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Considerations when Developing an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework within Canada: A Collaboration between a White Settler and Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education

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Abstract

This research contributes to the scholarship on evaluation and assessment within early learning and child care (ELCC) environments. The research was carried out in collaboration with the leaders of an Indigenous ELCC centre, an Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper, co-supervisors with the Faculty of Education at Western University, and funding partners Mitacs and a municipal funder. The collaboration took place within Southwestern Ontario, Canada. The dissertation is a diffractive analysis that involved reading texts multiple times, focusing on differences that matter while not ignoring relevant similarities. The methodology was also informed by the Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper who collaborated with the researcher by providing feedback throughout the project. The research examined the state of knowledge relating to Indigenous ELCC frameworks and outcomes. The project also described tensions, debates, and potentialities when establishing an ELCC outcomes frameworks from Indigenous perspectives. Analysis included standardization, terminology, spirituality, indicators, and resource allocation considerations. Part of the project also focused on patterns within existing Indigenous ELCC outcomes frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada). This project concludes by offering considerations and provocations for the development of Indigenous ELCC outcomes frameworks, as well as providing a discussion of methodological considerations, contributions of the diffractive analysis, and considerations for future research.

Keywords

Early learning and child care

Early childhood education

First Nations

Métis

Inuit

Assessment

Outcomes frameworks

Summary for Lay Audience

This research focused on assessment and evaluation, specifically outcomes frameworks and their use with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children in early learning and child care (ELCC) environments. In collaboration with the leaders of an Indigenous ELCC centre (in Ontario, Canada), an Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper, co-supervisors with the Faculty of Education at Western University, and funding partners Mitacs and a municipal funder, the researcher analyzed relevant literature and documentation. The study offers important considerations for people developing ELCC outcomes frameworks within Indigenous environments.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie, as this research would not have been possible without her ongoing collaboration. I would like to acknowledge my supervisors Dr. Rachel Heydon and Dr. Erica Neeganagwedgin. Their kindness and motivation are inspirational. I also acknowledge my mother Shannon Symon and sibling Arwen Johns M.A. for always supporting and laughing with me. My grandparents were also integral to my completion of the dissertation, and I thank them. This work was supported by Mitacs through the Mitacs Accelerate program and another municipal funder.

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Chapter 1

1 Introduction

Early learning and child care (ELCC) frameworks have become ubiquitous within such countries as Australia (see Sumsion et al., 2018), Aotearoa New Zealand (see Alcock & Haggerty, 2013), Sweden (see Garvis et al., 2018), and Canada (see Ott & Hibbert, 2019). ELCC frameworks have also often become part of the standardization and formalization of early childhood education and care (see Alcock & Haggerty, 2013). Though there is no universal definition to describe ELCC frameworks, I turn to Langford (2010) who described these frameworks as tools to stimulate thinking about the education practices of professionals working directly/indirectly with children and families. This dissertation project was born of the many questions concerning ELCC frameworks. Especially, questions concerning the education and care of Indigenous children within ELCC environments that are required by settler colonial governments to have *outcomes* frameworks.

Outcomes frameworks are tools of measurable, desired objectives (see Tyler, 2013). Outcomes can be predominant within educational experiences, Tyler state that, “In practically every educational experience[,] two or more kinds of educational outcomes may be expected” (p. 41). However, because outcomes frameworks have typically been developed through Western European perspectives (British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2010), First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children could continuously be beholden to Western European perspectives when accessing care and/or a family centre. It was within this context that I was invited to collaborate with leaders of an early learning and child care (ELCC) centre that was created by and for Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, families, and children in Ontario, Canada. I provided research support for the development of their required outcomes framework, and the fruits of this work informed this dissertation. I hope these findings contribute to the knowledge concerning evaluation and assessment within ELCC environments where Indigenous ways of knowing and being are central (e.g., Ball & Simpkins, 2004; Battiste, 2002).

1.1 Researcher Positioning

The invitation to collaborate on this project came through the Associate Vice President of Indigenous Initiatives and resulted in a collaboration between the managers of the Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) centre, the Faculty of Education at Western University, municipal funding partner, Canadian funding partner, Mitacs, Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie, and me (see Table 1).

Table 1

Collaborators and Affiliations

Affiliation	Role in Project
Western University	Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper (Liz Akiwenzie)
Western University	Principal Investigator
Western University	Supervisor of Principal Investigator, Faculty of Education (Dr. Heydon)
Western University	Supervisor of Principal Investigator, Faculty of Education (Dr. Neeganagwedgin)
Western University	Associate Vice President of Indigenous Initiatives, Faculty of Education
Indigenous Child Care and Family Centre	Family Centre Manager
Indigenous Child Care and Family Centre	Child Care Manager
Mitacs	Director, Business Development
Municipal funding partner	Manager

I was asked to be part of the collaboration because my program of research focused on ELCC frameworks and decolonization and because of my community connections, such as my seven-year friendship with Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie. I accepted the collaboration being aware of my positionality. How I move with the land is

influenced by my positionality as a White Settler and my ancestry as Welsh, Irish, English, and French. How I came to Turtle Island (Canada) is a colonial story—where I benefit from the configuration of the institutions maintaining the settler colonial nation-state Canada. I expand on this conceptualization and who and what informs it in “Chapter 2: Literature Review.”

As a White Settler, I acknowledge Battiste’s (2002) statement that an Indigenous knowledge system, “is a knowledge system in its own right with its own consistency and ways of knowing, and there are limits to how far it can be comprehended from a Eurocentric point of view” (p. 2). I credit Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie for guiding my current understanding of this system. When using the terminology *Indigenous*, I turn to Tuck and Yang (2012) who explained that Indigenous people have Creation Stories about how they came to be in a particular place such as Turtle Island. Their relationships to land encompass cosmologies, ontologies, and epistemologies. Turtle Island is comprised of Indigenous Lands that are exploited by the settler colonial nation-state Canada based on their notion of terra nullius (E. Neeganagwedgin, personal communication, November 22, 2021). Tuck and Yang (2012) explained that a settler colonial nation-state, “operates as an empire – utilizing external forms and internal forms of colonization simultaneous to the settler colonial project” (p. 7); I describe those forms of colonialism in “Chapter 2: Literature Review.” Also, Tuck and Yang described land as not just expanses of geographical formations but also water, air, and subterranean earth. I use this same conceptualization of land throughout the dissertation.

Specifically, regarding the Canadian nation state, Bourgeois (2015) viewed Canada as a white settler nation “established through the domination and exploitation of indigenous peoples and their lands” (p. 1444). Bourgeois noted that, “the Canadian state refers to the federal, provincial, and territorial governments and their institutions, including the criminal justice, health, and education systems” (p. 1433). The terminology *state* and *Crown* are not interchangeable, although “the Crown does frequently serve as a conceptual placeholder of the state...[but]...the terms Crown and state do not map the same semantic terrain” (Shore, 2019b, pp. 69-70). The Crown, as Shore (2019a) explained, “is a social and symbolic construct, an unfinished project or work in progress

that is constantly being reinvented” (p. 19). Within this structure, I recognize that Indigenous people are self-determining; “Fundamental to the exercise of self-determination is the right of peoples to construct knowledge in accordance with self-determined definitions of what is real and what is valuable” (Brant Castellano, 2004, p. 201).

I am also influenced by Barad (2007), who conceptualized identity and political economy as inseparable: identity is a doing/being as part of the iterative materialization of the world with possibilities for change. More simply, identity is comprised of multifaceted experiences of existence as part of the ongoing and ever-changing world. Engaging with identities is a matter of ethics. Barad further described ethics as being “about responsibility and accountability for the lively relationalities of becoming of which we are a part” (p. 393). As a White Settler on Turtle Island, I am actively connected to the ongoing colonization of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit land. I interpret this connection to colonization as evoking a Settler Responsibility; I define and explain aspects of Settler Responsibility in “Chapter 2: Literature Review.”

Within Canada, Indigenous people’s experiences with colonial violence are diverse, though overall the effects of imperialism are devastating to Indigenous life and land (Tuhivai Smith, 2012). The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) has constitutionally recognized that Indigenous peoples in Canada include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit; however, that is not the terminology used in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Specifically, the Charter states, “In this Act, ‘aboriginal peoples of Canada’ includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada” (s. 35.2). Prochner and Kirova (2018) stated, “Education was established as a provincial matter in the British North America Act of 1867” (p. 394; see *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*, 1982, s. 93). The context of early learning and child care within the settler colonial nation-state Canada is further explained within “Chapter 2: Literature Review.”

1.2 Objective

The objective of the research is to contribute to the scholarship involved with evaluation and assessment within early learning and child care (ELCC) environments where

Indigenous ways of knowing and being are central (e.g., Battiste, 2002; Ball & Simpkins, 2004). Early learning and child care, also referred to in Canada as early childhood education and care, includes “any program or service providing care/education for children under the age of 12” (Richardson, 2019, p. 7). Although the age span specified by Richardson is under the age of 12, for this research I focus on the age span zero to six. I focus on this span, because the Government of Canada’s (2017b) *Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework* has prioritized “investments in regulated early learning and child care programs and services for children under age six” (p. 3). The Government of Canada’s *Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework* has encouraged a long-term vision for provincial and territorial jurisdictions so that all children can access ELCC environments.

