentiating number for animate nouns, but a marked inability to give any form for any inanimate plural.<sup>94</sup> That is, she seemed to know nouns whose singular forms ended in *-i* took something other than *-aki* to mark plural, but

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<sup>93</sup> Although Amehk's siblings and mother (but not her father) were saying *waawa* 'eggs' to refer to the singular form around this time (I often heard Karen say *nkoti waawa*, literally 'one eggs'), I had never anybody say *waawaki* until Amehk did in this elicitation session. I believe it was a guess based on a relatively recent understanding of the paradigm. Six weeks before this particular elicitation, Amehk had given *waawa* when I elicited "egg" and said "I don't know" when I asked her about "eggs".

<sup>94</sup> Exceptions include one instance where she added *-s* to the singular form of an inanimate noun, and one where she added *-ooki*, after I told her to guess. Overall, however, the pattern was robust; she gave some answer to elicitations of plural forms for words whose singular form ended in *-a*, and no answer for those whose singular form ended in *-i*.



nouns that were not frequently uttered as pairs, Amehk displayed less understanding:

(58) two rainbows: **I don't know.** (Amehk, 7:6)  
 niišwi alaankwiaki

one rainbow: **alaankwia** (correct)

(59) baby chicken: **pileensa** (correct) (Amehk, 7:6)

baby chickens: **the same, but it has an -s at the end**<sup>96</sup>  
 pileensaki

(60) snake: **kineepikwa** (correct) (Amehk, 7:6)

snakes: **I do not know!**  
 kineepikwaki/kineepikooki

However, she was clearly developing an awareness that PLURAL was marked by a suffix, as evidenced by her sometimes sticking on an incorrect suffix:

(61) horse: **neekatikašia** (correct) (Amehk, 7:0)

(N) horses: **neekatikašooki???**  
 neekatikašiaki

(no answer given when I elicited 'horses' six months later)

Amehk also added *-kwi* to a noun whose plural form she had given correctly many times before:

(62) cow: **lenaswa** (Amehk, 7:2)

(N) cows: **lenasookwi**  
 lenasooki

*I then asked Amehk if it was -ki or -kwi, as she had never used -kwi as a noun ending before. She corrected herself to -ki.*

And at the age of 7:7, she used *-ookwi* with another noun:

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<sup>96</sup> While there was one other instance at the age of 7:2 where Amehk added *-s* to a Miami noun under elicitation (in that case to an inanimate noun – the only instance where she gave an answer for an inanimate plural prior to the age of 7:6), in natural speech, this practice was uncommon. This example probably reflects Amehk being in an English frame of mind, or perhaps her school lessons in (English) language arts and explicit discussion of adding *-s* to pluralize nouns.

- (63) one fox, then more than one fox: **paapankamwa, paapankamookwi**<sup>97</sup>  
 (N) paapankamwa paapankamwaki (Amehk, 7:7)

It is not clear what conditioned the use of these non-standard suffixes. It is true that they all end in *-wa* or have [i] in the final syllable, and the extension of *-ooki* to nouns ending in *-wa* would not be unusual; many *-wa* nouns do have this suffix in the plural. The substitution of *-kwi* for *-ki* does not occur anywhere in nominal morphology, but both endings are common in verbal morphology. This is the likely source of [kwi].

Beyond the father's habit of offering examples of singular and plural forms of animal nouns, the family more generally began to make a concerted effort to use plural forms as much as possible around this time. I was observing inconsistency in the children's elicitations and suggested that they do so. Perhaps for this reason, perhaps as an independent development, Amehk gained a new metalinguistic awareness of PLURAL that I first observed when she was 7:6. She started talking about forms for "more than one" of something being different from the form for just one of the item. I started using this terminology after I heard it from her.<sup>98</sup>

There was strong anecdotal evidence by the age of 7:6 that Amehk had acquired that idea that *-aki* marks plural number, though she may not yet have been clear about what nouns this suffix attaches to. At earlier stages of acquisition, affixes are applied probabilistically, which may be what occurred here. Nevertheless, the following examples clearly show that Amehk was

<sup>97</sup> Eleven months later, she gave the standard form:

foxes: **paapankamwaki** (correct) (Amehk, 8:6)

<sup>98</sup> I asked the older family members if they had introduced this terminology to differentiate singular/plural pairs, but they had no recollection of it and assumed it was something that Amehk had come up with on her own.

thinking about nouns and trying to discern patterns:

- (64) squirrels: **anikwa** (Amehk, 7:6)

Is that for one squirrel or more than one?: **one**

What if you have more than one?: **anikwaki???** (correct, but a guess)<sup>99</sup>

How about cats?: **I don't know.**

Can you guess?: **uh-uh.**

- (65) kitten: **pinšinhsa** (Amehk, 7:7)

Is that one or more than one: **one** (correct)

What if it's more than one?: **I don't know that.**

- (66) Amehk, when I asked her how to say 'puppies', suggested **alemwadehsaki**, which is non-standard but correct in terms of its plural suffix.<sup>100</sup>

- (67) bee: **aamaawia** (Amehk, 7:7)

Do you know how to say "bees" – more than one bee?: **aamaawiaki???**

aamaawiaki? I think that sounds right. (correct)

- (68) beaver: **amehkwa** (related to Amehk's name) (Amehk, 7:7)

What if you have more than one beaver?: **Umm, I think it's amehkwaki.**  
(correct)

- (69) Daryl introduced the term *waapansoonsa* 'little rabbit, bunny' and I asked Amehk to pluralize it. She correctly guessed **waapansoonsaki**, and Daryl noted later that he thought he had never used the plural form.

In one instance, Amehk treated the *-aki* suffix as a self-standing unit, and attached it to a singular form that already contained *-a*:

<sup>99</sup> Amehk later remarked that she wasn't sure about the plural form for "squirrels", and did not give any response when I elicited it six weeks later.

<sup>100</sup> The standard form for "puppy" is *alemontehsa* [alemondesa], but Amehk's older siblings pronounced it [alemwadesa]. (In the original form, *t* is realized as [d] because it appears after a nasal. The siblings kept the voicing, but lost the nasal. As standard Miami orthography has no way of representing this, I am using the letter *d* to do so in this example.)

- (70) 'one wolf', then 'more than one wolf': **mahweewa, mahweewa aki**  
 (Amehk, 7:7)  
 (I elicited this phrase twice, and she gave the same answer both times.  
 There was a clear pause between *mahweewa* and *aki*.)

It is possible that Amehk was considering the pluralizing suffix as a separate word around the age of 7:7. At that age, when I asked her to say any Miami word that started with [a], she suggested *aki*. Given children's preference of analytic forms, this would not be surprising, although it is unusual that the plural marker is never pronounced separately from the noun stem except in this one instance.

Conversely, for every inanimate noun I asked about during the same time period, she consistently said that she did not know the plural form:

- (71) plate: **alaakani** (correct) (Amehk, 7:0)

plates: **I don't know.**  
 alaakana

- (72) What's the word for sock?: **miišimitaakani** (correct) (Amehk, 7:6)

How about socks? *Amehk shook her head, not knowing the answer.*

- (73) knife: **maalhsi**<sup>101</sup> (correct) (Amehk, 7:6)

How about knives: **I don't know.**  
 maalhsa

kihseensa \_\_\_\_\_ kocimi.  
 your older brother ask him

*Amehk then asked her older brother Ciinkwia what the form would be:*

Ciinkwia: **maalhsa** (correct)

Amehk: **maalhsa** (repeating Ciinkwia)

While there were isolated cases such as this one in which Amehk solicited the answer from somebody else and was able to correctly provide it to me immediately thereafter, in every other instance where I elicited the plural form of

<sup>101</sup> Three and a half months earlier, Amehk had been using *maalhsa* 'knives' as the singular form, but apparently acquired the standard singular form at some point during Summer, 2004.

an inanimate noun, Amehk was not able to give any answer until the age of 7:7.

That was the age at which she began giving the standard forms for a few singular/ plural pairs such as the following:

(74) **ahseni is one rock. ahsena is two rocks.** (Amehk, 7:7)

What about three rocks or four rocks?: It's still ahsena. (correct)

(75) spoon: **kookani** (Amehk, 7:7)

spoons: **kookana** (correct)

While the late acquisition of inanimate plurals is likely due primarily to the relatively high frequency of animate nouns as compared to inanimate ones because the Baldwins talk about their farm animals so much in Miami, there may also be a cognitive process at play. Slobin's Universal 3 states that "[t]he closer a grammatical system adheres to one-to-one mapping between semantic elements and surface elements, the earlier it will be acquired" (Slobin, 1979:109).

Semantically, plural forms should be longer (i.e. have more phonetic content) than singular forms because, as Amehk might say, they mark "more than one".

In Miami, however, this iconicity is present only for animate nouns.

### 6.3.2.1 *Awan's Nouns*

The data from this period is insufficient to give a detailed account of Awan's acquisition of noun suffixes. Certainly, he understood the concept cognitively, as evidenced by his English. By the age of 5:1, which was the first substantial elicitation that I did with him, his Miami knowledge minimally included some singular-plural pairs. Data suggests some acquisition of the internal morphology and that Awan was probably on the verge of acquiring productivity with the animate nouns. Several examples from elicitation in June, 2004 are given below:

- (76) tree: **tawaana** (Awan, 5:1)  
tawaani trees

trees: **I don't know. We actually call them trees-trees.  
That's a funny name.**

- (77) snake: **kineepikwa** (correct) (Awan, 5:1)

snakes: **I don't know.**

Is it kineepikwaki?: **uh-huh** (correct)

- (78) baby: **piloohsa** (Awan, 5:1)

babies: **I don't know that yet.**  
piloohsaki

- (79) rabbit: **waapanswa** (Awan, 5:1)

rabbits: (Awan didn't know the answer, so I suggested *waapansaki* and *waapansooki*. He seemed sure that it was the second one, which is correct.)

- (80) cows: **lenasooki** (correct) (Awan, 5:1)

In natural speech and in other elicitation, aside from the few pairs where he made a differentiation, Awan tended to use the singular form all the time.

### 6.3.3 Novel Forms & Usages

The notion of iconicity where plurals should be longer than singulars may have played a role in Amehk's novel classification of the PIG words in a way that was unique to that particular pair:<sup>102</sup>

- (81) pig: **koohkooš** (Amehk, 7:7)  
(N) koohkooša

pigs: **koohkooša** (uttered with strong emphasis on *-a*)  
koohkoošaki

<sup>102</sup> However, one hour after I elicited the tokens given in (81), Amehk spontaneously remarked that *koohkooša* refers to one pig and *koohkoošaki* to more than one pig. As I learned later, she and her mother had been talking about this pair that morning. As with other parts of the Miami language, Amehk often has one form that she uses, but intellectually knows that some other form is standard. Also with this particular pair, the older children use the truncated form *koohkooš* and her parents say *koohkooša*, so it is possible that she simply assigned the two phonological strings to slightly different notions, observing the overall frame she had already discerned where plural forms are longer than singular ones – or possibly (also) that some plural nouns end in *-a*. Peters and Slobin both note that this sort of analysis is common.

There was also one other case approximately one year earlier where Amehk truncated a singular form ending in *-a*: *waapinkwilookia* ‘elephant’ and used that truncated form as a singular: *waapinkwilooki* (6:6). She gave the standard plural form at the time, but it was immediately after asking her father how to say “two elephants”, and it is unclear whether the truncated form really was conceived of as singular by virtue of being shorter or for some other reason.

Awan picked up the PIG example from Amehk, and started using the words in the same way. He also sometimes made up his own forms. I noticed one instance where he made a novel plural form by means of reduplication:

(82) see example (72) where I was questioning Amehk:

What’s the word for sock?: **miišimitaakani** (correct) (Amehk, 7:6)

How about socks? *Amehk shook her head, not knowing the answer.*  
miišimitaakana

(N) Awan (who was present in the room): **miišimitaakanini** (Awan, 5:4)

As I discuss in more detail later, Awan had a tendency to playfully modify words and to sometimes temporarily create new forms, likely by analogy to other ones that he was frequently hearing.

### 6.3.3.1 *The Creation & Spread of -zooki, a Novel Suffix*

Starting at the age of 7:0 and possibly earlier, a certain set of Amehk’s animate nouns took what appeared to be her own reanalyzed plural suffix *-(n)zooki*.<sup>103</sup>

This very likely came from analogy to one of the following pairs:

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<sup>103</sup> This usually occurred without any presence of a nasal, i.e. as [zuki]. Unless there is a nasal present, [z] never occurs in standard Miami. For this reason, I am writing z in my orthographic representations of this novel suffix.

**Figure 4 – Source of Novel Pluralizing Suffix:**

waapanswa 'rabbit' → waapansooki 'rabbits'
[wa:panzwa]                      [wa:panzuki]
lenaswa 'cow, buffalo' → lenasooki 'cows, buffaloes'
[lenazwa]                              [lenazuki]

The former 'rabbit-rabbits' pair was especially frequent in the Baldwins' language use around the time, partly because the family was raising rabbits on their farm through 2005, but also because this particular pair had become a favorite of the father. He sometimes specifically said *nkoti waapanswa, niišwi waapansooki* 'one rabbit, two rabbits' in an attempt to informally teach the difference between singular and plural, and he emphasized the suffixes when reciting this pair.

That the novel suffix took the form that it did is not surprising, as natural syllable breaks occur in a way to facilitate this reanalysis: *waa.pan.soo.ki* and *le.na.soo.ki*. As noted in Chapter 5, syllable breaks are important in acquisition for perceptual reasons, and here the novel morphological break occurred on a syllable break. There is a general tendency for children reanalyze morphemes in this way, especially in fusional synthetic languages (Peters, 1985). Mithun notes that this happens in Mohawk and that it has been attested in K'iche' Mayan (Mithun, 1989:290, latter point originally from Pye, 1983).<sup>104</sup>

Particularly with the DOG words, Amehk became very comfortable with this novel suffix and used it with a variety of animal nouns.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>104</sup> This is not an absolute pattern. One study of Inuktitut, another fusional synthetic language, found that children did not reanalyze morpheme boundaries based on syllable boundaries (Crago & Allen, 1998:273), thus showing that the process is not absolute. Nevertheless, the findings of the current study support that there is a general tendency for it to happen.

<sup>105</sup> There is an obvious possible analysis that Amehk was conceptualizing this suffix as an allomorph specifically for animate nouns that refer to animals (or some subset of this category, as she did not use it for all animals). Unfortunately, I was unable to substantiate this point in any

- (83) dog: **alemwa** (correct) (Amehk, 7:0; 7:4; 7:6; 7:7)
- (N) dogs: **alemwazooki**  
alemooki
- (84) bear: **mahkwa** (correct) (Amehk, 7:0)
- (N) bears: **mahkonzooki???**  
mahkooki
- (N) bears: **mahkwazooki** (Amehk, 7:7)

At one point, Amehk was using her reanalyzed ending even on what I assume to have been the initial source of her analogy:

- (85) I elicited rabbits (*waapansooki*) from Awan when Amehk was present:  
Awan: **waapanswa** (Awan, 5:4)
- (N) Amehk: **That's for one rabbit. waapanswazooki** (Amehk, 7:6)
- Awan: **waapanswazooki** (here, he was repeating his sister's novel form)
- (also attested: (N) **lenaswazooki** (7:6) – the entire word *lenaswa* 'cow' followed by the novel suffix *-zooki*)

Note that Amehk had previously been using the standard plural forms *waapansooki* and *lenansooki* – see examples (56) and (57).