1.3 Coming to the Research Questions

Research questions were initially proposed to me by the Associate President of Indigenous Initiatives at Western University, the co-supervisors of my PhD, and the municipal funder. The research questions that were proposed focused on supporting an Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) centre with engaging in the process of creating an outcomes framework. To be useful to the centre, I had six months in which to produce the research and three reports. Maintaining the focus and content of the questions, I reworked them with my supervisors to be manageable within this timeframe. The revised research questions include the following:

1. *What is the state of knowledge related to Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks?*
2. *What are some tensions, debates, and potentialities when establishing an early learning and child care outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives?*
3. *What are patterns within Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada)?*
4. *What are considerations for the development of Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks?*

To respond to these questions, I completed a diffractive analysis. In “Chapter 3: Methodology,” I elaborate on my approach to the diffractive analysis.

1.4 Organization of Dissertation

The dissertation begins with “Chapter 1: Introduction,” where I outline my position on Turtle Island (Canada), research objective, research questions, and an explanation of the organization of the dissertation. What follows is “Chapter 2: Literature Review,” which is a literature review, focusing on the process of early learning and child care (ELCC) frameworks becoming ubiquitous within the settler colonial nation-state Canada. This includes descriptions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) education and governance within Turtle Island (Canada). I also describe in second chapter, a history of the development and continuation of settler colonial Canada, followed by a description of FNMI cultural resurgence and resistance of settler colonial Canada. Next, I describe the development of Canada’s ELCC programmatic curricula and evaluations, including a discussion about FNMI and Settler inclusion and configurations within those curricula. Salient findings from the literature review are then synthesized.

“Chapter 3: Methodology” explains the *ethico-onto-epistemology agential realism* (see Barad, 2007) that guided me throughout all aspects of the research. “Chapter 4: Diffractive Analysis” begins with a focus on the state of knowledge related to Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks. The following section is the second research question and describes some tensions, debates, and potentialities when establishing an ELCC outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives. I also discuss standardization, terminology, spirituality, indicators, and resource allocation. The third section focuses on patterns within Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada). This section focuses on policies, Ontario ELCC, and pedagogical documentation. The final section of this chapter is comprised of considerations for the development of Indigenous ELCC outcomes frameworks. I also provide interconnected considerations and provocations which are organized as subsections for clarity and readability. The subsections are leadership and advisement, resources and supports, structural considerations, and content considerations during the construction of an Indigenous ELCC outcomes framework. “Chapter 5: Discussion” concludes with methodological considerations, contributions of the diffractive analysis, and future research considerations.

Chapter 2

2 Literature Review

In the second chapter, I present literature pertinent for understanding the context of the research, namely early learning and child care (ELCC) frameworks within the settler colonial nation-state Canada. Although the focus of this literature review is Canada, I draw from an international scope of literature because scholars within other settler colonial nation-states provide nuances about colonization that can be relevant to Canada (see Tuck & Yang, 2012). I begin by describing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) education and governance within Turtle Island (Canada). Then, I provide a history of the development and continuation of settler colonial Canada, followed by a discussion of FNMI cultural resurgence and resistance of settler colonial Canada. In what follows, I describe the development of Canada's ELCC programmatic curricula and evaluations, including a discussion about FNMI and Settler inclusion and configurations within those curricula. In the conclusion, I synthesize the salient findings from the literature review.

2.1 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education and Governance within Turtle Island

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) are diverse and distinct peoples (Battiste, 2002; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996b). However, similarities throughout the literature influenced how I contextualized FNMI education and governance within this dissertation.

2.1.1 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) education as a whole are relevant to this dissertation because I am focusing on early learning and child care (ELCC) environments where Indigenous ways of knowing and being are central (e.g., Ball & Simpkins, 2004; Battiste, 2002). When describing First Nations and Inuit education, Battiste (2002) and

the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples¹ (RCAP) (1996b) explained that First Nations and Inuit education is interconnected with diverse ways of knowing through Creation stories, and these stories are core to the relational connections to land, life, and language. Battiste (2002) stated,

Creation endows people with sacred gifts that emerge in different developmental stages of their lives, slowly enabling them to find their places in the cosmos and in their national traditions and ethos. (p. 15)

From Creation comes traditional knowledge, which “includes ecological teachings, medical knowledge, common attitudes toward Mother Earth and the Circle of Life, and a sense of kinship with all creatures” (RCAP, 1996b, p. 488); additionally, humans and nonhumans have relationships with land that are instructive, familial, and intergenerational. Furthermore, First Nations and Inuit people perceive time as cyclical, and this influences relationships and ways of being (RCAP 1996a).

Also, within First Nations, Métis, and Inuit education, Archibald (2008) and Tuck, McKenzie, and McCoy (2014) stated that for land, life, and language to flourish children should learn that humans have unique and diverse responsibilities as part of human-land relations. Haig-Brown (2009) demonstrated that family is a continuous part of education:

traditional education [is] embedded in the everyday lives of members of varied Aboriginal cultures and nations across the continent. In traditional forms of education, children, their parents and grandparents engaged in a lifetime of watching, learning and doing: no separation of any age group from this active participation in learning within the community occurred. (p. 7)

The extended family teach and care for infants and toddlers with their relationships remaining throughout lifetimes, and children learn their languages through oral modeling, animation, and practice (Battiste, 2002; RCAP, 1996b).

¹ The report on Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996b) “concerns government policy with respect to the original historical nations of this country [Canada]” (p. 6).

Indeed, Archibald (2008) and Battiste (2002) stated that education is grounded through language structures where song, speech, and story are central. Throughout this dissertation, I strive to recognize that Indigenous languages should be predominant throughout Indigenous children's lives. Archibald (2008) explained that there are synergistic relationships between story, storyteller, and listener in locations that are formal (e.g., longhouse) and informal (e.g., during the daily routine); however, no matter the context, the original storyteller or source of the story is acknowledged. This acknowledgment recognizes that each nation has different protocols and traditions regarding the ways stories are told, where they are told, and by whom they are told. Archibald shared that some stories are for entertainment and others for specific teachings, with each requiring learners' memories to become highly developed. Moreover, teachings gleaned by learners are not only influenced by the physical location and synergistic relationship but also by how the story came to be told in that specific situation and time (RCAP, 1996a). In addition, the lifelong process of education and learning, no matter the teacher, require stable and consistent relationships, because life is the continuation of watching, learning, doing, and reflecting (Battiste, 2002; RCAP, 1996b;).

Another source of knowledge influencing Indigenous education is land. Archibald (2008) described land as informing dreams, ceremonies, stories, and teachings of Elders. Regarding dreams, Balanoff and Chambers (2005) shared that the Inuinnaqtun language describes dreams as informative pre-existing and/or created texts. Archibald (2008) elaborated that being an Elder is not defined by numerical age but by having acquired wisdom from life experiences and education. Also, Battiste (2002) explained that Elders and Knowledge Keepers are part of a long-term ecological history of the land through careful observation and hypothesizing about changes to come: the maintenance, continuation, and dissemination of these findings are the responsibility of many different members of nations. Furthermore, regarding members of nations, Battiste stated,

There are not only differences between ordinary folks and experts, such as experienced knowledge keepers, healers, hunters, or ceremonialists, there are also major differences of experience and professional opinion among the knowledge holders and workers, as we should expect of any living, dynamic knowledge

system that is continually responding to new phenomena and fresh insights. (p. 12)

Regarding land, Archibald (2008) shared that governance, as well as the knowledge source, influences education.

2.1.2 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Governance

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) governance and education are interrelated and impact early learning and child care (ELCC) experiences (e.g., Ball & Simpkins, 2004; Battiste, 2002). Like education, the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996a) agreed that governance systems and laws impact the daily lives of children. The report also articulated that FNMI governance systems and laws are grounded in language. Regarding Métis governance, Drake and Gaudry (2016) stated,

The great buffalo hunt of the nineteenth century formed the basis of Métis governance. These were the means by which Métis vested their territorial control. The establishment of buffalo hunt governance utilized a long-standing and agreed-upon system to assert political authority over Métis and others who hunted within a given territory. (pp. 26-27)

Often FNMI governance is decentralized with representatives attending confederacy or councils of nations (RCAP, 1996a). The nations forming these councils or the confederacy are assembled through bands, clans, districts, or communities that have at their core large extended families. Decision making at all governance levels typically continues until consensus. Additionally, the report on the RCAP (1996c) explained that in most governance systems, women have an important role in peace. When decisions effecting land, life, and nations are made, their views are sought: the women are guardians of culture and values.

2.2 A History of the Development and Continuation of Settler Colonial Canada

The Canadian state is described by Bourgeois (2015) a white settler nation “established through the domination and exploitation of indigenous peoples and their lands” (p. 1444). The *state* refers to “the federal, provincial, and territorial governments and their institutions, including the criminal justice, health, and education systems” (p. 1433).

Shore (2019a) explained that institutions such as the criminal justice system use the terminology *Crown*, and in recent years the judiciary “coined ‘the honour of the Crown’ as crucial to relationships between governments and various aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit)” (p. 5). However, Shore (2019b) emphasized that the terminology state and Crown are not interchangeable. Although “the Crown does frequently serve as a conceptual placeholder of the state ... [,] ... the terms Crown and state do not map the same semantic terrain” (pp. 69-70). The Crown, as explained by Shore (2019a), “is a social and symbolic construct, an unfinished project or work in progress that is constantly being reinvented” (p. 19).