Awan also started using this novel suffix, but with less frequency than Amehk at first. In addition to repeating novel forms as shown above in example (85), he once used *-zooki* himself to suggest a plural form:

- (86) person, then more than one person: **alenia ... aleniaki** (said slowly, but correct) (Amehk, 7:7)
- (N) While Amehk was taking her time thinking of a plural ending, Awan was whispering **aleniazooki** (Awan, 5:5)

Given Amehk's more developed language acquisition and the general trend of Awan to follow Amehk's lead in language that I observed throughout this study,

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systematic way. Whenever I tried to do so, some other variable came into play. Amehk used this novel suffix only with a subset of animals ending in *-wa*. Awan, however, further extended it to *alenia* 'person', as discussed later.

my best conclusion was that Amehk was the original creator of this suffix.<sup>106</sup>

By the time she turned 8:0, Amehk was starting to express hesitation when using this suffix. Conversely, Awan started using it regularly:

- (87) March 25, 2005 elicitation (I elicited the same words from Amehk and Awan, but this was done in separate settings and the children did not hear each other giving answers)

dogs: **alemwazooki???** (Amehk, 8:0)  
alemooki

dogs: **alemwazooki** (no hesitation) (Awan, 5:10)

A year later, Awan used this novel suffix with certain words, while Amehk had lost it entirely:

- (88) How do you say 'more than one rabbit'? (I was asking this question to Awan, but Amehk was present.)

**Oh I know. kiihkeelintamaani!** (Amehk, 9:0)  
I know it

Awan, after a long pause:  
**kiihkeelintansiwaani** (Awan, 6:9)  
I don't know it

Amehk then correctly answered: **waapansooki**

Three days later, we were eating some rabbit-shaped crackers. When I asked how we should describe them in Miami, Awan offered an answer that had the whole singular form plus the novel suffix:

- (N) **wiihsa waapanswazooki** (Awan, 6:9)  
many

Beyond my original attestation of where he had adopted the novel form for "dogs" at the age of 5:10, Awan continued using that form:

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<sup>106</sup> The exact issue of who was using what form varied throughout this study. Both the singular and the plural forms of DOG were relatively frequent throughout this study, and as of the time Amehk first gave the nonce form *alemwazooki*, I am relatively sure that nobody else in the family did, and Daryl was surprised when I told him about this new form. I believe it started with Amehk and then spread to Awan and then to Ciinkwia. Near the end of the study, Awan and Ciinkwia were still accepting this nonstandard form, while Amehk had since adopted the standard form *alemooki*.

(89) (N) dogs: **alemwazooki** (Awan: 6:5; 7:3; 7:7; 7:10)

In the same visit that the second elicitation referenced in (89) had occurred (when Awan was 7:7), I said *alemooki* ‘dogs’ in a conversation, and Awan actually corrected me to his novel form *alemwazooki*.

Awan stuck with this novel form through the end of the study.<sup>107</sup> Amehk, however, was trying to reinforce the standard usage. The following occurred in the last field visit reported on in this document (i.e., November, 2007):

(90) dogs: **alemwazooki** [Awan’s response] (Awan, 8:6)  
**no, no, no, alemooki** [Amehk correcting Awan] (Amehk, 10:7)

## 6.4 Case Study II – Verb Suffixes

### 6.4.1 A Sketch of Miami Verbs

Miami verbs fall into the following four categories based on transitivity and the animacy of their arguments:

- **Animate Intransitive (A.I.):** has animate **subject**
- **Inanimate Intransitive (I.I.):** has inanimate **subject**
- **Transitive Inanimate (T.I.):** has inanimate **object** (and animate subject)
- **Transitive Animate (T.A.):** has animate **object** (and animate subject)

Generally speaking, the I.I. paradigm is the most simple (as there are only third-person forms), the A.I. and T.I. paradigms are of medium complexity, and the T.A. paradigm is the most complicated of the four types. Despite the complexity of the verb system, the older family members generally exhibit a strong grasp of the different verb types. They generally use them in their standard ways, almost always correctly differentiating *waapantanto* ‘look at it [inanimate noun]’ from *waapami* ‘look at him/her [animate noun]’, even when

<sup>107</sup> Over time, Awan adopted the standard plural forms for *aleniaki* ‘people’, *lenasooki* ‘cows’ and *waapansooki* ‘rabbits’, which were the other three nouns where he had at some point used *-zooki*.

the object being looked at is one of few tokens where there is a mismatch between grammatical and semantic animacy.<sup>108</sup>

While the family uses all types of verbs, A.I. verbs are especially common, and my investigation focused on the acquisition of A.I. morphology. Occurring in relatively common contexts of people performing actions like walking, talking, eating, and sleeping, A.I. verbs are especially frequent during the time I spend with the youngest children, thus making their morphology a likely candidate for earlier acquisition. Person and number marking is fusional and encoded in the suffixes given in the following chart. Following Algonquianist practice, I will encode grammatical person with numbers; 1 = first person singular, 2 = second person singular, 11 = first person exclusive plural (“we” that doesn’t include the addressee) 12 = first and second person (“we” that includes the addressee), 22 = second person plural, 3 = third person singular, 33 = third person plural

**Figure 5 – Selected A.I. (Animate Intransitive) Person/Number Suffixes**

1 - <i>aani</i>	11 - <i>aanki</i> (first person exclusive – doesn’t include addressee)
2 -( <i>y</i> ) <i>ani</i>	12 -( <i>y</i> ) <i>ankwi</i> (first person inclusive – includes addressee)
	22 -( <i>y</i> ) <i>iikwi</i>
3 - <i>ci</i> / - <i>ta</i>	33 - <i>waaci</i> / - <i>ciki</i> /
(- <i>ki</i> / <i>ka</i>	- <i>kiki</i> (after consonant-final stems))
Imperative singular: - <i>lo</i> (- <i>to</i> after [n])    Imperative plural: - <i>ko</i>	
Hortative (Let’s ___): - <i>taawi</i>	

The suffixes given above reflect a simplification; they are technically bimorphemic, and the leftmost parts change based on the phonological shape of the root and any earlier suffixes. (These suffixes occur in the last slot of the verb templates.) However, the rimes of the suffixes do not change, and it is this part

<sup>108</sup> The question of the younger children’s differentiation of verb classes is complex. They were using the appropriate type of verb in most contexts, but it is likely that they need to acquire more morphology before they can differentiate the verb classes into the categories given above.

that is likely to be most salient for acquisition purposes. In particular, the first-person singular suffix occurs not only with A.I. verbs but also with T.I. and T.A. verbs in the same form (*-aani*), making it especially frequent in the children's input – and not surprisingly, in their production as well.

There are two third-person forms that had different functions historically. Both are used in this family, hence potentially complicating their acquisition. Based on how the cognate forms function in sister languages, the father tries to use the *-ci* form when the emphasis is on the action and the *-ta* form when the emphasis is on the person, but there is no clear pattern among the other family members. Furthermore, in the negative, there is an allomorph *-kwi* that attaches to negated third-person verbs in lieu of *-ci* or *-ta*. (For negated first- and second-person verbs, the normal suffixes follow the negative suffix *-hsiiw*.) Slobin states that if there are homonymous forms in an inflectional system, those forms will tend not to be the earliest inflections acquired by the child; i.e. the child tends to select phonologically unique forms, when available, as the first realization of inflections (1973:203). Given the multiple third-person singular forms in Miami, it is a prediction that they would be acquired later than the first- and second-person singular forms. This prediction was not fully borne out, but Amehk did have some problems with third-person, as I detail later.

A second important notion and added complication is “initial change”, a system of vowel ablaut that happens to the first vowel in certain verb roots based on semantic factors. Though a full discussion is beyond the scope of this study, the main idea is that the first vowel in a verb root generally changes in realis contexts, and remains unchanged in irrealis contexts.

Ex: A.I. verb stem *wiihsini-* 'eat'

Changed	v.	Unchanged (negative)	Unchanged (imperative)
weehsini-aani		wiihsini-hsiiw-aani	wiihsini-lo
eat -1 <sup>st</sup> sing.		eat - NEG -1 <sup>st</sup> sing.	eat-IMP.sing.
'I am eating' / 'I ate'		'I do/did not eat'	'eat!'

The system as documented in the classical language was for the most part regular, with initial vowels changing as follows:

### Figure 6 – Initial Change

(This chart comes from Costa, 2003:393)

<u>UNCHANGED</u>		<u>CHANGED</u>
<i>a, e, i, ii</i>	->	<i>ee</i>
word-initial <i>i, i</i> after <i>k, #Vhk</i>	->	<i>ii</i>
<i>o</i>	->	<i>wee</i>
The underlying long vowels <i>aa, ee, oo</i> do not change.		

This process is significant for two reasons. First, in terms of acquisition, this means that many verb stems will generally appear in *two* forms, one way in statements of what is happening or already has happened, and another in questions, imperatives, or hypothetical (future) situations. This diminished frequency of any given collocation, coupled with the variables driving initial change, may make it more difficult for the younger two children to acquire the standard pattern for verbs of any of the types. Second, the older family members often incorrectly use changed forms in irrealis contexts and vice versa, thus making the younger children's input somewhat idiosyncratic.

#### 6.4.2 Acquisition of Verb Suffixes

Despite the complexities, with heavily used verbs, both Amehk and Awan exhibited a relatively good grasp of the more commonly occurring forms, especially when explaining the Miami forms in English. The following examples come from elicitations of the very common verb 'to go':

- (91) (*ayaa-* ‘to go’ is the only commonly used verb where the initial change is irregular; the initial vowel *a* changes to *ii* instead of the expected *ee*.)

ayaalo: **go** (correct) (Amehk, 7:0)  
go-IMP.sing

iiyaayaani: **I’m going** (correct)

iiyaayankwi: **we’re going** (correct)

The last token in the example above is the first person plural form that includes the addressee. Three days later, I presented her with the first person inclusive and exclusive forms of the same verb:

- (92) iiyaayaanki: **we’re going** (Amehk, 7:0)  
we (excl) go

iiyaayankwi: **we’re going ... They’re kind of the same thing.**  
we (incl) go

At that point, she recognized that there were two forms, but didn’t know the difference. Six months later, I elicited the same pair:

- (93) iiyaayaanki: **we are going** (Amehk, 7:6)

iiyaayankwi: **we’re going**

Are they the same or different?: **They’re different.**

*I repeated iiyaayaanki.*

**The first one that you said is ‘I’m going’; the next one is ‘we’re going’.**

As she was correctly using *iiyaayaani* ‘I’m going’ around this time, her answer may have been motivated by an attempt to apply logic in an elicitation session. Still, it was clear that she wasn’t understanding the standard semantics.

Awan demonstrated a similar level of knowledge, using forms like *ayaalo* ‘go!’ appropriately in natural speech (and translating it as “you go!” at the age of 4:7), but incorrectly translating first-person plural forms under elicitation:

- (94) (These three words were elicited as a set in the order below.)

- (a) iiyaayaanki: **we are going** (correct) (Awan, 5:1)  
we (excl) go
- (b) iiyaayaankwi: **I am going** (non-standard)  
we (incl) go
- (c) ayaataawi: **we are going** (essentially correct;  
let's go likely meaning 'we're going! / let's go!')

It is possible that the pattern of English, where there is only one first-person plural, led Awan to translate the second first-person plural form as something other than “we”, the “we” slot having already filled by a different form within the English-based person template that he may have had at the time.

While Awan rarely ventured guesses, Amehk did so frequently under elicitation. In some cases she put together an ungrammatical collocation:

- (95) you're going: **niila ayaayani???** (Amehk, 7:0)  
iiyaayani I you go (without initial change)
- cf. you're going: **kiila ayaayani** (basically correct)<sup>109</sup> (Amehk, 7:5)  
you-sg. you go (without initial change)

Likely, the practice of putting together forms as exemplified above was at least partially driven by context of the fieldwork. Amehk knew my desire to learn Miami and was aiming to please by giving an answer. That she picked a word or combination of words from the appropriate semantic class(es), however, was nonetheless telling. It gave evidence of her knowing the basic idea of what something meant, though not necessarily its full standard semantics.<sup>110</sup> This was a common pattern.

As noted earlier, Amehk had trouble with the first and second person

<sup>109</sup> The overt pronouns are unnecessary, but may be reflective of contact with English or children's general preference for analytic structures and one-to-one semantic mappings. I return to this discussion later. The use of *niila* 'I/me' to refer to 'you' occurred only in this and one other example at the age of 7:0 (both answers were clearly guesses), and once at the age of 7:7.

<sup>110</sup> For example, the verb form in (95) *ayaayani* has the appropriate suffix but is the “unchanged” form that one would find in irrealis contexts, such as in the highly used phrase *taaniši ayaayani?* ‘Where are you going?’. This unchanged form is far more common than the changed form *iiyaayani*, as the situation where one would say “you are going” occurs infrequently.

plural forms, but was clear about the meaning of *-ciki* (third-person plural) since I began formal elicitation when she was 7:0, by which point she had already acquired the suffix:

- (96) ceeki aweeya niimiciki: **Everybody's dancing.** (correct) (Amehk, 7:0)  
 all someone they dance
- (97) apininkiši ayaaciki: **They're going to bed.** (correct) (Amehk, 7:6)  
 to bed they go
- (98) peekiticiki: **they farted** (correct) (Amehk, 7:7)
- (99) aalaankwiciki: **they're tired** (correct) (Amehk, 7:7)

A closer one-to-one correspondence almost always correlates with earlier acquisition cross-linguistically. Unlike the third-person singular where historical developments have led to multiple endings as discussed above, the plural ending used in this family is almost always *-ciki* (though other forms exist). Hence it is not surprising that Amehk had more facility with the plural form relative to the singular. Such partial paradigm acquisition is common and well attested in other acquisition settings, though the actual internal order of acquisition within a paradigm varies. For example, Schieffelin (1986) reports on Kaluli children between the ages of 20-24 months using various grammatical forms, including first- and second-person (but not third-person) verb forms. Similarly in Quechua and Navajo, the person-marking forms are not all acquired at the same time (Courtney & Saville-Troike, 2002). Mithun (1989) reports on a Mohawk child who at the age of (2:9) had constructed a partial pronominal prefix template, and notes that these prefixes are functionally important.