2.2.1 Forms of Colonialism

A settler colonial nation-state operates through multiple forms of colonization. Tuck and Yang (2012) described a settler colonial nation-state operating “as an empire – utilizing external forms and internal forms of colonization simultaneous to the settler colonial project” (p. 7). Internal, external, resource, military, and settler colonialism are all unique but interrelated forms.

Tuck and Yang (2012) described *internal colonialism* as “the biopolitical and geopolitical management of people, land, flora and fauna within the “domestic” borders of the imperial nation” (p. 4). They explained that strategies of internal colonialism are surveillance, segregation, and criminalization through practices such as schooling, policing, and imprisoning. Also, this form of colonialism is structural and “is bound to the policy of national government (of national integration, internal communication, and expansion of the national market)” (Casanova, 1965, p. 36).

Another form of colonialism is *external colonialism*—also known as exploitation or exogenous colonialism. Tuck and Yang (2012) described this form of colonialism as fueling colonial efforts and appetites through the extraction of resources such as spices, tea, “diamonds, fish, water, oil, humans turned workers, genetic material, cadmium and other essential minerals for high tech devices” (p. 4). External colonialism is similar to resource colonialism. For example, Parson and Ray (2018) argued that “tar sand production on First Nations land is a practice of resource colonialism: the theft and

appropriation of land belonging to indigenous people in order to access natural resources” (p. 69). Once resources are extracted, they are most often “shipped to other jurisdictions, where they are consumed to meet human needs or used to fuel secondary production”, as is the case in Nunavut (Bernauer, 2019, p. 411). Additionally, Tuck and Yang (2012) explained that external colonialism often requires *military colonialism*, which is “the creation of war fronts/frontiers against enemies to be conquered, and the enlistment of foreign land, resources, and people into military operations” (p. 4).

Settler colonialism is distinct from other forms of colonialism, because Settlers come with the intention of staying and controlling land and life for their own benefit. Specifically, the Settlers’ desire for land is rooted in the desire for physical space and wealth. Wealth from physical space comes from the organization of land as private property (Wolfe, 2006; Barker, 2012). Barker (2012) explained, “Private property is a dominating relationship to place that objectifies and deconstructs complex living independent systems for the benefit of an individual or a group” (p. 201). Reserve land as Barker explained is not private property and the government holds it in trust for the use of Indigenous peoples. Barker continued his explanation:

Reserve lands are administered by the federal government in both Canada and the United States, and as such have shifting and unique relationships to various Settler political bodies and jurisdictions. ... Many reserves are small communities, are isolated, and most reserve economies are depressed and social infrastructure is lacking. Reserves were developed around the belief in the ‘vanishing Indian;’ Settler people hoped that by isolating Indigenous peoples, their perceived-backwardness would lead to their eventual extinction. (p. 63)

Barker asserted that reserve lands were a way of monitoring and controlling Indigenous peoples’ mobility and clearing land for Settlers.

Land is of the utmost concern within settler colonialism. Tuck and Yang (2012) explained,

This is both because the settlers make Indigenous land their new home and source of capital, and also because the disruption of Indigenous relationships to land represents a profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence. (p. 5)

Tuck and Yang articulated that this epistemic, ontological, and cosmological violence does not temporarily occur when Settlers arrive but “is reasserted each day of occupation” (p. 5). Moreover, both Mann (2012) and Wolfe (2006) asserted that through stealing the land, Settlers attack Indigenous existences, and this continues everyday of occupation, demonstrating that settler colonialism is not an event but a structure. Also, Wolfe (2006) and Tuck and Yang (2012) similarly shared that erasing Indigenous peoples is a Settler objective so the land is structured for Settler’s homes and resource extraction. The *Doctrine of Discovery*, as described by the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996a), was authorized under international law and granted the so-called discovering nation immediate sovereignty. The title to land was based on *terra nullius*, referring to uninhabited empty land. The doctrine was then revised to characterize Indigenous people as unhuman and land like. The doctrine supported Manifest Destiny—the idea that Anglo-Saxons should unite in global domination, justifiable through divine right (Teigrob, 2012).

2.2.2 Relationships between First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Settlers during Canada’s Development and Continuation

Canada’s development and continuation are described by the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996a) as occurring through the relationships between First Nations, Métis, Inuit (FNMI) and Settlers. The relationships between FNMI and Settlers are conceptualized by the report on the RCAP as cyclical, because FNMI perceive time as cyclical and this influences all relationships. The report also defined the relational cycle between FNMI and Settlers as encompassing the original relationships, the down cycle, low point, up cycle, and the return to the fundamental aspects of the original relationships, which were mutual cooperation and respect.

2.2.2.1 *Original Relationships*

Both the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996a) and Dickason and Newbigging (2015) described the original relationships of Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island (Canada) and Settlers as being of mutual respect and cooperation. However, they explained that overtime, some Indigenous peoples retreated

from contact as racial prejudice against Indigenous peoples and disease reaped havoc during the securing of trading routes with the French and British.

The report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996a) explained the French and British began negotiating Treaties with Indigenous nations. The Treaties continue to be binding and from Indigenous perspectives have a spiritual aspect that creates a unique tie and responsibility for both parties. The Treaties are sacred pacts that are only void when the land no longer exists. Additionally, the report explained that the Treaties were negotiated orally, and because the nations spoke different languages, systems were created to record and maintain the Treaties. Throughout these processes, there were devastating manipulations and misunderstandings that occurred surrounding Indigenous sovereignty. For example, Indigenous peoples did not view submission to a European monarch as part of these Treaties.

2.2.2.2 *Down Cycle*

Raudon (2019) articulated that “the Royal Proclamation 1763, issued after the Treaty of Paris ... ceded New France to the British” (p. 85). Regarding the historical Numbered Treaties, the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996a) reported that they were signed in the 1800s and early 1900s, and the federal government became responsible for funding education on Reserves. The down cycle included the forcible removal of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) from the land onto less agriculturally stable Reserves. This contributed to the displacement of FNMI governance and education as ceremonies and ceremonial knowledge were outlawed from 1884 to 1951 (RCAP, 1996a). The forced removal of FNMI from the land is described by Barman (2010) as land grabs that geographically began in the east and then gradually spanned west.

2.2.2.3 *Low Point*

The report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996a) described the low point within the relational cycle between First Nations, Métis, Inuit (FNMI) and Settlers as being shaped by the many policies that perpetuated the erasure of FNMI nations and people. The policies of erasure were strategies that Casanova (1965) referred

to as internal colonialism, because the practices were structural and bound to policies that perpetuated what Tuck and Yang (2012) articulated as the settler colonial project. The first example of a policy of erasure came from the report on RCAP (1996a) and described the residential school system in the 1800s as having a three-pronged approach to assimilation: 1) remove children from families and nations, 2) indoctrinate children into Christianity as part of their resocialization as Europeans, and 3) integrate graduates into the labour market. This transition, however, often went as far as graduates being escorted off the grounds.

The history of the residential school system is described by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada (2012) as spanning much farther back than the 1800s. The TRC of Canada stated that in 1620 the foundation was laid by Missionaries from France, and until the last doors closed in 1996, the focus of Christian indoctrination never wavered. The persistent focus of religion is described by Miller (2003) as being part of the central purpose of residential schools, that “was the assimilation of the First Nations through the younger generations” (p. 373). Also, the curriculum is described by the report on the RCAP (1996a) as a resocialization tool guided by the standard provincial curricula. The implementation had a purposeful, more than usual, emphasis on religion. Similarly, Miller (2003) explained that classroom pedagogy was coercively assimilative. Furthermore, regarding the violence that begets assimilation, the TRC of Canada (2012) explained that if children were heard speaking their language, they were abused so that they would stop speaking and weaken that relation. Children’s languages were systematically attacked, and this attempted erasure through assimilation resulted in devastating intergenerational trauma and loss of language across Canada.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada (2012) also revealed that child labour was used to maintain the grounds, and children’s nutrition was actively experimented on. Children were forced to farm, clean, and cook with ingredients that were of poor quality and low in quantity. The labour was Eurocentrically gendered with children who were perceived as females being forced to completed domestic labour, and children perceived as males forced to complete labour that would lead to wage labour. Moreover, they were being prepared for positions that were not competitive in the job

market. Neeganangwedgin (2014) described how when it became mandatory by Canadian law for families to send their children to the schools and churches, families hid their children to protect them. Under the *Indian Act*, families could not hire lawyers to contest the government's actions. Canada's current understanding of human trafficking supports that residential school systems trafficked children because the systems were maintained through the "forced relocation and forcible confinement of indigenous children who feared for their lives within this punitive and violent system" (Bourgeois, 2015, p. 1461). Both the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996a) and TRC of Canada (2012) stated that children experienced severe verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. Although residential school systems have closed their doors, child welfare services continue to disproportionately remove children from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) families and nations, confining them in state care (Bourgeois, 2015; Neeganagwedgin, 2014). Bourgeois (2015) stated that this continuation of removing FNMI children from their families and nations is the continuation of Canada trafficking FNMI children.

The report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996c) identified the *Indian Act* (RSC 1985, c 1-5) as another policy of erasure. The report described the *Indian Act* as characterizing people as status and non-status in the system of Canada's government. The *Indian Act* is a law and legal government document, which is currently in existence and has been revised multiple times. The *Indian Act* was enacted in 1876 and stripped First Nations people of their rights to land and focused attacks on First Nations women. The report on the RCAP explained that women lost status if they married a non-status man, and this meant their children were not able to successfully apply for status. However, status men who married non-status women kept their status and their wives would also be considered status, along with any of their born children. In 1985, the Act was amended by Bill C-31 to try and address the gender-based inequalities through the activism of Indigenous women, such as Jeannette Corbiere Lavell. However, women's third generation descendants, depending on who the second generation marries, would not be able to successfully apply for status and the erasure through policy continues (see Hamill, 2011).

Furthermore, another policy of erasure identified by the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996a) was the *White Paper*, which was released in 1969. The goal was complete assimilation, resulting in complete erasure. Specifically, Turner (2006) articulated “The White Paper’s stripped-down view of equality would have rendered all citizens the same, with the state owing each citizen the same package of rights” (p. 6). The report on the RCAP (1996a) described that the release of the *White Paper* was met with strong resistance and the policy went no further. A part of this resistance was the *Red Paper*, created by the Chiefs of Alberta in 1970. An aspect of the *Red Paper* was to honour the Treaties, stating that “the intent and spirit of the treaties must be our guide, not the precise letter of a foreign language. Treaties that run forever must have room for the changes in the conditions of life” (Chiefs Alberta, 1970, p. 196). Now the next section of this chapter focuses on what the report on the RCAP (1996a) described as a turning point and beginning of the up cycle in the relationships between First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Settlers.

2.3 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Cultural Resurgence and Resisting Settler Colonial Canada

The 1970s is characterized as a time of cultural resurgence: “Aboriginal leaders pushed strongly for self-government as an inherent right, arguing that its roots lie in Aboriginal existence before contact” (RCAP, 1996a, p. 216). The report described that time as a turning point and beginning of the up cycle in the relationships between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) and Settlers. Brant Castellano (2004) stated that,

When Aboriginal Peoples speak about maintaining and revitalizing their cultures, they are not proposing to go back to igloos and teepees and a hunter-gatherer lifestyle. They are talking about restoring order to daily living in conformity with ancient and enduring values that affirm life. (p. 100)

Also, Brant Castellano made explicit the importance for researchers and policy makers to recognize that FNMI are self-determining peoples:

Self-determination has been seen as a political goal expressed most notably in self-government that recognizes a degree of autonomy in relation to Canadian state institutions. (p. 112)

FNMI people defining for themselves “what is real and what is valuable” is fundamental to self-determination (Brant Castellano, 2004, p. 102).

Both Battiste (2002) and St. Denis (2007) shared that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) speaking and learning their languages were fundamental aspects of the original relationships between FNMI and Settlers. The original relationships are described by the report on the RCAP (1996a) as relationships of mutual respect and cooperation.

Returning to the fundamental aspects of the original relationships between FNMI and Settlers is a critical and timely concern (RCAP, 1996a). An example of why returning to the fundamental aspects of the original relationships is crucial is the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (2019) reported that current human consumption activities are devastating life and land.

2.3.1 Settlerism and Whiteness

Tuck and Yang (2012) stated that “Indigenous peoples are those who have creation stories, not colonization stories, about how [...] they came to be in a particular place...” (p. 6). In contrast, my story of coming to Turtle Island as a White Settler is a colonial story. Alfred and Corntassel (2005) explained that,

Contemporary Settlers follow the mandate provided for them by their imperial forefathers’ colonial legacy, not by attempting to eradicate the physical signs of Indigenous peoples as human *bodies*, but by trying to eradicate their existence as *peoples* through the erasure of the histories and geographies that provide the foundation for Indigenous cultural identities and sense of self [emphasis in original]. (p. 598)

I was also influenced by McIntosh (1990) who described White privilege as manifesting through invisible provisions that guide and support bodies that navigate settler colonial institutions within North America. I have benefitted from such privileges, benefiting from the configuration of the institutions maintaining the settler colonial nation-state Canada.

Regarding White privilege, Barker (2012) posited that it can be conceptualized as being of a spectrum, where people who live with physical characteristics of Euro-Whiteness have more access to state institutions and other institutions of privilege than racialized

people. Kim (2019) suggested that “within the case of Canadian cultural politics, delinking can be used to envision new conversations that begin with migrants and Indigenous histories instead of with whiteness” (pp. 553-554). However, Anderson and Denis (2003) suggested that white supremacy in the structure of Canada cannot be ignored. They described how

State formation in the colonial territories, and concomitantly in the metropolis, was monumentally concerned with “containing” the purity of the “white race,” and great effort was extended to ensure that that would be done. (p. 377)

Haig-Brown (2009) stated that the Settler-First Nations, Métis, and Inuit binary does not recognize the diverse ways people become and are a part of Canada. Examples of people migrating in diverse ways are immigration and responses to refugee crises. However, Tuck and Yang (2012) also stated that there are

colonial pathways that are usually described as ‘immigration’ and how the refugee/immigrant/migrant is invited to be a settler in some scenarios, given the appropriate investments in whiteness or is made an illegal, criminal presence in other scenarios. (p. 17)

Barker (2009) noted that Settler people could be conceptualized as including, most peoples who occupy lands previously stolen or in the process of being taken from their Indigenous inhabitants or who are otherwise members of the “Settler society,” which is founded on co-opted lands and resources. (p. 328)

This definition, Barker acknowledged, is not comprehensive.

Another conceptualization of human relationships within settler colonialism is Veracini’s (2011) argument that settler colonialism creates triangular relationships between humans. Humans manifest as three potential agencies; these agencies are described as the Indigenous colonized, the Settler colonizer, and Exogenous ‘Other’. Veracini explained that “the settler colonial situation is premised on a foundational act where settler body politic establishes its sovereignty by drawing different circles of inclusion and exclusion” (p. 2).

Furthermore, Barad (2007) conceptualized agency as not something humans and nonhumans have in them waiting to be used as a choice. Agency is a doing/being and a

matter of the ongoing reconfiguring of the world. This includes topological reconfigurings, Barad explained that topological concerns are questions of boundary, interiority, exteriority, and connectivity, including the re-evaluation of geometrical concerns of size and shape as topological concerns. When thinking of *self*, Barad (2012) articulated that “the self is dispersed/diffracted through time and being” (p. 213). Then, when thinking of *otherness*, they described this as an entangled relation of difference, though the *other* is not a radical outsider to self. Barad (2007) explained, “there is no spatial-temporal domain that is excluded from the ethicality of what matters” (p. 182). Entanglements are also conceptualized by Barad as irreducible relations of responsibility and intentionality—an entangled state of agencies. I further discuss Barad’s explanation of entanglements and agencies in “Chapter 3: Methodology.”

2.3.2 Settler Responsibility

Scholars such as Waldorf (2012), Regan (2006), Archibald (2008), Barker (2012), and Moraga and Anzaldúa (1988) conceptualized Settlers as having responsibilities. Drawing on these influences, I conceptualize Settler Responsibility as stemming from being a human: One who came to a particular place through a colonization story and who benefits from the configuration of the institutions maintaining a settler colonial nation-state. Responsibility involves confronting their complicity with its maintenance and engaging with the world as part of the dismantlement of a settler colonial structure. This passage from Waldorf (2012) significantly influenced my conceptualization of Settler Responsibility:

I have argued that non-Indigenous teachers need to understand their complicity in colonialism so they can form ally relationships with Indigenous peoples in their struggle for justice, whatever form that struggle takes. (p. 107)

I am influenced by Waldorf’s idea of forming ally relationships, but I use the terminology *practicing for allyship*, so it is explicit that allyship is never complete. For actionability when practicing for allyship, I turn to Regan (2006). Regan explained that a person who is not Indigenous can listen and struggle together with Indigenous people by an Indigenous person’s invitation; commitments included developing and maintaining relationships, rather than focusing on the outcomes the relationship may glean. Regan

also emphasizes that Indigenous leaders are the people who make the decisions about defining goals and how to fight. Also, Waldorf (2012) suggested that when part of a settler colonial nation-state, people should be informed of how different power structures of colonialism and racism influence the maintenance of exploitive institutions. Regan (2006) explained further that people who benefit from the maintenance of the institutions maintaining settler colonial nation-states can engage in an ethics of recognition. An ethics of recognition is learning to listen and acting authentically when hearing Indigenous testimony. Archibald (2008) and Barker (2012) similarly shared that silence can create good thinking and is respectful, and no matter how informed a non-Indigenous person may be, it is important to recognize that any Indigenous knowledge that is engaged with is by no means their cultural authority. Part of taking direction is learning what knowledge is appropriate to share and if it is appropriate to share in specific settings.

Barker (2012) was also influential to my conceptualization of *Settler Responsibility*. Barker emphasized that when a human is unsettled from learning, they are complicit in the maintenance of a settler colonial nation-state. People who have benefitted from settler colonialism have a responsibility to pass on this unsettlement. If this unsettlement brings on feelings of guilt, remember when Moraga and Anzaldúa (1988) stated, “Guilt is *not* a feeling. It is an intellectual mask of feeling. Fear is a feeling—fear of losing one’s power, fear of being accused, fear of loss of status, control, knowledge. Fear is real [emphasis in original]” (p. 62).