### 6.4.3 Novel Forms & Usages

#### 6.4.3.1 Filler Syllables

The younger children also say non-standard forms that couldn't have come from

their older family members and must have been created on their own, though this is not necessarily reflective of productive morphology. One interesting example is the word for ‘I peed’. Early in this study, the parents and older children were using the standard form *šekiaani* (or sometimes the equivalent form without initial change: *šikiaani*), but the younger children temporarily used a novel form *šiikitiaani*.

(100)

(N) **šiikitiaani**

(Awan, 5:2; 5:4)

It is not clear exactly where the novel *-tiaani* form comes from, but the father has speculated that it may be influenced by extending the [t] from the third-person *-ta* form. This could indeed be an influence, but the most likely direct source is *peekitiaani* ‘I farted’ which not only ends in *-tiaani* (here, the [ti] is part of the root), but also has the distinction of being frequent as a taboo topic word and also falls in a natural semantic class with the two verbs discussed above.

Awan was using the *-tiaani* form with another verb of elimination *miisi-* ‘to poop’ as well. This suggests possible productivity, but it may have simply been a practice of realizing a given form to sound like some other word that shares part of the phonology, a common practice in early stages of the acquisition of synthesis (Peters 1983:20). Peters 1985 attributes this practice to a “rhythm based” operating principle of acquisition that gets manifested in children’s addition of filler syllables to maintain some perceived rhythmic pattern (1036). Importantly, these basic patterns are generally developed from frequent words or phrases, and the children’s novel forms pattern after frequently occurring segments in their input. I summarize this process below.

Originally, Awan’s novel extension of *miis-* ‘to defecate’ involved two extra

syllables, *-mi-* and *-ti-*:

- (101) **miisimitiaani** (standard: *meesiaani*, or in unchanged form: *miisiaani*)  
 (N) Intended: I pooped (Awan, 4:5; 4:7)

The likely source here is the word *miišimitaakani* ‘sock’ or the verb *miišimitawiaani* ‘I put on socks’, both of which were and continue to be commonly used by this family.

Later, at some point during Spring, 2004, Awan lost the first extra syllable. In Summer, 2004 (age 5:2) he was saying *miisitiaani*, hence using the same novel form as in *šiikitiaani*, which he was also using at that time. Importantly, while the following data is not the best in quality (these are forms that the mother vaguely remembers hearing), it is crucial to this analysis: for ‘he pooped’ and ‘did you poop’, Awan was saying *miisita* and *miisiyani-nko*, respectively, both of which were also forms that he probably often heard others say. Were this a situation of the verb *root* having acquired an extra syllable, one would expect that the extra syllable would also show up with other verb suffixes, i.e. *\*miisitita* and *\*miisitiyani-nko*.

By Fall 2004, Awan had settled on the standard forms. He uttered the correct first person form in an actual conversation, and then give the correct third-person form when I elicited it:

- (102) Awan: **miisiaani** (correct) (Awan, 5:4)

WL: What does that mean?

Awan: **That means ‘I have to go poopie.’**

WL: How do you say the bird pooped?

Awan: **miisita** (correct)



curious pattern emerged elsewhere. For a period of at least one year and possibly considerably longer, Amehk was using *kiila* ‘you’ (and in most cases second person suffixes), to cover both second and third person. The initial clue in my data for this categorization came when she was 6:6 (September, 2003). This was soon after the study had begun, and I assume that she had this categorization for some time before I ever noticed it:

- (107) aašitee niila: **It’s my turn** (correct) (Amehk, 6:6)  
           be one’s turn me
- aašitee kiila: **It’s your turn** (correct)  
           be one’s turn you

At first glance, these translations are both correct. However, soon after these phrases were elicited, she spontaneously remarked that *aašitee kiila*, could also mean ‘it’s his turn’, which it does not. This categorization was made explicit in a short conversation one year later:

- (108) aašitee kiila: **It’s your turn.** (correct) (Amehk, 7:6)
- How about ‘it’s his turn’?: aašitee kiila  
           aašitee awiila
- I thought that meant it’s your turn. How do you say ‘it’s his turn’?: It means the same thing.

A series of ongoing developments when Amehk was 7 years old shows how she had extended this categorization into verbs. The following examples are elicitation where the target sentence was intended to be third-person, but where Amehk’s translation had a second-person suffix and also included the second person pronoun *kiila* ‘you’:

- (109) he farted: **kiila peekitiyani ... actually, kiila peekitiyani-nko**  
           peekitita you you farted you you farted-QP (Amehk, 7:0)

I tried this one again with her two months later:

(110) he farted: **kiila peekiti ... I don't know.** (Amehk, 7:2)  
           peekitita    you    \_\_ fart\_

Interestingly, when the same sentence was elicited two months earlier (ex. (109)), she was giving both a second-person pronoun *and* a verb with a second-person ending. At the age of 7:2, she gave the same pronoun, but not the verb suffix, seeming unsure about what it was. (She did seem sure about the pronoun.)

Example (110) was just one of a larger set that suggested that Amehk was in the process of discerning the person-marking pattern of verbs. The amount and type of input may be playing a significant role here, as they had just taken a shift around this time period. Having noted from the earlier fieldwork data that the younger children had not yet figured out verb suffixation, the family (especially the parents) had started to purposely use more third-person verb forms and sometimes even pointing to the referent. That intentional usage may have helped Amehk realize that *-yani* was not a third-person suffix, although she apparently still thought that *kiila* covered third-person, and furthermore, that a pronoun was obligatory.<sup>111</sup>

To what extent Amehk had an actual EGO/NON-EGO categorization was never fully clear, as her translations exhibited significant variation:

(111) he peed: **kiila šseekita ... kiila šseekitiyani-nko** (Amehk, 7:7)  
           šseekita    you    he peed        you        you pee-QP

Several weeks earlier, she had given standard forms, albeit with some hesitation:

(112) How would you say 'you're peeing'?: **šseekiyani** (correct) (Amehk, 7:6)

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<sup>111</sup> Example (110) is also important in that it strongly suggests an awareness of the synthetic nature of Miami verbs, specifically that Amehk is recognizing the end of the verb as a changeable part. Courtney & Saville-Troike observe that children acquiring Navajo and Quechua isolate the verb stem/root before they acquire the full array of subject inflections, even though the verb root does not stand alone as a word in either of these languages (2002:652). A similar pattern seems to be the case here.

How about ‘he’s peeing’?: *Amehk first thought it was šeekiyani, but then gave the correct answer, šee kita.*

But elsewhere, she still had the second-person pronoun with a third-person verb:

(113) you are pretty: **kiila peekisita** (Amehk, 7:7)  
           peekisiyani       you he is pretty

As I was not aware of this categorization until well after these tokens occurred, I did not systematically investigate what range of meanings Amehk was assigning to Miami verbs with third-person marking at the time. In my questions around this time period, she explained them as “*he \_\_\_\_\_*”, which is correct, but not fully indicative. I realized later that most sentences I had inquired about were from contexts where *he* would be the logical choice, even if the form itself were ambiguous between second- and third-person. As noted earlier, both younger children often gave the best translation for a given context, not every possible translation. There was, however, one instance – a translation from Miami to English at the age of 7:0 – where Amehk had explicitly and without hesitation translated a single word as having this ambiguity:

(114) peekitita: **he farted or you farted** (Amehk, 7:0)  
           (s)he farted

As noted earlier, taboo topics tended to be talked about in Miami, not English. I heard this word several times throughout my time with the children, generally in contexts where the referent was very close. I assume that what was intended by the speaker to be a third-person reference was misinterpreted as an addressee by Amehk, who thought the speaker was talking to and accusing the actor directly.

The opposite misinterpretation of thinking that an addressee was a referent would explain her extension of *aašitee kiila* ‘it’s your turn’ to cover second and third person. This phrase usually occurred in games, where one

family member would point to somebody else and say *aašitee kiila*. Importantly, while Amehk's older family members did sometimes specify whose turn it was by name (e.g., *aašitee Awan*), they rarely said *aašitee awiila* 'it's his turn'. I encouraged them to start using the third-person pronoun *awiila* in game and other contexts after I realized that Amehk was missing that part of the person paradigm.

As for Amehk's conceptualization of first-person singular throughout this period, there is every reason to think that it was standard. She usually used the appropriate suffix in natural speech and under elicitation. As shown earlier, when she added an unnecessary pronoun to an inflected verb, first-person forms always took *niila* 'I, me'. At the age of 6:9, she had explicitly said, "I think *niila* means 'me'". It was not the case that Amehk didn't have a full concept of first, second, and third person; her English pronoun usage was standard throughout this study. Rather, she developed a nonstandard understanding of Miami that had a strong correlation with patterns of how the language was being used.. The following section elaborates on this finding through an analysis of possessive prefix acquisition.

## **6.5 Case Study III – Possessive Prefixes (Nouns)**

### **6.5.1 Possessive Prefixes Overview**

The differentiation of the *niila* and *kiila* pronouns discussed earlier is especially significant in that their phonological forms reflect a larger pattern of noun possession where *n(i)-* refers to first-person, *k(i)-* to second-person, and *a(w)-* to third-person. (In the case of the pronouns, hence *niila* is 'me', *kiila* is 'you', and *awiila* is '(s)he'.) Miami has a whole class of "dependent nouns" – roots which

have a set meaning but that cannot occur without one of these possessive pronominal prefixes.<sup>112</sup> Many commonly referenced objects and ideas, including kinship terms and body part terms, happen to be formed off dependent noun stems in Miami. Furthermore, the same prefixes also occur on self-standing nouns, hence making their occurrence frequent.<sup>113</sup>

Because kinship terms are so commonly used and of special interest to the Baldwins due to the parents' focus on creating and reinforcing interpersonal relationships through the use of these terms, I paid special attention to how the children were understanding them. I examined them over the course of this study both in terms of the prefixes as well as how the kinship terms were being conceptualized semantically. The following chart contains the forms that I most frequently heard the family use around the beginning of this study.

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<sup>112</sup> In some cases beyond the ones described in this section, possession is marked both with one of these prefixes and with an obligatory suffix, but these were not systematically investigated in this study. Studies have suggested that discontinuity in morphemic marking is hard to deal with (MacWhinney, 1978; Peters, 1983; Slobin, 1973), and as with my investigation of verb suffix acquisition, I decided to start with the most simple paradigm first.

<sup>113</sup> In other Algonquian languages, cognate prefixes also mark person on a certain class of verbs that is usually called "the independent paradigm". This paradigm existed in Miami historically, but fell out of use among the more recent speakers and the Baldwins don't use it at all except in a very few fixed expressions.

### Figure 7 – The Most Frequently Used Kinship Terms

The chart below contains vocatives, special forms used when addressing somebody. Vocatives are glossed with an exclamation point.

FATHER	my father: <i>noohsa</i> your father: <i>koohsa</i> father!: <i>noohsa</i> <sup>114</sup>
MOTHER	my mother: <i>ninkyā</i> your mother: <i>kikyā</i> mother!: <i>iinka</i>
ELDER BROTHER	my elder brother: <i>nihseensa</i> your elder brother: <i>kihseensa</i> elder brother!: <i>iihseensa</i>
ELDER SISTER	my elder sister: <i>nimihsa</i> your elder sister: <i>kimihsa</i> elder sister!: <i>nimihsa</i> (form used by this family) (↑ standard vocative form: <i>nimihse</i> )
YOUNGER SIBLING	( <i>first and second person forms rarely used</i> ) younger sibling!: <i>iihši</i>

#### 6.5.2 Possessive Prefix Acquisition

Unlike the first two case studies, where the younger children appeared to be figuring out the pattern and learning several of the forms, both younger children were clearly missing this part of Miami grammar. With non-kinship nouns, both Amehk and Awan generally took what was likely the most commonly heard form for any given dependent noun and mapped the root's basic semantics onto that form. With kinship nouns, Amehk learned only fixed pairs and went through a stage of understanding them in several different ways. This section details the pattern by which this occurred. The examples discussed in this section involve roots that I had previously determined were frequently being used with more than one prefix and in a variety of conversational contexts, as it is from these sets that the pattern is likely first discovered. However, significant

<sup>114</sup> The FATHER terms work different from all others because the vocative form and the first person possessive form are identical. For a period of time, Keemacimwiihkwa started hypercorrecting by addressing her father with *noohse*, which has the standard *-e* vocative inflection. However, that the FATHER terms form an exception likely occurred historically because *noohse* already exists as the vocative form meaning 'my grandchild!'.

additional evidence, including elicitations of less commonly used forms, supports the conclusions I make here.

The earliest substantial evidence comes from a game of *paapankamwa iilweeta* 'Fox says' played in October, 2003 (Amehk, 6:7; Awan, 4:5) and similar activities around the time. In the game referenced here, I solicited the help of Ciinkwia, whose Miami proficiency was far higher than my own. As *paapankamwa*, he gave a variety of commands to his younger siblings in Miami along the lines of "touch your head", "touch your eye", etc. When he started introducing commands such as "touch *my* head", Amehk and Awan first continued in the same pattern as before where they were touching their own body parts, only realizing that they were supposed to be doing something different after Ciinkwia pointed to himself. Only with constant gesture reinforcement such as this were Amehk and Awan able to appropriately respond to other similar tokens throughout this game.

One pair of dependent nouns that came up in that game was the HAND terms. They frequently appear in phrases like *kinehki miililo* 'give me your hand' (meaning "let me hold your hand for safety reasons", not "help me"), and I inquired about them regularly over the entire period of this study, as they also became a component of the language games that characterized the second half of this study. When elicited on December 30, 2003, Amehk and Awan both translated *kinehki* 'your hand' as "**hand**" (Amehk, 6:9; Awan, 4:7). However, Amehk later seemed to be figuring out that something was different about the HAND terms and may have been applying a level of metalinguistic logic to discerning the meanings, perhaps because I had asked her about HAND words so many times:

(115) kinehki: **hand** (Amehk, 7:0)  
your hand

ninehki: **my hand**  
my hand

anehki: **our hand???**  
his/her hand

*Older brother Ciinkwia entered the room told Amehk that anehki means 'his or her hand.'*

If *ninehki* means 'my hand', what do you think *kinehki* means?: **your hand**

But the correct differentiation of *ninehki* and *kinehki* appears to be one that she was basing solely on having learned these forms as fixed collocations. On the same day, Amehk did not have the same confidence with the pair *niili/kiili* 'my navel/your navel', even though this was also a commonly heard pair, often occurring in the game alluded to earlier where the father pointed to his own body part, said the first-person form, and then pointed to the same body part on Amehk and said the second-person form:

(116) niili: *no response* (Amehk, 7:0)  
my navel

kiili: **belly** (thought of as "belly", not "belly button", as confirmed later)  
your navel

With prompting, however, Amehk was sometimes able to discern the morpheme's meaning:

(117) kiilihsa: **hair ... my hair** (Amehk, 7:7)  
your hair

Ciinkwia: **ki- ... ki- ...** (prompting Amehk)

Amehk: **Your hair.** (correct)

Awan also exhibited the pattern where full forms were unanalyzed. One day, he first told me the term *kiinšikwa* meant 'eye', and then said, "That means 'close eyes'", likely associating the word with some specific usage (Awan, 4:7).