Also, Settlers should be warned of the six strategies used to relieve “feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 10). Tuck and Yang (2012) defined the strategies as *settler moves to innocence*, toward the continued attempted erasure of Indigenous peoples. The six moves to innocence are outlined by Tuck and Yang as the following: (1) Settler nativism—the desire to deflect Settler identity and maintain privilege and land through identifying as Indigenous on account of long lost ancestry; (2) Settler adoption fantasies—the desire to maintain Settler futurity as the erasure of Indigenous people is complete and sometimes includes the appropriation of Indigenous knowledge; (3) Colonial equivocation—the homogenizing of experiences of various oppression and

exploitation as all being because of colonialism; (4) Freeing the mind—the idea that once the Settler mind is decolonized, the colonial institutions maintaining the settler colonial nation-state will dismantle; (5) Asterisk/at risk people—the continued attempted erasure of Indigenous people through their inclusion in mainstream education discourses being on the periphery or as at risk people who are on the verge of erasure, and (6) Re-occupation and urban homesteading—the Settler desire for the redistribution of monetary wealth, but not the acknowledgment that the wealth is land.

2.4 Development of Canada's Early Learning and Child Care Programmatic Curricula and Evaluations

There is no universal definition to describe early learning and child care (ELCC) frameworks. Langford (2010) described ELCC frameworks as tools to stimulate thinking about education practices with professionals who work directly/indirectly with children and families. This concept of having a tool to stimulate thinking about education practices is still relevant to ELCC environments where Indigenous ways of knowing and being are central (e.g., Ball & Simpkins, 2004; Battiste, 2002). However, the settler colonial nation-state Canada heavily influences the tools used within ELCC environments (e.g., Akbari & McCuaig, 2014; Langford, 2010).

Regarding the development of early learning and child care (ELCC) programmatic curricula within Canada, Prochner (2009) completed an expansive review of the literature. Prochner traced the influence of Canada's ELCC programmatic curricula, beginning with Infant Schools that were developed by Robert Owen in Scotland during the 1800s. Children residing with families who were considered poor were the targeted demographic of enrollment for these Infant Schools. Families experiencing poverty were seen as forces that would corrupt children, because they did not have a similar education and poverty was associated with immortality and evil. Owen believed that early moral interventions could safeguard children from later difficulties. The age of enrollment for the schools was 18 months to six years and the schools' objectives were to indoctrinate children into the Christian notion of goodness, learn one's place as part of the social stratification hierarchy, and receive a basic education to be a labourer or domestic (Prochner, 2009).

These objectives were similar to those of Canadian residential schools where children were subjected to labour in the guise of curriculum that was Eurocentrically gendered. Children who were perceived as females were forced to complete domestic labour, and children perceived as males were forced to complete labour that would lead to wage labour (TRC of Canada, 2012).

The basic format for Infant Schools was set by the Lutheran minister Jean-Frédéric Oberlin's Knitting Schools. The Knitting School operated in France during the 1770s and enrolled children from families experiencing poverty. The pedagogy emphasized play, but the teacher (often male) with his female relatives as assistants thought more formal instruction, consisting of visual arts and academics, was needed (Prochner, 2009). Prochner (2009) explained that the pedagogy of the Infant Schools was structured as amusements that were free of rote learning and focused on games and songs. The founder Owen never expanded on the pedagogies, but they were expanded on later by Samuel Wilderspin and other Infant School teachers, leading to the development of Infant School guidebooks. In 1832, Wilderspin and colleagues identified the method as an Infant System, and this was incorporated into the titles of the guidebooks.

Prochner (2009) described the development of the guidebooks as being cohesive, except for divergence over the extent to which religion should be intertwined. Wilderspin advocated for a subtler approach to Christian indoctrination, while his colleagues advocated for the Bible to be throughout the system. Prochner explained that most of the Infant School teachers working on the guidebooks had brief informal training and that these manuals were the sole pedagogical resource being used to organize Infant Schools. Also, there was variation of implementation of the Infant System as differences occurred when teachers trained other teachers through demonstration. Prochner further explained that the Infant System pedagogy was distinct from the popular pedagogies for older children because the Infant Schools had adapted gallery instruction, included a playground, and discouraged corporal punishment—though corporal punishment still took place.

Similarly, Prochner (2009) and Prochner and Kirova (2018) described the people considered lead thinkers of the British colonies as the social and political elites; these lead thinkers aligned with the Infant System's Christian indoctrination pedagogy. Funding for Infant Schools in colonies was initially backed by various evangelical missionary groups and the *Home and Colonial Infant School Society*. Prochner (2009) explained that predominantly between 1825 to 1835, but spanning to the 1860s, several dozen Infant Schools were established by private charities before they later became part of public schools.

Prochner (2009) described how the rhetoric used by Infant System supporters surrounding the social adjustment potential in children was adopted by colonial administrators and mission teachers. These groups also hoped to use education as a tool to assimilate Indigenous children into the Christian perception of goodness. The Infant Systems required financial support from the government and were often managed by the local Infant School societies. The teachers, like the British ones, also lacked training. The provincial use of the pedagogy of amusements was rhetorically popular; however, there is no evidence of play materials in Infant Schools.

After 1860, newly opened Infant Schools within colonies did not remain open long. The need for charity schools was dwindling because young children went to public schools with their older siblings (Prochner, 2009). Prochner (2019) articulated, "Schooling framed the lives of settler children after compulsory school laws were enacted in the 1870s" (p. 2).

2.4.1 Predominant Theoretical Perspectives in Canadian Early Learning and Child Care

According to Prochner and Kirova (2018), as the structure of children's education and care changed within Canada, so did the rise in diversity of early learning and child care (ELCC) advocates. Psychologists came to play a dominant role. Focusing on North America, Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (2006) stated that beginning in the 1860s, *developmental psychology* had a dominant influence on ELCC. Pinar et al. described how the dominant discourse of developmental psychology viewed the mind as

a muscle solely dependent on repeated exercises for development: the more advanced the exercises, the more rapid the development. Children's recall was desired over comprehension of content. Pacini-Ketchabaw, Nxumalo, Kocher, Elliot, and Sanchez (2014) stated that developmental psychology can universalize human growth as structured in inevitable stages. This universalization lumped children into homogenous groupings, making invisible individual life stories and potentially oversimplifying the complexity of children's meaning-making.

In 1867, under *The British North America Act*, education fell under provincial, instead of federal jurisdictions. Thus, provincial jurisdictions became responsible for evaluation and assessment (see Prochner & Kirova, 2018). There are various definitions describing evaluation and assessment. For example, Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) described *evaluation* as referring to appraising curriculum, programs, and institutions, while *assessment* referred to appraising individuals. However, they articulated that adhering to this distinction was artificial because the terminology evaluation is frequently used when focusing on student appraisal. They also explained that "data on individual (assessment) may be aggregated for use in the appraisal of a program (evaluation)" (p. 121). Pinar et al. (2006) provided a different definition, explaining, "evaluation is the broad category while assessment is subsumed within it. Within assessment is measurement, the most narrow [sic] form or subset of evaluation" (p. 732). Internationally and nationally across Canada, there are a variety of approaches to evaluation (see Pinar et al., 2006) with the prevalence of theoretical perspectives ebbing and flowing to meet emerging and diverse needs (see Madaus & Kellaghan, 1992).

Each evaluative approach is tied to a purpose it aims to address. Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) observed that for some commentators the curriculum should be created before the evaluation and assessment, while "[f]or others, assessment and evaluation procedures may be used to determine the curriculum" (p. 119). They further explained that the accountability of educators to governing bodies was another aim of evaluation. Assessment activities and observation were described by Stooke (2019) as ranging

from the completion of standardized screens and checklists to the creation of anecdotal records and multimedia ensembles known variously as documentation panels, narrative assessments, and learning stories. (p. 2)

When referring to indicators, Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) attested that indicators may be inputs (e.g., child-educator ratio) and outputs (e.g., student achievement). They additionally explained that the evaluation component of a curriculum delivery system may also be evaluated. The remainder of the subsection focuses on predominant theoretical perspectives in Canadian early learning and child care. Although I focus on predominant theoretical perspectives over the decades, the concepts and theorists are not confined to such timeframes, and they remain influential within early learning and child care studies.

2.4.1.1 *Predominant Theoretical Perspectives during 1900 to 1949*

After 1900, the child-study movement became associated with experimental psychology (Pinar et al., 2006; Quinn, Johnson, Roopnarine, & Patte, 2018). Pinar et al. (2006) explained that the stock market crash of 1929 overshadowed the research being done surrounding social efficiency within curriculum. *Progressivism* became an influential paradigm and child-centeredness dominated. Also, during the 1920s, Franklin Bobbitt a dominant curriculum theorist was influencing the social efficiency movement and the discursive shift from method to curriculum. This discursive shift “was further legitimized by the publication of *The Curriculum* in 1918” (Pinar et al., 2006, p. 96). The curriculum focused on preparing students for tasks within the so-called adult world, including out of school experiences, directed experiences, and undirected experiences (Jackson, 1992). Crucial concepts for curriculum makers to consider during this discursive shift were specified by Pinar et al. (2006) as economy, effectiveness, and efficiency: “The work of curriculum makers became studying the adult world to determine the major tasks or activities comprising it” (p. 97).

During the 1940s, child-centered orientation remained at the forefront with developmentalism (Prochner & Kirova, 2018). Also, the availability and frequency of standardized tests to measure student progress increased following World War II (Pinar et al., 2006). During 1949, Ralph Tyler disseminated *Basic Principles of Curriculum and*

Instruction. Pinar et al. (2006) explained that the elements of the *Tyler Rationale* have remained influential within North America and the four elements are “objectives, learning experiences, organization, and evaluation” (p. 17). Tyler (2013) stated, “Evaluation is also an important operation in curriculum development” (p. 104). The intermediate or preliminary stages of evaluation involve determining if the learning experiences and objectives align. Also, Pinar et al. (2006) described this approach to curriculum as focused on procedure and “it is fundamentally bureaucratic or institutional in conception and execution” (p. 20). In other words, the “curriculum became a means to achieve ends or objectives” (p. 188).

2.4.1.2 *Predominant Theoretical Perspectives during 1950 to 1969*

The 1950s was riddled with experts advocating that preschool was valuable for children because it contributed to children’s social adjustment into society. Prochner and Kirova (2018) explained that in the 1960s as well, social adjustment was desired along with school readiness, and this emphasis on school readiness for preschoolers was targeted toward children of families experiencing poverty.

Beginning in the late 1960s, Canada was modelling their early learning and child care (ELCC) programmatic curriculum after the settler colonial nation-state, the United States of America’s *Project Head Start*. *Project Head Start* focused on the enrollment of African American children experiencing poverty, who were considered culturally disadvantaged. *Head Start* programs were half days, focusing on school readiness, intelligence quotient, and social adjustment to white middle-class values. Children were conceptualized as active self-initiating learners, based on cognitive-interactionist theory (Prochner & Kirova, 2018). Pinar et al. (2006) explained that during the 1960s, behavioural objectives became preferred because they were deemed to contribute to accountable curriculum. Behavioural objectives were seen as establishing “measureable goals and outcomes for curriculum, a means for quantifying these outcomes” (p. 165). Regarding *outcomes* Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) stated that,

an overemphasis on outcomes is unsatisfactory since information about outcomes does not necessarily tell us about other important aspects of curriculum, such as the quality of its objectives or the way in which it has been taught. (p. 120)

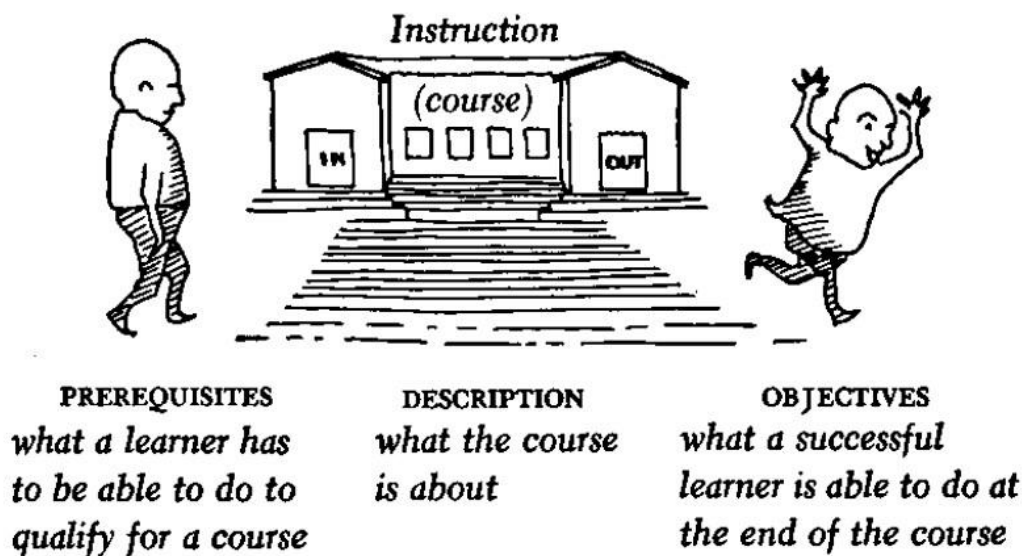
Aspects of behavioural educational psychology applications were described by Pinar et al. (2006) as being “influential in curriculum studies during the decades to follow” (p. 167). Some of the aspects are mastery learning, taxonomies, performance objectives, and time on task. Mager (1962) defined an *objective* as “a description of a performance you want learners to be able to exhibit before you consider them competent” (p. 5); the focus is on the instructional outcome or result, rather than the process of instruction. Objectives are important for a variety of reasons: Objectives are

useful in providing a sound basis (1) for the selection or designing of instructional content and procedures, (2) for evaluating or assessing the success of the instruction, and (3) for organizing the students’ own efforts and activities for the accomplishment of the important instructional intents. (Mager, 1962, p. 6)

Mager also distinguished differences between a description of a course and objectives of a course (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Description of a Course vs. Objectives of a Course



Note. Sketch from Mager (1962, p. 11).

Mager (1962) explained that “a course description does not explain what will be accepted as adequate achievement” (p. 11); rather, it provides aspects of the instructional process. An objective focuses on the learner’s results of the process.

Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) suggested that during the 1960s the terminology *assessment* became more popular than *testing* because assessment was “being used to denote a broader range of information and techniques than those associated with the standardized multiple-choice test” (p. 119).

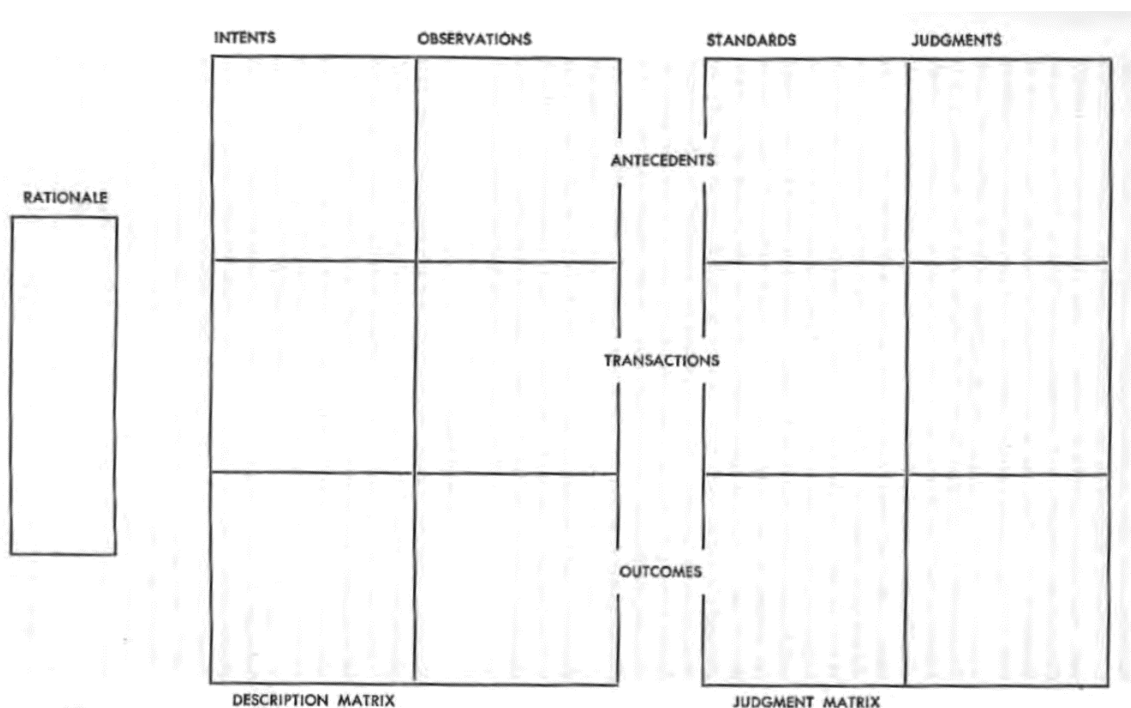
Eisner (1967a) forwarded another prevalent perspective on objectives during the 1960s: “educational objectives clearly and specifically stated can hamper as well as help the ends of instruction” (p. 250). The function of objectives in a curriculum process are described by Eisner as potentially being dogmatic, “which in fact may hinder the very functions the concept was originally designed to serve” (p. 250). He suggested, “educational objectives need not precede the selection and organization of content” (p. 258), as the curriculum can be open-ended. Eisner also pointed out that the “complex process of instruction yields outcomes far too numerous to be specified in behavioral and content terms in advance” (p. 254). In some disciplines such as the Arts, it is not possible or desirable “to specify with great precision the particular operation or behavior the student is to perform after instruction” (p. 254). Additionally, some “modes of achievement [are] incapable of measurement” (p. 257). Regarding objectives, Eisner stated that “the application of a standard requires that some arbitrary and socially defined quality be designed by which other qualities can be compared” (p. 255). He explained that even though objectives are often developed based on socially defined standards, evaluation is not primarily applied by “a socially defined standard, but by making a human qualitative judgement” (p. 256). Pinar et al. (2006) described Eisner’s contribution to evaluation as enormous in the use of Art as a disciplinary foundation for evaluation (see Eisner, 1967b; 1971; 1972; 1988; 1993). However, Eisner’s *artistic approach* was not without criticism. Alexander (1986) argued that, “what is needed is to see more precisely how artistic vision is integrated into the processes of conceptual and empirical analysis as they function within the context of evaluation” (p. 270).