Interestingly, the answer he gave here is the plural form of the dependent *root* (*-hkiinšikwi* ‘eye’), not a word in itself. It was probably Awan’s own truncated form. This term likely derived from *kihkiinšikwa* ‘your eyes’, and I am guessing that it frequently occurred in the context “close your eyes”, though this is not a phrase that I actually heard.

Similarly, with the HAND terms, Awan was unsure of the pattern several months after *paapankamwa iilweeta*:

(118) ninehki: **hand** (Awan, 5:1)  
my hand

kinehki: *no response*  
your hand

Based on how he reacted to commands that involved HAND words, Awan clearly knew that *kinehki* had something to do with HAND despite his non-response above. (He himself has said that *kinehki* means ‘hand’ on several earlier occasions.) In this case, it is possible that with the juxtaposition of the elicited forms, he had already said that one of the words meant “hand”, and then it didn’t make sense to say that the other word meant the same thing. Regardless, it was clear from this and many other examples that he had not acquired the standard paradigm of possessive prefixes.

### 6.5.3 Novel Usages of Kinship Terms

A curious pattern emerged within the kinship term portion of this investigation. When presented as pairs (e.g., *ninkya-kikya*, *noohsa-koohsa*), Amehk began correctly translating the MOTHER and FATHER forms at the age of 7:0. Prior to that point, she had been clear in explaining to me that they referred to the same person but were used differently:

(119) noohsa: **dad**  
my father

(Amehk, 6:8)

koohsa: '**Other people say that.**'  
your father

Likewise with the MOTHER terms, Amehk had not known what the difference was at the beginning of this study, noting only, for example, that some people called her mother *kikya*, but that she did not. In an effort to help her learn the difference, Amehk's father told her outright (in English) that *ninkya* means 'my mother' and *kikya* 'your mother' around the age of 6:11. That sort of reinforcement helped Amehk, at least on a conscious level of knowing what a word meant. At the age of 7:0, she was finally able to correctly translate the following pairs when they were presented as sets:

(120) noohsa, koohsa – Do you know the difference?: **my dad and your dad**  
(Amehk, 7:0)

How about ninkya and kikya?: **my mom and your mom** (all correct)

Upon further questioning, she displayed a similar understanding seven months later:

(121) kikya: **mom**  
your mother (Amehk, 7:7)

Whose mom?: **your mom** (correct)

How about ninkya?: **my mom** (correct)

Presenting the words as pairs and juxtaposing the questions probably gave a clue as to the correct answer. Conversely, when I elicited single forms or otherwise elicited knowledge about kinship terms through means other than presentation as fixed pairs, Amehk either gave a nonstandard answer or no answer at all. As shown in the examples given below, Amehk wasn't able to translate the FATHER terms beyond the fixed pair that she already knew and still gave a non-

standard explanation for *kikya* ‘your mother’:

(122) *kikya* means I’m calling her, like where she is. (Amehk, 7:2)  
           your mother

(123) You say *iinka* when you’re talking to her, and *kikya* when you’re  
           mom!           talking about her.           your mother (Amehk, 7:6)

Example (121) suggests a knowledge of certain fixed forms but not of the larger paradigm. The non-standard semantics in example (122) clearly comes from how the form *kikya* is used within the household. Two expressions are especially common: *kikya koocimi* ‘ask your mother’ and *taanaha kikya?* ‘Where’s your mother?’, and she appears to have analyzed that form as a referential term.

The productive morphology of some pairs such as *ninkya/kikya* ‘my mother/your mother’ is masked due to their phonological differences beyond the initial consonant. In this pair, the initial *n-* in *ninkya* caused the [k] to become prenasalized and voiced to yield [nɪŋja] – hence very different from *kikya* [kɪkja]. However, even with other pairs where allomorphy doesn’t render such complications, neither Amehk nor Awan had discerned the basic pattern.

A different pattern emerged with *nimihsa/kimihsa* ‘my older sister’/‘your older sister’. Again, both younger children had not analyzed the internal morphology and did not know the standard semantics of these words. Instead, they were consistently used and translated as ‘big sister’/‘little sister’ through the first half of this study:

(124) nimihsa: **big sister** (Amehk, 6:9; 6:10; 7:0; 7:2)  
           my older sister

kimihsa: **little sister**  
           your older sister

... **nimihsa. That means ‘big sister.’** (Amehk, 7:6)

(125) nimihsa: **big sister**  
my older sister

(Awan, 4:9)

kimihsa: **little sister**  
your older sister

The answers given by Awan in example (125) came just a few minutes after he had overheard Amehk translating the same pair.<sup>115</sup> As such, it is unclear if he really understood this pair as he translated them here, but it was just one of many examples where either of the two picked up language practices from the other one. I believe he had the same understanding of the term as Amehk did.

While the general point that they missed the prefixes is clear, this pattern is notable in that it reflects a combination of cognitive language acquisition principles as well a strong correlation to how the language was being used.

The only person ever referred to as *kimihsa* was Keemaacimwiihkwa, who is the oldest sibling in the family. In this case, the younger children seem to have mapped a pattern onto a pair of words by comparison to another pair: *iihseensa* 'older brother!' and *iihši* 'younger sibling!' Both younger children had initially called Ciinkwia *iihši*, as this was the form that they had picked up from Keemaacimwiihkwa, who used this term to address Ciinkwia because he actually is her younger sibling.

The parents initially let this go, but right around the time this study began, they started teaching the younger children that they were supposed to address Ciinkwia as *iihseensa* 'younger sibling!' and Keemaacimwiihkwa as *nimihsa* 'older sister!' Here, the lack of parallelism in the paradigm appears to have fostered their confusion. OLDER BROTHER and OLDER SISTER are

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<sup>115</sup> This example occurred on February 5, 2004 and corresponds to the second time I had elicited this pair of words from Amehk (then age 6:10).

different words in Miami and gender is usually differentiated in Miami kinship terms, but a single set of YOUNGER SIBLING terms refers to both genders. As a Miami cultural convention is to call young children by their given names, the only person in the family who was supposed to be addressed as *iihši* was Ciinkwia, who happened to be a younger brother. At the time, Amehk had a narrowed semantics for *iihši*:

(126) *iihši* is ‘little brother’ (Amehk, 6:7)  
younger sibling!

(127) *iihši* means ‘little brother’ (Amehk, 6:9)  
younger sibling!

Around the same time, Amehk often laughed if I said I called my own younger sister *iihši*. Amehk told me explicitly that I couldn’t do that, and that I should call my younger sister *kimihsa*.<sup>116</sup>

Ironically, even though they said that *nimihsa* means ‘big sister’, Amehk and Awan were usually calling their older sister *kimihsa* in natural speech through the first half of this study. They used it as a name:

(128) **Kimihsa and Amehk wants one** [a piece of dried fruit]. (Awan, 4:5)

(129) **That’s why Kimihsa and Hannah have some.** (Amehk, 7:0)  
(As noted earlier in section 3.5.1, Amehk used “why” to mean “because”)

That they picked up on this particular form as a name is not surprising; the parents speak about Keemaacimwiihkwa to the other children and refer to her as *kimihsa* ‘your older sister’. What is especially interesting, however, is that when I inquired as to how they would refer to their older sister, the younger children both told me (separately) that they would call her *nimihsa* – and

<sup>116</sup> Around Summer 2004, Amehk’s older siblings started sometimes addressing her as *iihši* and at that point, she figured out that it was a general term for younger sibling. That fall, she told me “[My older brother] calls me *iihši*. That means younger brother and younger sister” (Amehk, 7:6). However, this particular form doesn’t have a possessive prefix and learning its standard semantics was not relevant to her understanding of possessive prefixes.

sometimes, they did. They may have intellectually known that *nimihsa* was the more appropriate form, but there was a strong, established pattern within this family where *Kimihsa* had become a proper name. These and other inconsistencies in how they understood a given word's semantics may have made it even harder for them to decipher the pattern of possessive prefixes on these nouns.

### ***6.6 The First Two Years – Summary***

As with other cases of child language acquisition as reported on in the literature, the one covered here exhibited a great deal of internal variability, with forms and their semantics sometimes varying from one month to the next. The general trend that emerged from these case studies and other areas that were concurrently investigated was that the younger children were figuring out the morphology of Miami following general principles, and that their understanding was influenced by the specific patterns of how words were used in their environments.

Seemingly acquired in terms of its pattern was the system of marking plural on nouns. Halfway through this study, the children had not fully acquired the standard forms and had moments of uncertainty, but it was clear that they were on track to figure out what they didn't already know. With verb suffixes, the pattern was that again, they had acquired the principle of synthesis and specifically of using suffixes to mark person and number, but they were often unsure about specific morphemes. Finally, with possessive prefixes on nouns, while they had memorized several fixed collocations, they appeared to have not learned the underlying template, despite the family's efforts to use a variety of

forms that would facilitate its acquisition.

Although OPs predict that the possessive prefixes would be acquired after the other two areas reported on in this chapter, their functional load is high and it was surprising that the younger children had not learned them at all. Findings from two other situations in related languages suggest that limited input was the key problem. A relevant situation occurs in Mitchif. Though a mixed language in which the vast majority of nouns are in French, Mitchif's kinship terms are in Cree and have possessive pronominal prefixes cognate to those of Miami (Bakker, 1997:108). Heather Souter reports that some children learning Mitchif in situations of language reclamation also appear to be parsing possessed kinship terms as having a fixed non-possessed semantics, generally where "your [*kinship term*]" has become "[*kinship term*]" (personal communication, 2004). Lindsay Jones reports a similar situation for children acquiring Potawatomi in situations of limited input, except that in the cases she observed, the first-person singular form had been reanalyzed as the basic word (personal communication, 2004).

From these trends emerged what became a thesis of this study – namely, that in a situation of language reclamation in a situation of incomplete input such as this one, simply using the language in the home is not enough to facilitate language acquisition. In response to this tentative conclusion, I decided to create some games with the help of Karen and Daryl to help the children with their acquisition. We initially focused on verb suffixes and on noun prefixes. These games and their results are discussed next in Chapter 7.

## Chapter 7 – On Teaching & Language Development

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Throughout Fall 2005, the children's mother and I developed teaching exercises that revolved around identification of morphology and were designed to illustrate a given pattern/paradigm. The initial pattern that emerged was that the games were successful in remedying problem areas as identified earlier in the study, but that the more significant result was that they prompted a high level of interest in the language and an eagerness to learn and use more of it. This chapter details a subset of those games and discusses their results and implications.

### *7.1 Summary of Games*

As discussed in Chapter 4, the younger children were already establishing a pattern wherein games (and play more generally) were Miami domains. Given this trend, playing games became an obvious strategy of language teaching; we wanted it to be fun. Also around this point, the younger children were learning to read, and there was some desire to integrate a written component into the games we designed for learning Miami as a way to reinforce their developing literacy skills.

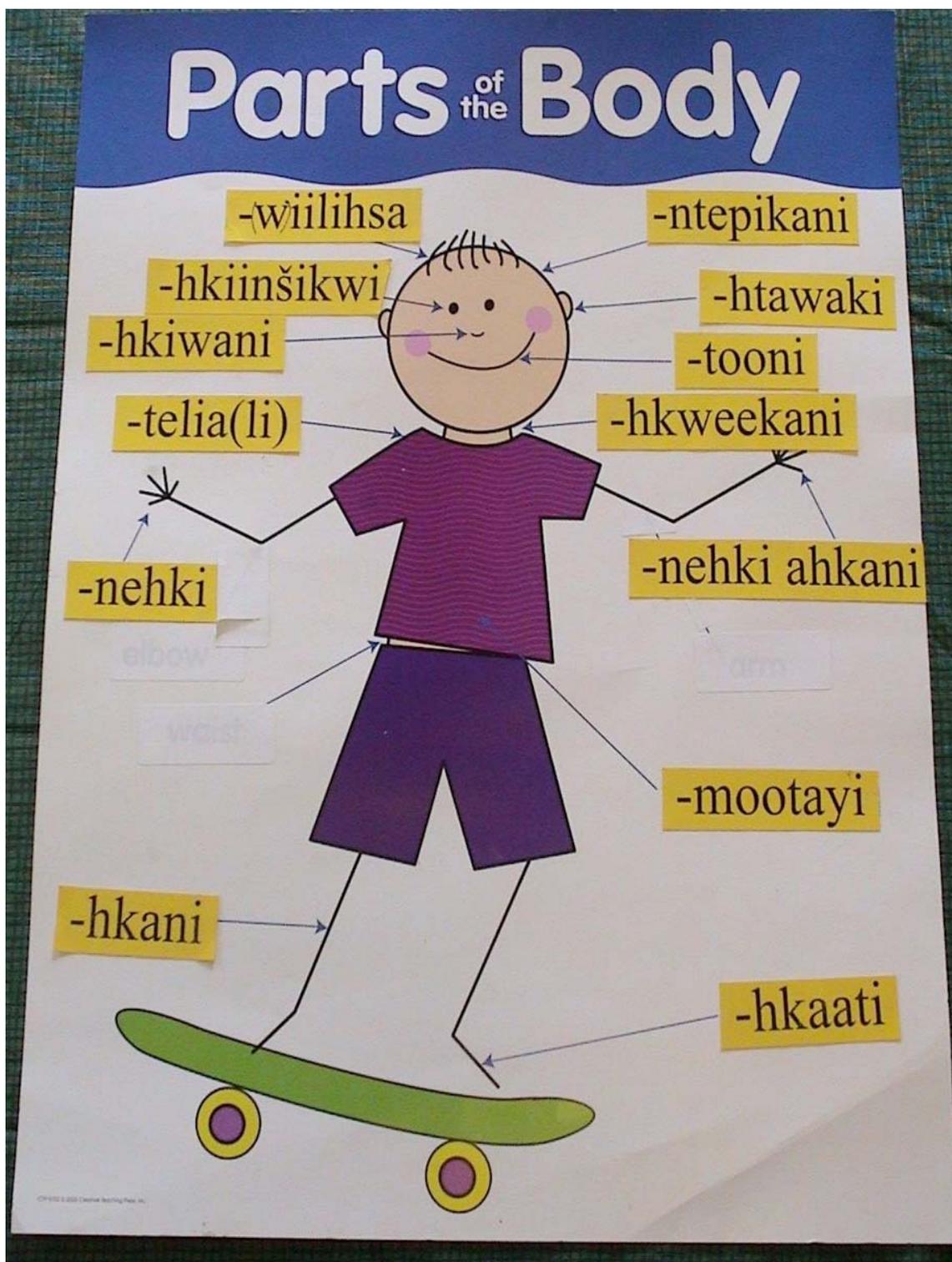
For this reason, Karen and I initially created two games, both of which involved matching. One game involved adding prefixes to roots in order to make whole forms. The other involved matching whole forms, and was meant to emphasize that the prefixes did not stand alone. Both games are described below.