Now still within the 1960s, Stake (1967) stated that the value one puts “on education does not reveal their way of evaluating education” (p. 523): A “wide range of evaluation purposes and methods allows each to keep his[their] own perspective” (p. 523), and “the purposes and procedures of educational evaluation will vary from instance to instance” (p. 525). Moreover, educational evaluation has “formal and informal sides” (p. 523): “Informal evaluation is recognized by its dependence on casual observation, implicit goals, intuitive norms, and subjective judgment. ...[I]nformal evaluation results in perspectives which are seldom questioned” (p. 523). Then on the flip side, Stake explained that, “Formal evaluation of education is recognized by its dependence on checklists, structured visitation by peers, controlled comparisons, and standardized testing of students” (p. 523). Stake oriented themselves around educational programs, not educational products, because of the presumption “that the value of a product depends on its program of use” (p. 524). Evaluating a program includes evaluating the materials used throughout the program. Essential aspects of evaluation are description and judgement: these are “two basic acts of evaluation” (Stake, 1967, p. 525).

Stake (1967) stated that “an evaluation of a school program should portray the merit and fault perceived by well-identified groups, systematically gathered and processed” (p. 527). He felt that regardless of whether the purpose of the evaluation was description or judgement, it was helpful when an evaluation report distinguished “between *antecedent*, *transaction*, and *outcome* data [emphasis in original]” (p. 528; see Figure 2).

Figure 2

A Way to Organize Evaluation Statements, including Description and Judgement Data



Note. Example from Stake (1967, p. 529).

Stake emphasized that the boundaries between these categories are not clear and the categories “should be used to stimulate rather than to subdivide our data collection” (p. 528). Stake stated that “an antecedent is any condition existing prior to teaching and learning which may relate to outcomes” (p. 528). A couple examples of antecedents are a student’s interest and previous experiences. Transactions include

the countless encounters of students with teacher, student with student, author with reader, parent with counselor – the succession of engagements which comprise the process of education. Examples are the presentation of a film, a class discussion, the working of a homework problem, an explanation on the margin of a term paper, and the administration of a test. (p. 528)

Regarding outcomes, Stake explained that “in short, outcomes are the consequences of educating—immediate and long-range, cognitive and conative, personal and community-wide” (p. 528).

2.4.1.3 *Predominant Theoretical Perspectives during 1970-1989*

Pinar et al. (2006) and Prochner and Kirova (2018) similarly observed that *multiculturalism* became popular in education during the 1970s. In 1985, multiculturalism became an official federal policy, influencing early learning and child care (ELCC) teacher education programs with the hope of preparing future educators for collaborating with culturally diverse children and families. Pinar et al. (2006) outlined that multiculturalism in education puts emphasis on: “a) understanding, b) cultural competence, and c) cultural emancipation” (p. 323). Multiculturalism also perpetuates the myth of meritocracy, which is the belief that through hard work and drive, people can freely move on the social stratification hierarchy. Pinar et al. further explained that multiculturalism was seen as emancipatory, but that this was not necessarily the case. Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2014) supported Pinar et al. (2006) when pointing out that multiculturalism is extremely limited within settler colonial nation-states, as multiculturalism does not address the complexities of settler colonialism and racism. Similarly, St. Denis (2011) stated,

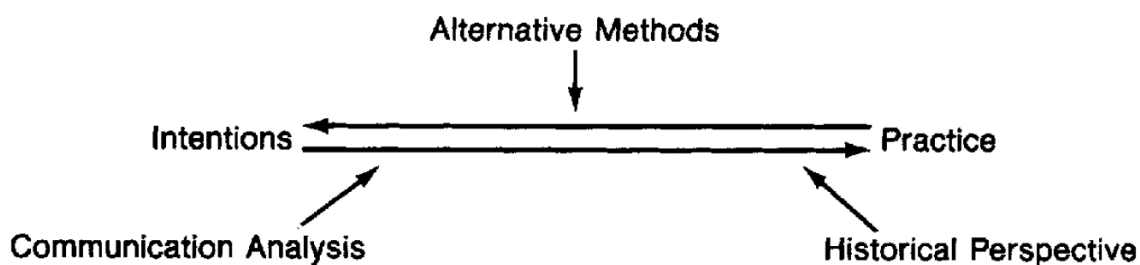
Multiculturalism in schools makes it possible for non-Aboriginal teachers and schools to trivialize Aboriginal content and perspectives, and at the same time believe that they are becoming more inclusive and respectful. (p. 313)

Prochner and Kirova (2018) spoke to multiculturalism and developmentalism being theoretically dominant ELCC discourses alongside each other.

During the 1970s, a variety of other evaluation approaches emerged from the dissatisfaction with the Tylerian definition (see Pinar et al., 2006). One such approach was influenced by Schwab’s (1973) *curriculum commonplaces*, which view “the learner, the teacher, the milieu, and the subject matter” (pp. 508-509) as equally important and interconnected. Schwab (1978) further proposed an approach to curriculum and evaluation described as *practical*, and an “outcome of the practical...is a *decision*, a selection and guide to possible action [emphasis in original]” (p. 288). These decisions are comparatively judged for possible alternatives and “by its consequences as good or bad, but this is an afterthought and usually sterile as far as further decisions are concerned” (p. 288). Schwab also described decisions as being situational when stating

that, “It [a decision] applies unequivocally only to the case for which it was sought” (p. 288). Regarding the quasi-practical, Schwab explained that these methods are similar to the practical “but with a heavy special emphasis on the *cherishing of diversity* and the *honoring of delegated powers* [emphasis in original]” (p. 294). Cherishing diversity is referring to subjects such as physics and sociology. Then, the eclectic curriculum orientation, as described by Schwab, “recognizes the usefulness of theory to curriculum decision, takes account of certain weaknesses of theory as ground for decision, and provides some degree of repair of these weaknesses” (p. 295). Schwab’s (1973) curriculum commonplaces remain influential and relevant within Ontario, Canada early learning and child care environments.

Regarding the evaluation of classrooms, Gitlin and Goldstein (1987) explained that administrators of evaluations are often under the constraint of district guidelines. The teacher is often not involved and “those who are thought to be experts impose standards concerning desirable teaching outcomes on those [educators] who supposedly need the feedback” (p. 17). They articulated that if educators change their behaviour because of an administrator’s feedback, this often reinforces a hierarchical relation between the educators and so-called expert. Gitlin and Goldstein explained that “horizontal evaluation, as the name suggests, holds that understanding through dialogic interaction should be the aim of evaluation (as it is a primary aim of education)” (pp. 17-18). They further explained that “Horizontal evaluation structures dialogue so that a communication process is established in which teaching peers critically examine goals and means” (p. 18). These relationships could also bolster institutional change being enacted through joint enquiry. For program evaluation, Gitlin and Goldstein explained that “[d]ialogue structured by the horizontal evaluation method often begins by considering the teacher’s intentions or purpose” (p. 19). They also articulated that horizontal evaluation considers historical perspectives and alternative methods (see Figure 3).

Figure 3*Reciprocal Relationship Between Intentions and Practice*

Note. Gitlin and Goldstein's (1987) depiction (p. 19).

Communication analysis refers “specifically to a process that uncovers prejudgments reflected in speech acts” (Gitlin & Goldstein, 1987, p. 19).

2.4.1.4 *Predominant Theoretical Perspectives during 1990 to Present*

Pinar et al. (2006) explained that “by the 1990s qualitative inquiry generally and qualitative curriculum evaluation specifically had achieved legitimation in the field” (p. 737). Also, the influence of *Project Head Start* became evident (Prochner and Kirova, 2018). In 1995, federally funded community-based *Aboriginal Head Start* programs became established for First Nations and Métis children who lived in specific locations across Canada; then, in 1999 the initiative was made accessible to Inuit children living on Reserves. Prochner and Kirova (2018) explained that the programs with Reserves are titled *Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve*. The focus of *Aboriginal Head Start* is children's development, which has its theoretical orientation within developmentalism (Pinar et al., 2006). Iannacci and Whitty (2009) explained that *Aboriginal Head Start* differed from previous ELCC initiatives with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit families and governances because this initiative included families and communities in the implementation and continuation of programming: Languages were consciously central to the programming. Regarding *Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities*, Gerlach and Gignac (2019) stated that this “is the primary early childhood program designed

specifically for Indigenous families and young children, living in off-reserve communities across the country” (p. 61).

Even though the approach to language learning has changed, Donmoyer (1990) pointed out that “we have tended not to change the way we think about and do evaluation” (p. 274). Donmoyer described a deliberative approach to evaluation:

This approach involves gathering together a group of teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and where appropriate, students, and asking them to discuss and debate such questions as (1) what issues should be focused on in the evaluation, (2) what sort of data ought to be collected and what methods should be employed to do the collection, and (3) what recommendations should be made to improve the program” (p. 275).

The members of the group are described by Donmoyer as potentially being “asked to help collect data” (p. 275). They are a part of “fostering communication and resolving disagreements among participants who ideally will start the evaluation process with different views of education in general and the program being evaluated in particular” (p. 275).

As part of the new millennium, the dominant discourse within early learning and child care (ELCC), according to both Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2014) and Iannacci and Whitty (2009), is *developmentally appropriate practice*, better known as DAP. They described DAP as connected to developmentalism—more specifically, developmental-maturationist theory. Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. and Iannacci and Whitty explained that with DAP, children’s school readiness is developed through purposeful play alongside the development of children’s physical, cognitive, and emotional skills; DAP specifies that there are inappropriate practices, and this binary between appropriate and inappropriate practices may silence other ways of knowing that are not grounded in modernism. Modernists conceptualize the child as not a rational logical thinker until adulthood. Both Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. and Iannacci and Whitty warned that this universalization of practice could potentially silence other ways of being.