The first game we created was based on a poster that I had found at a teacher store and that in its original form was meant to be used to learn body

part words in English. Karen and I modified it so that the parts of the body (all of which are bound stems in Miami) were labeled on the poster in Miami, and the game involved attaching the appropriate possessive prefix using a variety of schemes. One person would, for example, give a command (in Miami) to touch, tickle, or hit *my hand, your hand, his hand* ('his' refers to the figure in the poster), etc. The other person would receive a point for following the command appropriately. We created cards that had the prefixes (*ni-* 'my', *ki-* 'your', and *a-* 'his/her'), the idea being that they would literally be placed on the poster so as to create a full word using the stems that were already there.

The initial game was designed to be relatively straightforward, but even it had three minor complications. One, stops become voiced and prenasalized when preceded by *ni-* 'my' and the prefix itself appears as *nin-*. Second, one stem (*-telia* 'shoulder') is grammatically animate and gets used with different verb forms from all of the other words (e.g., touch *him* instead of touch *it*). Third, we also slowly incorporated body parts not shown on the poster into the game, thus introducing new vocabulary.

Image 5 – Body Part Game



(In the game, small cards reading “ni”, “ki”, and “a” (not shown here) are attached to the appropriate stems on the poster, hence creating full words.)

The second game was the first of two games that involved matching flashcards of Miami (possessed) nouns with their appropriate English glosses. For example, the card “nimaalhsi” was to be matched with “my knife”. The Miami words were created from 10 noun stems combined in different ways with the possessive prefixes. (Three of those stems also exist as a full form by themselves.) Importantly, while there are 33 possible combinations using these noun stems and prefixes, only 25 pairs were included in the game. The intent was to use the remaining 8 as test tokens later.

The chart below gives the pairs used in this game:

**Figure 8 – Forms Used in Noun Matching Game Level I**

	Miami stem	gloss	1st singular 'my'	2nd singular 'your'	3rd singular 'his or her'	not possessed
(1)	-nehki	HAND	<b>ninehki</b> my hand	<b>kinehki</b> your hand	<i>anehki</i> his hand or her hand	
(2)	-kya	MOTHER	<b>ninkya</b> my mother	<i>kikya</i> your mother	<b>akiili</b> his mother or her mother	
(3)	-oohsa	FATHER	<b>noohsa</b> my father	<b>koohsa</b> your father	<b>oohsali</b> her father or his father	
(4)	maalhsi	KNIFE	<b>nimaalhsi</b> my knife	<b>kimaalhsi</b> your knife	<i>amaalhsi</i> his knife or her knife	<b>maalhsi</b> knife
(5)	-ilpita (-ilpití is 'tooth')	TEETH	<b>niipita</b> my teeth	<b>kiipita</b> your teeth	<i>awiipita</i> his teeth or her teeth	
(6)	-teehi	HEART	<b>ninteehi</b> my heart	<b>kiteehi</b> your heart	<b>ateehi</b> her heart or his heart	
(7)	mahkisina (mahkisini is 'shoe')	SHOES	<b>nimahkisena</b> my shoes	<b>kimahkisena</b> your shoes	<i>amahkisena</i> his shoes or her shoes	<b>mahkisina</b> shoes
(8)	-taya	PET	<b>nintaya</b> my pet	<b>kitaya</b> your pet	<b>atayali</b> his pet or her pet	
(9)	-illawi	FOOD	<b>niilawi</b> my food	<b>kiilawi</b> your food	<b>awiilawi</b> his food or her food	
(10)	naapinaakani	COAT	<b>ninaapinaakani</b> my coat	<i>kinaapinaakani</i> your coat	<i>anaapinaakani</i> her coat or his coat	<i>naapinaakani</i> coat

(**Boldfaced** forms are those that appeared on the Miami set of flashcards; *italicized* forms are those that were left out. The English set of flashcards were worded with the glosses as given on this chart.)

(The circled forms (A)-(D) are referenced in the discussion below.)

## 7.2 *Results*

### 7.2.1 **Initial Results**

The games were successful in helping the younger children acquire the pattern, and they caught on very quickly. This was striking, given that neither Amehk nor Awan had understood the pattern before, even when it was explicitly explained to them. Though their earlier acquisition may have been building up to their acquiring the possessive prefixes, actually applying those prefixes in the games marked the turning point.

Additionally, Karen notes that Amehk has always been a very visual learner. It is noteworthy that these games represented the first time the prefix paradigm was introduced to her in written form, and this new medium of presentation may have been the key variable in why these games were successful. The pattern clicked for Amehk on October 25, 2005 (age 8:7) after a few rounds of game-playing. Saying “ohhhh!”, she suddenly realized what it was. From that point, the paradigm was clear for her. She said the following during a game the next day:

- (130) looking through her set of cards to find the correct match to the card her brother had placed on the table:

Amehk: “I already know what it is! Because the [nʌ] stands for ‘my’. The [kʌ] stands for ‘your’.”

Awan, though he expressed no similar epiphany, quickly became proficient at the games as well:

- (131) From Karen (by e-mail): “Amehk did very well as usual [playing a different but similar matching game] and Awan did well also, only missing one the entire game.” (November 9, 2005, approximately two weeks after the games were first introduced)

### 7.2.2 After Two Months

The younger children played both of these games most days as part of their home-schooling from late October to early December, 2005. After two months, I followed up with them, eliciting a variety of forms and especially focusing on those that had been left out of the games. I found that their understanding of these and other forms with the same morphemes had increased significantly.

Their knowledge of the pattern was best demonstrated through different forms:

(132) niihkana is “my friend”. What do you think “your friend” is?

Amehk: **kiihkana** (correct) (Amehk, 8:9)

(133) nihkoni means “my liver”. ahkoni means “his liver” or “her liver”. What about kihkoni? **your liver** (Amehk, 8:9)

I was unable to systematically try out every test token during this visit, as it was a holiday period (late December, 2005 to early January, 2006) and the mood was not appropriate for elicitation. I did, however, ask several questions that were appropriate to contexts that naturally arose in our interactions. Of those, I have chosen four specific examples of tokens to illustrate the sorts of changes that were occurring. These four are circled and labeled (a)-(d) in Figure 8, and are discussed below.

#### 7.2.2.1 On -kya ‘mother’ (A)

*When we first played the game:*

(134) for *kikya* ‘your mother’, Awan (then age 6:5) first said “my mom” (incorrect) – and then picked “his mother” (also incorrect)

(See Section 6.5.3 for several more nonstandard kinship forms given by Amehk.)

*Two months later:*

They were able to translate these and other kinship terms correctly and use them appropriately in natural conversation.

**7.2.2.2 On -nehki 'hand' (B)**

The HAND words were included in both of these games, and were of special interest in that they had come up often in elicitation. As noted earlier, the younger children were sometimes able to correctly translate the first- and second- person forms when they were presented as a pair, but they clearly had not been understanding the internal morphology of those forms.

*When we first played the game:*

- (135) for "your hand" in the matching game, Amehk (then age 8:7) first chose *ninehki* 'my hand'
- (136) when I asked Awan about *anehki* 'his/her hand' in the other game, he first said 'your hand', then 'my hand', and finally 'his hand'. He appeared to be guessing.

*Two months later:*

Both younger children were getting all forms correct in the games. Amehk once (in my presence) gave the following direction to her younger brother:

- (137) We were pointing to things and asking each other what they were in Miami. I pointed to Amehk's hand (hence 'her hand') and asked Awan *keetwili* 'what is it?'. He didn't answer right away and Amehk told him "anehki". (correct) She was very clear about the pattern.

**7.2.2.3 On -iipita 'teeth' (C)**

This stem was included in the game because it was very frequently used by the parents, but almost always in a fixed phrase *kiipita piiwahanto* 'brush your teeth'. I had never heard the first or third person forms used in natural conversation.

*When we first played the game:*

Both younger children initially thought that *kiipita* ‘your teeth’ simply meant “teeth”. Upon presentation as a pattern, Amehk was able to correctly translate the first and second person forms, but did not recognize *awiipita* ‘his teeth’.

*Two months later:*

Amehk still needed a bit of reminding, but clearly knew the pattern. In the following example, she appears to have forgotten the root itself, not the prefixal system:

(138) *awiipita*: **awiipita? I forget that one.**  
his/her teeth

*niipita*: **my teeth** (correct) (Amehk, 8:9)  
my teeth

Amehk went on to comment: “*kiipita is your teeth*” (a correct statement)

How about *awiipita*?: **his or her teeth** (correct)  
his/her teeth

**7.2.2.4 On *naapinaakani* ‘shirt’ (D)**

This word was included in the game because it was different from all of the rest in that it happens to begin with *n-* and also is a free standing word. Clothing terms and items similarly held on one’s person usually exist as free forms in Miami, but can also take the possessive prefixes. (The other two such examples included in this game were *maalhsi* ‘knife’ and *mahkisena* ‘shoes’.) I wondered if they would treat this one differently and might misparse the beginning of the word as a first-person prefix.

Unfortunately SHIRT ended up not providing a test because of an error in designing the game. The only form that had the SHIRT lexeme was *ninaapinaakani* ‘my coat’. Both children correctly matched this pair, but doing so didn’t require an understanding of internal morphology. However, the general

prediction referenced above was borne out elsewhere. Amehk became so good at identifying the forms that she started sometimes overapplying them:

- (139) in reference to the word *niimita* '(s)he is dancing', Amehk was (incorrectly) explaining to me that it means "I'm dancing, and the [nʌ] means 'I'" (Amehk, 8:9)

(*niimi-* is the root, and *-ta* is clearly third person. Amehk had even translated this exact form correctly before.)

This pattern, however, was short lived. To the best of my knowledge, this sort of reanalysis never posed any real problem, and she stopped doing it later.

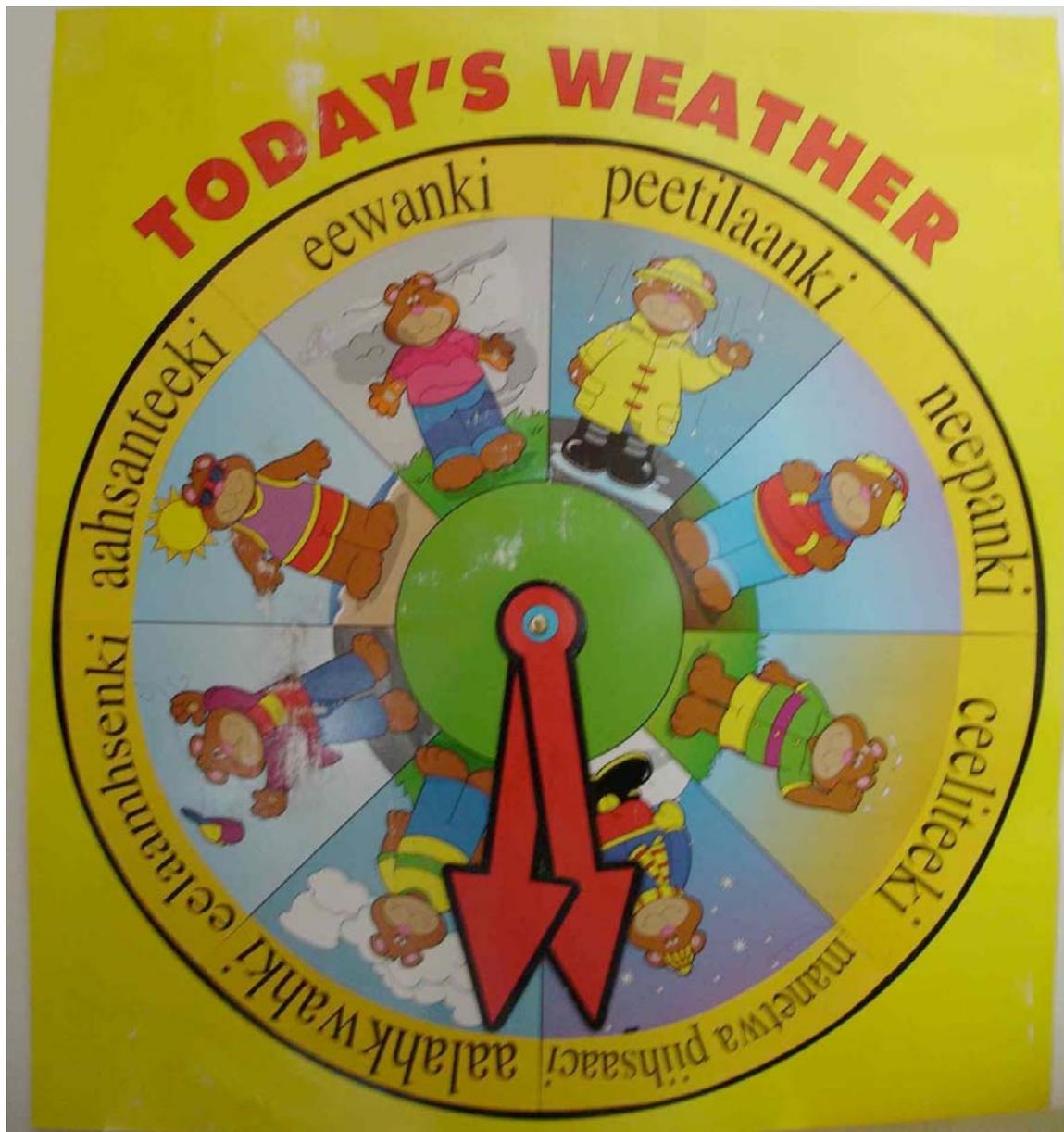
In December 2005, I introduced a more difficult possession game. This one included nouns that take a possessive theme suffix in addition to the prefix, and also some that exhibit vowel changes due to phonological rules. This is one that I created offsite and sent to the family, and I was not there to assess the children's before-and-after knowledge. However, by that point, it was clear that they had already deciphered the basic pattern. This second game was primarily intended to introduce some new vocabulary and also to provide a new game, as by that point, I was worried that they would tire of the original one and that it would get too easy.

This began a pattern of creating fun language exercises to aid the younger children's language development. Around the time that the noun prefix games were being introduced, the parents also created a matching game for verb suffixes in the transitive animate paradigm. Transitive animate verbs are those that mark animate subjects acting on animate objects, their suffixes marking relationships such as "I to him", "he to me", "I to you-plural", "They to me", and so on. This is a paradigm that even the parents and older children had trouble remembering, as the number of forms is comparatively large and several of them

have notable allomorphy driven by the phonological shape of the verb stem. Around this time, the younger children surpassed my knowledge of verbal morphology and started to explain Miami words to me using descriptions such as “we exclusive see them”.

In Spring 2006, these games were augmented by two additional daily school activities. One involved a weather chart in the shape of a clock that had been labeled with Miami weather terms. The chart had arrows (as with the hands of a clock) that the children would manipulate every day so as to reflect that day’s weather.

Image 6 – Weather Chart Used in School



The other activity involved a similar chart with moveable hands, in this case with the chart being an actual clock image. Karen reports that they practiced telling time in Miami, moving the hands to point to different times and then going through a series of exercises that involved actually saying the time aloud.

It was also around this point that the children started regularly looking words up in the Miami dictionary. Amehk noted that some entries had “a line at

the end” (i.e., a hyphen), and seemed fully aware that the dictionary largely listed roots, to which affixes such as the ones she already knew would need to be added. Awan, however, was still writing roots as if they were whole words, but his interest in using the dictionary and wanting to learn new words was nonetheless striking.

### **7.3 Social Implications**

#### **7.3.1 Early Implications**

I had thought that the children would tire of them, and that at best, the games would be successful in teaching morphology and vocabulary. However, my expectations were far surpassed. The larger significance of the games was social. Beyond helping the children acquire grammatical patterns, the games gave a higher sense of prestige to the Miami language and made learning the language more fun.

Soon after they were introduced, the games became one of the younger children’s favorite school activities. Karen reports that during a period when Amehk was sick and they were skipping most of the lessons for her home-schooling, she still insisted on playing the games. As with their older siblings, who had had many opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge of the Miami language, games took on a similar role for the younger children. It is a finding of this study that success in language games and exercises can be a source of pride as indicated in the example below:

- (140) Amehk: “I am so good at this!” (This was uttered when she was doing well in the prefix-body part root matching game and correctly answered a question her father had asked about a form that wasn’t in the game itself)

Similarly, both children give a positive assessment of the Miami teaching

they were being exposed to. What follows is an excerpt from a discussion on January 4, 2006 in which I asked the younger children for their opinions and thoughts about Miami language games:

*Amehk had just commented that she liked the card game the best*

- [1] Awan: “Well, I like to play that game, too. It’s really fun because you gotta match the cards.”
- [2] Amehk: “And I like the body game.”
- [3] WL: “Which game do you think is harder or are they the same difficulty?”
- [4] Amehk: “Harder is that card game and the easiest is the other one [the game with the body parts].”
- [5] Awan: “The body one is easy but the card one is hard.”

Later in that same discussion, they suggested that we make a flashcard-based color game and gave me input as to what it would look like and how it would be played.

### 7.3.2 Long-Term Results

I found four months later in March, 2006 that the children were still playing these games. As expected, their knowledge was continuing to get stronger. Awan’s knowledge, however, was still variable, but as he would sometimes return to thinking of inflected forms as if they didn’t have person marking. The following examples are representative.

- (141) Awan was holding a rabbit’s foot and I, in an effort to determine whether he could say “his foot”, said *waapanswa* ...

Awan quickly chimed in with **akaati** (correct) (Awan, 6:10)

- (142) What does nipi mean? **water** (correct) (Awan, 6:10)

How about niipi? **teeth** (presumably thinking of *niipita* ‘my teeth’)  
my arrow

Nevertheless, the social benefits of the games never wavered.

The pattern that developed in Fall, 2005 continued through the end of this study. While games and school exercises varied, one general pattern was that the children were increasingly writing stories in Miami (using as many Miami words as possible), and were very, very excited about these lessons. In Fall, 2007, Amehk (10:10) wrote the following note to her father on his birthday, which he saved and later shared with me:

(143) miami class is the best class I ever had in miami university. I am learning a lot from noohsa. he is funny and he is fun. he teaches a lot of miaamia to me and im learning a lot.

#### ***7.4 The Role of Teaching in Language Reclamation***

Part of the overt prestige associated with world languages comes from their grammar and literature being taught in schools and similarly recognized by mainstream institutions. Endangered languages, conversely, do not normally have this type of social support. Even if one were in a situation of full immersion in an endangered language and could hypothetically fully acquire it without special intervention, socialization to think of the language positively is necessary. Teaching, by framing these languages as something worthy of school time, is one means of awarding prestige to these languages. For the children in this family, it also firmly contributes to their socialization to be teachers of the language at tribal events and elsewhere. In addition to the note given above, Amehk wrote another note to her father in which she acknowledged her own role as a teacher of the language.

(144) to. noohsa

from. amehkhoonsa

some goats know miaamia but if they don't we have to teach them. and sometimes they grow up learning miaamia and that is good. miaamia is fun and sometime easy and hard

Amehk expressed a very valuable insight. Miami is fun and growing up learning it is a good thing. Perhaps as she gets older, she will become increasingly aware of why that it is so and how lucky she and her siblings are. I examine what that future might look like in the next chapter, and also offer some conclusions that I came to at the end of this study.

## Part III – Looking to the Future

and the implications of this story

## Chapter 8 – Conclusions, Predictions, & Implications

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### *8.1 Summary of the Baldwins' Success*

Implicit in any situation of language revitalization or reclamation is the issue of *why*, both with respect to the original instigation of such an effort as well as to the goals of the said effort. A secondary issue involves whether the said effort has been successful. The Baldwins' language reclamation process has been successful – with “success”, in this case, being conceptualized from the goals of the Baldwin family.

As noted earlier, Daryl has commented that he wants his children to have brains that are “wired” with Miami but believes that actually speaking it fluently at this stage of the Miami awakening process may not be realistic. Reasonable proficiency and cultural knowledge, however, are clearly being attained. Importantly, while Daryl may have been the instigator, awakening the language has since become a goal of all four older members of the family – increasingly of the younger children as well. They have undergone language shift from English only to bilingualism in English and Miami.

Although the term “language shift” is more commonly used to describe a context of a given indigenous group shifting away from their traditional language toward increased usage of a language of a colonizing people, there is no inherent directionality to the process. Here, there is a shift toward the heritage language, a shift that seems remarkable given the extent to which the Miami language was thought to be lost. It is a special story because the family is so committed and has created such a positive and nurturing environment for

language reclamation. But again, calling the story of Miami language reclamation “remarkable” is partially motivated by an outsiders’ perspective and a larger societal context in which the story wasn’t supposed to happen. In the point of view of the Baldwin children, particularly the younger ones, that their family speaks Miami is just the way it is. They have never experienced anything different.

It is important to consider why languages such as Miami went out of use in the first place. To say that it was because people stopped speaking them is true, but misses the larger point of why that occurred. Daryl notes that he has spoken to several elders about the language. As it turns out, several of those elders had wanted to learn the language as children and asked their own elders to teach it to them. In every single case, they were denied. The current elders’ parents were the generation who went to federal boarding schools, where use of the Miami language was banned; the children going through those schools were socialized to think of their languages as inferior. The Baldwins have counteracted that history by bringing the language back into the home, back into school, and back into Miami life.

## ***8.2 Predictions on Future Language Development***

Predictions based on the current language practices of the family may be incorrect because the proficiency of the older family members (especially Daryl) continues to increase all the time. That noted, the most likely scenario is that Amehk and Awan’s language input will increase. I predict they will continue to receive the same or higher levels of “natural” input in their home, and will continue to formally study Miami as part of their home-schooling, as these are

the trends that surfaced during this study. Assuming this scenario, it is likely that Amehk and Awan will acquire the main structures of the language. As already shown, the input with some supplemental teaching is sufficient for a number of grammatical morphemes to be learned, though it is likely that some of the less common ones may not be learned.

One point not yet discussed is that the older family members tend to make a lot of “errors” and provide probabilistic input – that is, they use grammatical morphemes in inconsistent ways, sometimes because they haven’t settled on a form; they are always learning more language themselves. Though seemingly an issue, recent scholarship suggests that this may not be a problem. Singleton & Newport (2004) present data on the American Sign Language (ASL) acquisition of Simon, a child whose only language exposure was from non-native ASL speakers. They evaluate a number of ASL morphemes in terms of how often they are correctly used in obligatory contexts, and compare the data to other ASL speakers. While Simon’s parents have probabilistic usage (i.e. their errors are not consistent), Simon has created something much more regular. This study suggests that children will re-create rules even without perfect input. Of course in Amehk and Awan’s case, they are also going to be formally studying the language, and can thus supplement their language knowledge in that way.

While unlikely, a question occasionally posed during this study was “What would happen if the input in Miami were to completely stop now?” This would be the worst case scenario. It is noted that young children can be fairly fluent speakers of a heritage language and then cease to be able to speak it after going to school (Hinton, 2001a). Even within the time period described in this study, both Amehk and Awan forgot several lexical items – clearly knowing

certain words at one point, and then not recognizing them several months later. Thus it is very important that the language continue to be used, and that the children continue to be socialized to speak it. When Amehk was not able to give the plural form for 'horses' under elicitation, she remarked, "I haven't used it enough yet" (age 7:7), herself recognizing the importance of repeated use. The wisdom behind Amehk's statement is self-evident.

### ***8.3 Theoretical Implications***

In Chapter 1, I framed the story of the Baldwins and the awakening of the Miami language as one that could contribute to endangered language theory. Clearly, by showing that "extinct" languages are not always extinct, their story shows that sleeping languages must be recognized as a category in their own right – not just because they can hypothetically be learned and used, but because they sometimes actually are. It is my hope that this dissertation has already shown this to be true through its narrative and examples. The question remains, however, as to what it is that has allowed this level of language reclamation to happen in the Baldwin home. This section offers my insights into that issue.

An increasing body of scholarship points to a series of social factors that are thought to be necessary for language reclamation to occur. The well known Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale of Fishman (1991, 2001b) and associated theory of reversing language shift posit that increasing the viability of a language lies primarily in increasing its domains of use. Key domains include the home, school, and government. To the extent that it is possible to do so, the Baldwins have created many domains for the language, including ones with high social prestige such as university events.

Fishman further notes (2001b:21) that specific challenges in reversing language shift include that traditional culture is usually lost along with a language, and that there may not be a place for the language to come back into. However, he argues that there is a counter problem in that some people see language reclamation as “social mobility contraindicated, parochial and antimodern” (ibid). Again, the Baldwins have effectively dealt with both of these issues. They have reintroduced aspects of traditional culture and belief systems into their daily lives, and the parents make an explicit point to create awareness of what is Miami and what is not. The children are increasingly in places, both in and out of the home, where the Miami language and Miaminess are valued and esteemed. Miaminess is “cool”.

However, the observations given above are lacking in that they miss the essence of the Baldwins’ approach. I have observed a general tendency among scholar-practitioners to want to evaluate language endangerment along a series of social factors. Similarly, I have observed a pattern wherein people sometimes talk about reversing language shift as being something that entails doing a series of specific things to learn a language and create environments in which it can be spoken – that is, creating domains. However, a domain is only an area in which a language is used, and creating multiple domains for a language in itself yields no more than a set of domains.

The Baldwins’ case adds another perspective in that it points not only to the creation of domains and of the presence of appropriate social factors as being key to language reclamation, but also to the idea that these factors must be integrated with respect to each other. Daryl has emphasized that relationship is everything, and that understanding how things are interrelated is necessary to

live a good life. Over the four and a half years of this study, I came to believe that this philosophy is what most crucially allows the Baldwins to be successful in their language reclamation efforts. Their approach to reclaiming Miami is holistic.

Originally, this study was titled “Language Reclamation in the Home: A Case Study of Miami”. This title framed the study as being specifically about the language, which is how I was originally conceptualizing it. I was trained in quantitative methods and to think of language endangerment and reclamation as issues that could and should be measured and reported on in terms of specific numbers and factors such as exactly where and how much the language is used.

However, I came to view things differently as I began to understand that one of the keys to the Baldwins’ success is that they rarely think about their efforts in this way. The issue is not, for example, whether the language is used in the home, in school, or in the government per se. An additional important question to ask is “Do the people involved in the efforts conceptualize these specific factors as being interrelated?”

All of the Baldwins’ daily actions reinforce each other and create an environment where the language can flourish, but most important is that they see these issues as being interrelated and thus are able to see the larger picture and work through challenges in a holistic way. For this reason, I know that they will continue to be successful in their reclamation efforts. If they have to move, they will make their new home *myaamionki*, just as they have their current one. If new challenges arise in the younger children’s acquisition, the family will address those challenges in a comprehensive way. They integrate every aspect of life around their goals of language and cultural reclamation and their associated

belief that these processes will lead to a better life.

The Miami culture is one in which observation and reflection are valued, and one where awareness of environment and relationship and interrelatedness is viewed as key to living a good life. In this sense, one can say that the Miami culture frames the Baldwins' lives and guides their language reclamation. It was for this reason that this dissertation is titled "Miami Language Reclamation in the Home", where "Miami" is an adjective. This was done because the story contained within it is not only one of the reclamation of the Miami language, but also one of language reclamation performed (and reported on) in a Miami way, by Miami people, in a Miami place. More importantly, this title puts Miami first, just as the Baldwins do.

## Appendix I: Fieldwork Dates

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While the Baldwins and I had regular contact throughout this study by e-mail, actual research (where I documented the family's language usage in written, audio, or video form) occurred during the following visits I made to Indiana or Oklahoma:

*initial visit, presentation of consent forms: June 28, 2003 (no data collected)*  
 September 26-28, 2003 (3 days)  
 October 11-13, 2003 (3 days)  
 November 8, 2003 (1 day)  
 December 30, 2003, January 2-5, 2004 (5 days)  
 February 4-5, 2004 (2 days)  
 March 30-31 and April 2, 2004 (3 days)  
 June 2, 4-5, 2004 (3 days)  
 September 17, 20-24, 25, 27, 2004 (8 days)  
 November 1, 3-7, 2004 (6 days)  
 January 2, 2005 (1 day)  
 March 23-27, 2005 (5 days)  
 May 6, 8, 2005 (2 days)  
 July 21-26, 28, 30, August 1, 2005 (9 days)  
 September 26-28, 30 and October 1-2, 2005 (6 days)  
 October 25-26, 2005 (2 days)  
 December 31, 2005-January 3, 2006 (4 days)  
 March 21-23, 26, 2006 (4 days)  
 May 4-5, 7-8 (4 days)  
 August 22, 2006 (1 day)  
 December 19-22, 2006 (4 days)  
 March 30-April 2, 2007 (3 days)  
 November 11-12, 2007 (2 days, primarily to discuss the dissertation draft)

I also spent time with the family at Miami tribal language camps (June of every year) and on other dates beyond the ones given above. The 81 days listed above are ones in which I explicitly gathered some data for purposes of this study. The actual visits on those respective days varied from two hours to all day.

## Appendix II: Texts (Natural Conversations)

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The following five texts represent a variety of short interactions that involve the older children. They are intended to give a representation of their proficiency in Miami, and hence to give some context to the sort of language input that the younger children receive. I observed throughout this study that the longest Miami phrases tended to be uttered by Daryl, but there are many instances in these texts where the older children made complex phrases and showed command of morphology. This was a general pattern I observed in all of my interactions with the family.

**Key to all texts:**

[line#] Speaker's name: Miami phrase  
interlinear gloss  
'loose translation'<sup>117</sup>

Short extra commentary is given as necessary in parentheses. Longer comments about grammatical points are given in footnotes.

Each turn in the conversation is given a separate number.

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**Abbreviations:**

QP: question particle  
DUB: dubitative particle  
IMP: imperative  
sg.: singular  
pl.: plural

**Conventions:**

I gloss all third person entities as "he" unless the context indicates that the appropriate form is "she", as Miami does not differentiate "he" and "she".

Miami differentiates inclusive and exclusive first person plural. Within the texts given here, all forms are "we-inclusive", and I gloss them as "we".

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<sup>117</sup> Where the interlinear gloss makes the translation obvious, I do not provide an additional loose translation.

### Conversation I – Discussing a Soccer Game

The following conversation occurred on September 28, 2003. Ciinkwia had just returned home from a soccer game, and I suggested to Daryl that he talk to Ciinkwia about the game.

[1] Father: aya. Did you have a good game?  
hi

[2] Ciinkwia: iihia  
yes

[3] Father: yeah ... Did you did you ... ummm aweena anehiweeta?  
who (s)he wins  
'Who won?'

[4] Ciinkwia: niila  
me

[5] Father: taaninhswi?  
how many  
(In this context: 'What was the score?')

[6] Ciinkwia: yaalanwi-nkoti  
five one

[7] Father: yaalanwi-nkoti. ahtooyani-nko nkoti miinaawa yaalanwi  
five one you-sg. have it-QP one or five  
'Five to one ... Did you have five or one?'  
(This question was uttered in a facetious tone.)

[8] Ciinkwia: *laughing* yaalanwi  
five

[9] Father: iihia. mayaawi teepi  
ok real ability<sup>118</sup>  
'Ok. Very good.'

[10] Ciinkwia: niišwi naatiaani  
two I fetch it  
'I got two [points/goals]'

[11] Father: niišwi? mayaawi teepi  
two real ability  
'Two? Very good.'

<sup>118</sup> *mayaaawi* is a general intensifier, and *teepi* means "enough" or "able/ability". As a fixed collocation, *mayaaawi teepi* means "very good".

## Conversation II – How to Play Chess

The following conversation occurred on September 28, 2003. Knowing that the family had created terms for the pieces in the game of chess, I asked Ciinkwia to tell me (WL) about the game using as much Miami as possible.

[1] WL: Tell me about the game of chess. Anything you want.

[2] Ciinkwia: Okay.

[3] WL: myaamia ... ilaataweelo  
Miami speak-IMP.sg.

[4] Ciinkwia: iihia  
ok

[5a] Ciinkwia: The object of the game is pakamaci akima, which is to  
you-sg. strike him chief (king)

[5b] basically hit the king or get onto his square ... so that would be destroying him, touching him, whatever you want to call it.

[5c] moohci wiihsa paahpiaani, meemeekwaaci tikawi. I don't play a lot, but  
not a lot I play perhaps a little bit

[5d] sometimes I do – with my friends.

[6] WL: What about with your family? Do they know how to play?

[7] Ciinkwia: iihia, but moohci wiihsa paapihaci. I don't play with them a lot.  
yes not a lot I play with him

[8] WL: You don't play with them a lot? Do the other pieces have Miami names?

[9] Ciinkwia: Yes, but ... (pause) I can't remember them right now.<sup>119</sup>

[10] WL: What's the "queen"

[11] Ciinkwia: I only remember the king, which is *akima*, but, let's see ...

[12] WL: the knights and, and ... you call them horses?

[13] Ciinkwia: The knights would be – we call them "warriors", (WL: warriors) but I can't remember the name for that. (WL: OK) The pawns, bishops, can't remember the ... the, then there's the rooks; we have a name for those. We have a name for most of the pieces, but, I didn't like really get into learning all of them, so ... (WL: OK)

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<sup>119</sup> In the last year of this study, Ciinkwia got back into chess and started teaching Awan how to play it – completely in Miami. At that point, Ciinkwia could name all of the chess pieces in Miami, and he had done some research to determine what those pieces should be called.

### Conversation III – Bench Making

The following exchange occurred on January 2, 2004. Ciinkwia and his father were discussing a bench that they were making.

[1] Father: šaaye-nko kiila? šaaye-nko kiila?  
 ready-QP you.sg ready-QP you.sg  
 ‘Are you ready? Are you ready?’

[2] Ciinkwia: iihia. teepi-nko-hka kiihkikišamawiyani kinwaaki<sup>120</sup> naahkipioni  
 yes able-QP-DUB you.sg cut it on my behalf it is long chair  
 ‘Yes. Can you help me cut the bench?’

[3] Father: noonki šayiipaawe milohta kinoosaawia pyaata  
 this morning before [proper name] he comes  
 ‘This morning before Kinoosaawia comes.’

[4] Ciinkwia: iihia  
 yes

[5] Father: teepi-nko-hka wiiciilamiyani?  
 [can] you-sg. help me  
 ‘Can you help me?’

*Later, I played this recording for the father and Ciinkwia and asked them to provide a rough translation. Below (lines [6]-[8]) is a transcript of what they said:*

[6] Ciinkwia: Could you cut the pieces for my ... for the bench that I’m going to make?

[7] Father: Yeah. We should do it before Wes [Kinoosaawia] comes. Can you help me?

[8] Ciinkwia: Yes

<sup>120</sup> Due to the realis context, the standard form here would be *kiinwaaki*.



### Conversation V – Discussing the Stomp Dance

The following is a partial transcript of a conversation that Ciinkwia and I had on February 4, 2004. Daryl, the older children, and I had just been at a tribal stomp dance in Oklahoma, and I asked Ciinkwia to participate in an exercise where I (WL) would speak in English and he in Miami whenever possible.

[1] WL: I want for you to speak in Miami as much as possible. We were just at a stomp dance this past weekend and I'd like for you to tell me, in general terms, what people were doing there.

[2] Ciinkwia:  
 iihia. ceeki aweeya niimiciki neehi waapantanki ceeki kiikoo niyaaha.<sup>122</sup>  
 ok everybody they dance and he looks at it all thing thereabouts  
 'Ok. Everybody was dancing and looking at all the things that were there.'

[3] WL: And how many people do you think were there?

[4] Ciinkwia: nkotwaahkwe  
 100

[5] WL: okay ... quite a few people. and ummm of course earlier in the evening we had a dinner. Why don't you tell me what you ate?

[6] Ciinkwia: kiišaapihkiteeki alemwa and a Coke  
 it is hot dog  
 'a hot dog [and a Coke]'

*laughter from Ciinkwia and Keemaacimwiihkwa*

[7] WL: I see. Well, how about that. ummm ... Did you eat any ... more traditional Indian foods like frybread?

[8] Ciinkwia: moohci  
 no

[9] WL: Why not?

[10] Ciinkwia: moohci mayaawi (a)yiihkwiaani  
 not really I am hungry

[11] WL: And how did you get down to Oklahoma?

[12] Ciinkwia: eeyooyankwi šoohkwaakani<sup>123</sup>  
 we use it car  
 'We went by car.'

<sup>122</sup> This sentence first uses a third person plural form, and then uses a third person singular form. I am not sure if something intentional was motivating this shift. My guess is that it was a mistake.

<sup>123</sup> Most likely, the standard verb form in this context would be the exclusive first-person form *eeyooyaanki* 'we use it', given that Ciinkwia was speaking to me, and I had not traveled with his family.

## Appendix III: Texts (“Making Cornbread” Exercise)

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This appendix gives the transcript of the exercise discussed in Section 4.3.

Context: Ciinkwia and Keemaacimwiihkwa are practicing a lesson where they’re going to teach how to make cornbread in Miami. Their father is filming them and speaking in the background. They were instructed to use the new vocabulary previously learned as part of this lesson, but not to memorize the script (provided after the transcript of the actual practice shoot). Instead, they adlibbed throughout the exercise and teased each other. As the intention of this exercise was to use language, their father prompts them to speak by asking a lot of questions throughout.

(Glosses follow the conventions given on p. 227.)

### Transcript of adlibbed practice shoot (length: 8 minutes, 39 seconds) (Filmed January 28, 2004)

[1] Father: aya  
hello

*(laughter due to embarrassment of being on camera)*

[2] Ciinkwia: kiikoo ilweelo *(commanding his sister to start talking)*  
something say-IMP.sg.  
‘Say something.’

[3] Father: taaniši ... taaniši wiintilenki *(trying to elicit conversation)*  
how how you are called [by a name]  
‘What are you called?’

[4] Keemaacimwiihkwa: keemaacimwiihkwa

[5] Father: iihia  
yes

[6] Ciinkwia: ciinkwia

[7] Father: keetwi? *(prompting Ciinkwia to speak louder)*  
what

[8] Ciinkwia: ciinkwia

[9] Father: iihia  
yes

[10] Father: keetwi išiliniyani  
what you-sg. do  
‘What are you doing?’



- [27] Ciinkwia: waawa  
eggs
- [28] Keemaacimwiihkwa: pan-, pankoosaakani  
su - sugar
- [29] Ciinkwia: wiihkapaakani  
salt
- [30] Keemaacimwiihkwa: pimi  
oil
- (very soft and undecipherable utterance here)*
- [31] Father: iihia (pause) kee ... keetwili (pointing to measuring cup)  
yes wha ... what is it?
- [32] Keemaacimwiihkwa: mineekwaakani  
cup
- [33] Father: iihia, mineekwaakani  
yes cup
- Keemaacimwiihkwa picks up the measuring spoons*
- [34] Father: keetwi?  
what?
- Keemaacimwiihkwa looks unsure as to how to answer*
- [35] Father: kookan---
- [36] Keemaacimwiihkwa: kookanihsi  
teaspoon
- [37] Father: neewe  
thanks
- [38] Keemaacimwiihkwa: niišwi oonaana aapooši  
two this-animate also  
'Also two of this'
- [39] Ciinkwia: niišwi  
two
- [40] Father: niišwi ... keetwi?  
two ... what?
- [41] Keemaacimwiihkwa: kihkeelintansiiwaani  
'I don't know'
- [42] Ciinkwia: nkoti, niišwi keetwi  
one two what

- [43] Father: niišwi, niišwi mineekwaakana  
two two cups
- [44] Ciinkwia: mineekwaakana  
cups
- [45] Father: iihia  
yes
- [46] Ciinkwia: išiteehiaani ooniini  
I think thus this  
'I thought it was this.'
- [47] Father: ilweel uh --- ceeki kiikoo ilweeko ... ilweeko  
sa ... uh --- all things say-IMP.PL ...say-IMP.PL  
'Say what everything is.'
- [48] Ciinkwia: iihia  
OK
- [49] Keemaacimwiihkwa: nihswi kookanihsi oonaana  
three teaspoon this-animate  
'Three teaspoon [singular form] of this.'
- [50] Father: nihswi kookani? (*noticing that his daughter had used a singular form*)  
three spoon
- [51] Keemaacimwiihkwa: kookanihsi  
teaspoon
- [52] Father: kookanihsa  
teaspoons
- [53] Keemaacimwiihkwa: kookanihsa  
teaspoons
- [54] Father: nkoti kookanihsi niišwi kookanihsa nihswi kookanihsa  
one teaspoon two teaspoons three teaspoons
- [55] Keemaacimwiihkwa/Ciinkwia: iihia  
yes
- [56] Keemaacimwiihkwa: nihswi kookanihsa  
three teaspoons
- [57] Ciinkwia: nkoti, nkoti, niišwi, nihswi (*counting spoonfuls*)  
one one two three
- [58] Keemaacimwiihkwa: kilikinanto  
'mix it'
- [59] Ciinkwia: kiila išilinilo  
you do-IMP-sg.  
'you do it!'



- [71b] ceeki-nko?  
all-QP  
'Is that all (of it)?'
- [72] Keemaacimwiihkwa: moohci nkoti ooniini (*handing Ciinkwia a measuring spoon*)  
no one this-inanimate  
'No. [We need] one more of this.'
- [73] Ciinkwia: ooniini ... niini? (*pointing to a spoon*)  
this ... this
- [74] Keemaacimwiihkwa: mm-hmm
- [75] Keemaacimwiihkwa: ayoolhka ... moohci  
more ... no
- [76] Ciinkwia: kiilikinamaani?<sup>124</sup>  
I mix it  
'Shall I mix it?'
- [77] Keemaacimwiihkwa: moohci niišwi oonaana<sup>125</sup>  
no two this-animate
- [78] Ciinkwia: nkoti  
one
- [79] Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia  
yes
- [80] Ciinkwia: nkoti?  
one
- [81] Keemaacimwiihkwa: niišwi!  
two
- [82] Ciinkwia: niišwi (*word drawn out as he pours two cups of a*)  
two
- [83] Ciinkwia: kiilikinamaani  
I mix it  
'I'll mix it.'
- [84] Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia  
OK

*Ciinkwia mixes the ingredients*

<sup>124</sup> Ciinkwia appeared to be asking a question here and the standard form of the verb in this irrealis context is *kilikinamaani*.

<sup>125</sup> Here, Keemaacimwiihkwa uses the singular animate form, but the standard form would be *ooneela* (plural inanimate demonstrative). She is missing the number distinction, but her demonstratives do agree with the animacy of their referents throughout this text. In line [17], she appears to be about to use the wrong demonstrative, and then catches herself.

- [85] Father: keetwi weeših<sup>126</sup>tooyiikwi  
                   what     you-pl. make  
                   ‘What are you making?’
- [86] Keemaacimwiihkwa: miincipi waawinahkani  
   corn                   bread
- [87] Father: miincipi waawinahkani  
                   corn                   bread
- [88] Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia  
   yes
- [89] Father: weenkintamani-nko?<sup>127</sup>  
                   you-sg. like the taste of it-QP  
                   ‘Do you like it?’
- [90] Ciinkwia: iihia  
                   yes
- [91] Father: aweena ceekantanka  
                   who     (s)he eats it all  
                   ‘Who’s going to eat it up?’ (*verb should be followed by kati to indicate future*)
- [92] Ciinkwia: niila  
                   me  
  
                   *laughter*
- [93] Father: noonki peehkonteeki?  
                   tonight
- [94] Ciinkwia: iihia ... ceeki  
                   yes                   all
- [95] Keemaacimwiihkwa: niišwi mineekwaakani  
   two                   cup [singular form]
- [96] Father: mineekwaakana (*with emphasis on final vowel*)  
                   cups [plural form]
- [97] Keemaacimwiihkwa: mineekwaakana  
   cups
- [98] Father: nkoti mineekwaakani  
                   one                   cup
- [99] Father/Keemaacimwiihkwa: niišwi mineekwaakana  
   two                   cups
- [100] Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia  
   yes

<sup>126</sup> Here, the standard form is *wiiših<sup>126</sup>tooyiikwi* due to the irrealis context.

<sup>127</sup> The standard form is *wiinkintamani-nko* (without the initial change from *wiin* to *ween*)

- [101] Ciinkwia: antišilo  
move-IMP
- [102] Keemaacimwiihkwa: nkoti ooniini  
one this-inanimate  
*The children start handling a container of oil.*
- [103] Father: meemeekwaaci aalimihtoongi pimi? (*Daryl suggests a new term*)  
perhaps cooking oil  
'Why don't we call this "cooking pimi [oil/grease/butter]"?'
- [104] Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia  
OK
- [105] Father: meelweelintamani-nko?  
you-sg. like it -QP  
'Do you like it [the word]?'
- [106] Ciinkwia: iihia! (*uttered with enthusiasm*)  
yes
- [107] Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia (*spoken softly*)  
yes
- [108] Father: aalimihtoongi pimi  
cooking oil
- [109] Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia  
yes
- [110] Ciinkwia: nkoti waawi  
one egg
- [111] Father: taanonci piitooyani waawi  
from where you bring egg  
'Where do you get eggs?'
- [112] Ciinkwia: kilikinanto (*to Keemaacimwiihkwa*)  
mix it-IMP.sg.
- [113] Keemaacimwiihkwa: kinkiši  
to outside
- [114] Father: keetwi?  
what?
- [115] Ciinkwia: ahkweehsia  
hen
- [116] Father: ahkweehsia?  
hen

- [117] Ciinkwia: ahkweehsiaki  
hens
- [118] Father: taanaha weeyaahkita ahkweehsiaki?  
where he lives hens  
(3<sup>rd</sup> person singular) (plural noun)  
'Where do the hens lives?'  
(Intended: 'Where do the hens live?')
- [119] Keemaacimwiihkwa: weehsikaaninkiši  
to(ward) the barn
- [120] Father: weehsikaaninkiši weehsikaaninki (correction of the former form)  
to(ward) the barn at/in the barn
- [121] Father: taaninhswi ahsaci?  
how many you-sg. have  
'How many do you have?'
- [122] Keemaacimwiihkwa: wiihsa  
a lot
- [123] Keemaacimwiihkwa: nkotwaahkwe  
one hundred
- [124] Father: nkotwaahkwe?  
one hundred  
  
*The children start cracking eggs.*
- [125] Keemaacimwiihkwa: ahtoolo oowaaha  
put it here  
'Put [the egg shell] here.'
- [126] Ciinkwia: pakitamaani  
I throw it away  
'I'll throw it away.'
- [127] Keemaacimwiihkwa: moohci (because she doesn't want Ciinkwia to leave)  
no  
  
*Ciinkwia leaves to dispose of the egg shell.*
- [128] Father: maayonamani-nko waawa ceeki kaahkiihkwe  
you-sg. collect it-QP eggs all day
- [129] Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia  
yes
- [130] Father: taaninhswi maayonamani eekami waapanke  
how many you collect it every day  
'How many do you get every day?'  
  
*(Father is asking about collecting eggs, but Keemaacimwiihkwa seems to be thinking about something else – perhaps taaninhswi naayonamani 'How many [eggs] do you break/crush?')*

[131] Keemaacimwiihkwa: moohci kiikoo  
   not something  
   ‘nothing’

[132] Father: taaninhswi maayonamani? mataathswi niišwaasi?  
                   how many you collect it twelve  
                   ‘How many do you get? Twelve?’

*(Father repeats his question, and this time gives a possible answer as a means to help Keemaacimwiihkwa understand his question’s meaning.)*

[133] Keemaacimwiihkwa: meemeekwaaci  
   perhaps

[134] Father: nihswi mateeni?  
   thirty

[135] Keemaacimwiihkwa: moohci  
   no

*Ciinkwia returns to the area where the cornbread making is taking place, but doesn’t come into view of the camera.*

[136a] Father: taanonci pyaata?  
                   from where he comes  
                   ‘Where did he come from?’ *(asking Keemaacimwiihkwa about Ciinkwia)*

[136b] pyaaaaaaaaaloooo! *(to Ciinkwia)*  
                   come-IMP

*Ciinkwia comes back into view of the camera*

[136c] kyaasiyani-nko? *(Father asks Ciinkwia)*  
                   ‘Were you hiding?’

[137] Ciinkwia: kweeteeliaani  
   I try  
                   ‘I was trying [to hide]’

[138] Keemaacimwiihkwa: teepi-nko kišaapihkanto<sup>128</sup> kišaapihkaakotaakani  
   able-QP heat it-IMP.sg. oven  
                   ‘Can you warm up the oven?’

[139] Ciinkwia: iihia  
   OK

*Ciinkwia temporarily moves away to turn on the oven.*

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<sup>128</sup> The standard form for the imperative would be *kišaapihkisanto* ‘warm it up’. However, in this context, the standard form would be the second person *kišaapihkisamani* ‘you warm it up’. That this context was close to an imperative may have part of the motivation for her using an imperative form here; there were no other instances where I noticed her using an imperative in lieu of a verb with a second-person suffix.

- [140] Father: keetwi išiliniyani  
 what you-sg. do  
 'What are you doing?' (*asking Ciinkwia*)
- [141] Ciinkwia: kišaapihkaakotaamaani? (*uttered with uncertainty*)  
 literally: 'I'm stoving'  
 (*Ciinkwia substituted the first person singular suffix for the instrumental -aakani on 'stove'*)
- [142] Father: kišaapihkisaamaani (*providing the word for Ciinkwia*)  
 I heat it
- [143] Ciinkwia: kišaapihkisaamaani kišaapihkaakotaakani  
 I heat it stove (*Father chimes in at end of second word*)  
 'I'm warming up the stove.'
- [144] Father: mayaawi teepi  
 real ability  
 'very good'
- [145] Father: taaninhswi  
 how many (*asking about the oven temperature setting*)
- [146] Ciinkwia: niiwaahkwe  
 four hundred
- [147] Keemaacimwiihkwa: alaakani naatiaani  
 plate I fetch it  
 'I'll get a plate.'
- [148] Ciinkwia: iihia  
 OK  
  
*Keemaacimwiihkwa temporarily leaves to get a plate.*
- [149] Father: noontawiyani-nko kweecimaki keemaacimwiihkwa  
 you-sg. hear me-QP I ask her [proper name]  
 'Did you hear what I asked Keemaacimwiihkwa?'
- [150] Ciinkwia: mm-hmm. iihia  
 yes
- [151] Father: waawa-nko maayonamani eekami waapanke  
 eggs- QP you-sg. gather it every day  
 'Do you gather eggs every day?'
- [152] Ciinkwia: kihkeelintansiiwaani maayonamani  
 I don't know it maayonamani  
 'I don't know [the meaning of] "maayonamani"'

*Keemaacimwiihkwa returns.*

- [153] Ciinkwia: moohci, iyaayaani<sup>129</sup>  
                   no           I go  
                   (more standard form in this context: ayaahsiwaani 'I don't go'.)
- [154] Father: keetwi išiliniyani?  
                   what you-sg. do  
                   'What are you doing?'  
  
                   *The children start pouring the cornbread batter into a cakepan, and seem unsure of how to describe this process.*
- [155] Keemaacimwiihkwa: taaniši ilweenki  
   'How do you say?'
- [156] Ciinkwia: ummm ...
- [157] Keemaacimwiihkwa: seekinamaani (She appears to have remembered the word.)  
   I pour it
- [158] Father: seekinamaani (repeating Keemaacimwiihkwa to confirm the word)  
   I pour it
- [159] Keemaacimwiihkwa: miincipi waawinahkani  
   corn                   bread
- [160] Father: iihia  
   yes
- [161] Father: teepi-hka ilweeyani 'kiilikinamenki'  
                   able-DUB you-sg. say kiilikinamenki  
                   'Can you say kiilikinamenki ['ingredients', literally: "it is mixed"]?'
- [162] Keemaacimwiihkwa: kiilikinamenki
- [163] Father: ceeki kiikoo kiilikinamani ... ilweeyankwi 'kiilikinamenki'  
                   all thing you-sg. mix it we say kiilikinamenki  
                   'Everything that you mixed together we call "kiilikinamenki".'
- [164] Keemaacimwiihkwa: aalinta-nko?  
   some -QP  
   '[Do you want] some?'
- [165] Ciinkwia: moohci  
   no
- [166] Father: meehcihtooyani-nko  
                   you-sg. finish it -QP  
                   'Are you finished?'
- [167] Ciinkwia/Keemaacimwiihkwa: iihia  
   yes

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<sup>129</sup> I am unclear as to what Ciinkwia meant in this context. His father had asked him if he gathered eggs every day, and the answer was "no, I go."

- [168] Father: ilweelo ... meehci\_\_\_\_\_ ...  
 say-IMP-sg. \_\_\_\_\_ finish it
- [169] Keemaacimwiihkwa: -twaani  
 I [finish it]
- [170] Ciinkwia: meehcihtooyankwi  
 we finish it  
 'We're finished.'
- [171] Keemaacimwiihkwa: meehcihtooyankwi  
 'We're finished.'
- [172] Father: meehcihtooyankwi. mayaawi teepi. neewe  
 'We're finished. Very good. Thanks.'
- [173] Ciinkwia: iihia  
 OK
-

### The Original Script

Below is the “Making Cornbread” script written by Daryl Baldwin and David Costa that the older children were provided ahead of time. (The version presented here includes a few minor typographical corrections but no substantive changes from the original.)

wiicilamiyani-nko kati miincipi waawinahkani wišihtwaani  
*Are you going to help me make cornbread?*

mihtami ceeki naatitaawi alaakana, mineekwaakana, kookana aapooši  
*First we need to get all our bowls, cups and spoons*

neehi-hsa ceeki kiilikinamenki  
*Then all of our ingredients*

maaciyohkantaawi  
*Let's begin!*

waapiinkweemina siikinanto nkoti mineekwaakanenki  
*Pour 1 cup of cornmeal*

miililo mineekwaakani, neehi moohkinahtoolo ayoolo waapiinkweemina  
*Give me the cup and you fill it up with cornmeal*

neehi siikinanto alaakanenki meehšaaki  
*Pour it into a large bowl*

naahpihpenatoolo naloomini noohkimina  
*Do the same for the wheat flour*

maamawi kilikinanto  
*Mix it together*

noohki, aalimiihtoonki noohkimina  
*Next, baking powder*

eeyoowankwi nihswi kookanihsi noohkimina  
*We need three teaspoons of baking powder*

naaninkoti ahtoolo alaakanenki  
*Put each in the bowl*

nkoti  
*One*

niišwi  
*Two*

nihswi  
*Three*

noohki wiihkapaakana eeyooyankwi  
*Next, salt*

eeyooyankwi kaakataha iintahsenki kookanihsi  
*We are using 1/2 of a teaspoon*

siikinanto alaaminki  
*Pour it in*

noohki pankoosaakani eeyooyankwi  
*Sugar is next*

eeyooyankwi niišwi iintahsenki kookanihsi  
*We need 2 tablespoons*

nkoti  
*One*

niišwi  
*Two*

noonki, nkoti mineekwaakani noonaakanaapowi siikinanto  
*Now, pour 1 cup of milk*

siikinanto alaaminki  
*Pour it in*

nkoti  
*One*

kilikinanto maamawi ceeki kiikoo  
*Stir everything together*

noonki seekinamankwi kihswi pimaapowi  
*Now, we pour in a little oil*

niila seekinamaani; kiila sakinanto mineekwaakani  
*I'll pour; you hold the cup*

noohki, nkoti waawi eeyooyankwi  
*next, 1 egg*

kiihkinamani-nko kati waawi?  
*Do you want to break the egg?*

alaakanenki kiihkinanto  
*Break it into the bowl*

maamawi kilikinanto kookani ayoolo  
*Mix it together with a spoon*

kiišaaphkisamaani kišaaphkaahkotaakani  
*I'll heat up the oven*

peehki-nko kilikinamani  
*Did you mix it well?*

mahkihkaayonantaawi alaakani waawiyaaki  
*Let's grease the round pan*

siikinanto ceeki kiilikinamenki alaakanenki  
*Pour all the batter into the pan*

manto alaakanenkonci ceeki  
*Remove all of it from the pan!*

teepahki  
*That's good*

šaaye aawiki ahtooyani kišaaphkaakotaakanenki  
*Time to put it in the oven*

taani kati eepiši aawiki meehtiteewi  
*How long before it is done (heated)?*

niišwi mateni minutes  
*20 minutes*

neewe, peehkišiliniyankwi  
*thank you, we did a good job*

## Appendix IV: Additional Language Game

This following is “level II” of the noun matching game that the younger children started playing in Fall, 2005. This game included longer words, most of which also took a suffix *-em* that occurs in a certain set of possessed nouns. The idea was to slowly introduce increasingly complicated forms.

**Figure 9 – Forms Used in Noun Matching Game Level II**

**Bold** forms to be used in matching games;  
*italicized* forms to be used in follow-up questions to see if the children have learned the pattern

Basic word	gloss	1st singular	2nd singular	3rd singular	not possessed
mahsinaakani	book, paper	<b>nimahsinaakanemi</b> my paper	<i>kimahsinaakanemi</i>	<b>amahsinaakanemi</b> his paper or her paper	<b>mahsinaakani</b> book or paper
paahpahaakani	key	<b>nimpaahpahaakanem</b> my key	<b>kipaahpahaakanemi</b> your key	<b>apaahpahaakanemi</b> her key or his key	<b>paahpahaakani</b> key
šooli	money	<b>ninšoolimi</b> my money	<b>kišoolimi</b> your money	<i>ašoolimi</i>	<b>šooli</b> money
nipi	water	<b>ninipimi</b> my water	<b>kinipimi</b> your water	<i>anipimi</i>	<b>nipi</b> water
kiilhsua	clock	<b>ninkiilhsoma</b> my clock	<b>kikiilhsoma</b> your clock	<b>akiilhsomali</b> his clock or her clock	<b>kiilhsua</b> clock
atašiihkiomi (ašiihkiwi)	land	<b>nintašiihkiomi</b> my land	<b>kitašiihkiomi</b> your land	<b>atašiihkiomi</b> his land	<b>ašiihkiwi</b> land
mihsooli	canoe	<b>nimehsooli</b> my boat	<i>kimehsooli</i>	<b>amehsooli</b> her boat or his boat	<b>mihsooli</b> boat
kocihsaki	beans	<i>ninkocihsimaki</i>	<b>kikocihsimaki</b> your beans	<b>akocihsimahi</b> his beans or her beans	<b>kocihsaki</b> beans
kookani	spoon	<b>ninkookanemi</b> my spoon	<i>kikookanemi</i>	<b>akookanemi</b> her spoon or his spoon	<i>kookani</i>
šoohkwaakani	wagon	<b>ninšoohkwaakanemi</b> my car	<b>kišoohkwaakanemi</b> your car	<i>ašoohkwaakanemi</i>	<b>šoohkwaakani</b> wagon or car

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