Even though the dominant early learning and child care (ELCC) discourse within Canada is developmentalism, there are reconceptualist educators and researchers who are working against the status quo through various foci and theoretical orientations. Pinar et al. (2006) shared that “in evaluation as well as in the curriculum field more broadly, a reconceptualization has occurred” (p. 737). Also, Iannacci and Whitty (2009) positioned *reconceptualization* within ELCC as taking careful consideration of the social dimensions of learning and growth. Furthermore, Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2014) specified that social dimensions include the sociomaterial and take an active part in shaping and influencing learning. Nxumalo (2012), similarly, emphasized that humans are continuously within relational becomings with the material and more-than-material world, while striving to attend to embedded and emergent power relations. Part of this attending is to the social and political racialization of skin in a settler colonial nation-state.

Reconceptualist orientations also question the dominant discourse of multiculturalism and its contribution to identity configurations being static in early learning and child care (ELCC) (Nxumalo, 2012). Nxumalo suggested that multiculturalism could be complexified through the emergence of material-discursive assemblages, which pay attention to relational becomings and political engagements often happening directly within ELCC practices. Nxumalo (2012) suggested the complexifying of practices rather than the singular notion of understanding practice. Nxumalo, Vintimilla, and Nelson (2018) articulated that reconceptualists function in a realm of uncertainty as an ethical practice, yet this is more than just a way educators practice. Both Iannacci and Whitty (2009) and Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2014) similarly stated that part of an ethical practice of uncertainty is (re)learning and analyzing programmatic frameworks so that they are constantly being (re)configured.

Iannacci and Whitty (2009) asserted that theoretical orientations which have bolstered the growth of reconceptualization in early learning and child care (ELCC) are postmodern, sociocultural, feminist, sociomaterial, and decolonizing orientations. They explained that these theoretical orientations reject grand narratives that universalize ways of knowing and being with the world, with the hope that ELCC will be more equitable.

Reconceptualization also stays current of policies and practices implemented in the name

of caring and educating young children. As White, Prentice, and Perlman (2015) clarified, reconceptualization within ELCC does not ignore or reject that development in the early years has a significant effect on humans throughout their lives.

Stooke (2019) provided an example of a reconceptualist perspective when describing authentic assessment as,

the ongoing gathering and interpretation of information about what a child says or does in a naturalistic education setting. The main goal of authentic assessment is to inform pedagogical decision-making. (p. 7)

Stooke described two forms of assessment as authentic. The first is *pedagogical narration and learning stories*, understood as

authentic, asset-based assessments composed in story form. First developed in New Zealand, learning stories highlight learning dispositions such as taking an interest, or being courageous or persistent. (p. 7)

The second form of assessment described as authentic is *Reggio-inspired documentation*, inspired by preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. This multimodal assessment approach is viewed “as a form of teacher inquiry, a design process, and above all, a relational encounter that seeks to make learning visible” (p. 8). In contrast to authentic assessment, Stooke described a *standardized developmental screen* as

an instrument used to assess a child’s development in one or more developmental domains in order to compare the child’s development with an expected level of maturation. (p. 8)

Stooke, further explained that some conversations in Canadian early childhood education settings that focus on assessment are concerning, as they move toward *schoolification* of the early years.

Another example of a concerning conversation is when aspects of systems of care and education are merged. This merging requires early childhood education (ECE) communities to negotiate new relationships with public school systems and other stakeholders. The *Nshwaasnangong Child Care and Family Centre* (n.d.) is a specific example of this merging of systems. *Nshwaasnangong* is

Led by the Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre, licensed and supported by the Ministry of Education, and created with the Journey Together Committee. (para. 3)

Furthermore, Stooke (2019) explained “there is fear among ECEs that formal assessment tools used to measure achievement at school will be used inappropriately in ECE settings” (pp. 4-5). It is suggested by Stooke that this concern of schoolification can be addressed through authentic assessment practices; however, this “also raises questions about the relationship between any assessment approach and the curriculum in which it is situated” (p. 5).

2.4.2 Government of Canada’s Involvement in Early Learning and Child Care

The new millennium is described by White (2004) as the beginning of increased federal involvement and investment in provincial and territorial early learning and child care (ELCC). The Liberal federal government implemented the *Early Childhood Development Initiative*, hereinafter referred to as the *Development Initiative* (Health Canada, Human Resources Development Canada & Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2001). White (2004) stated that the *Development Initiative* was created under federal-provincial/territorial agreements reached in September 2000 with the Liberal government allotting the federal funding of \$500 million annually; those funds would be used to nationally expand and improve programming and services in four specific areas of priority. The four areas of priority are described by White: “healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; parenting and family supports; early childhood development, learning and care; and community supports” (p. 667; see also Akbari & McCuaig, 2014). Also, White (2004) explained that provinces and territories held jurisdiction on deciding how funds would be allocated. Because of the pooling of funds into parenting information and resources in March of 2003, another agreement was made between the federal and provincial/territorial Ministers most responsible for social services. The agreement is called the *Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning and Child Care*, hereinafter referred to as the *Framework Agreement*. The *Framework Agreement* specified that over a five-year period, the federal government would provide \$250 million

annually to fund ELCC provincial and territorial initiatives (Government of Canada, 2003).

Akbari and McCuaig (2014) noted that the federal funding strategies for the *Development Initiative* (Health Canada, Human Resources Development Canada & Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2001) and *Framework Agreement* (Government of Canada, 2003) were not targeting children from families who were experiencing poverty. Programs were described by Akbari and McCuaig as being accessible to all children, and accountability was introduced as each province and territory was to submit annual progress reports. Both Akbari and McCuaig (2014) and Langford (2010) stated that the only jurisdiction that did not sign the Government of Canada's (2003) *Framework Agreement*, though it still received the federal funding, was Québec: all other jurisdictions signed the agreement. White (2004) articulated, all provinces and territories that ratified the Government of Canada's (2003) *Framework Agreement* met in November 2004 and agreed upon shared principles that would guide the early learning and child care (ELCC) programs. The guiding principles became quality, universal inclusivity, accessibility, and developmentally focused programming (QUAD). White explained further that the expectation was that at subsequent meetings the details would be addressed and in 2005 this led to the agreement of jurisdictions being required to develop ELCC frameworks. Both Akbari and McCuaig (2014) and White et al. (2015) stated that in March 2007, the commitment was completely annulled by the Conservative government who were the federal representatives of Canada at the time. Since 2006, there has been a gradual shift with jurisdictions to designate ELCC programming responsibilities to Ministers most responsible for education (White et al., 2015). After the annulment of the Government of Canada's (2003) *Framework Agreement*, White et al. (2015) explained that a decade followed of gradual and sporadic provincial and territorial ELCC frameworks being developed.

In 2017, Ministers most responsible for early learning and child care (ELCC) federally, provincially, and territorially agreed that supporting families and communities was of great importance when striving to support children's futures in Canada (Government of Canada, 2017b). This support was an important aspect of the Government of Canada's

(2017b) *Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework*, hereinafter referred to as the *Multilateral Framework*. The *Multilateral Framework* was grounded in the notion that children's experiences in the early years have an influence on their rapid brain development, emphasizing that ELCC is, "one of the best investments that governments can make to strengthen the social and economic fabric of our country" (p. 1).

Jurisdictions have flexibility with how the objectives in the *Multilateral Framework* are met. The *Multilateral Framework* suggested a long-term vision for provincial and territorial jurisdictions so that all children can access ELCC environments. The broad long-term goals for ELCC systems are (1) high quality; (2) accessibility, affordability, and flexibility; and (3) inclusive education and care. The *Multilateral Framework* is particularly inclusive of children and families experiencing vulnerability and varying abilities. The only jurisdictions that have yet to publish ELCC frameworks are Nunavut and Yukon, but they are in development (see Government of Canada, 2017a; Government of Canada, 2018).

The *Multilateral Framework* stated that high quality early learning and child care is practiced through providing "rich early learning experiences and environments and views children as capable, competent learners who are full of potential" (Government of Canada, 2017b, p. 2). Also, the *Multilateral Framework* emphasized the importance of developing responsive, respectful relationships through purposeful interactions with children supported by quality early learning and child care (ELCC). Moreover, high quality care is best manifested through trained and qualified educators (Government of Canada, 2017b).

Québec did not sign the *Multilateral Framework*, but the province would receive their portion of federal funding and continue to invest their funds into services and programs for families and children. In other jurisdictions, investments were prioritized to regulated ELCC services, specifically focusing on children under six and reflecting local and regional needs, "with consideration for those more in need" (Government of Canada, 2017b, p. 4). The Government of Canada (2017b) in their *Multilateral Framework*, listed Indigenous families as more in need, perpetuating a deficit model. Recently, the

Government of Canada (2021) “highlighted that [Federal] Budget 2021 sets a goal of an average \$10 a day child care within the next five years” (para. 2).

2.4.3 First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Settler Inclusion and Configuration within Canada’s Early Learning and Child Care Programmatic Curricula

According to White et al. (2015) there has been little research on early learning and child care (ELCC) policy within Canada, leaving policy and framework creators to draw from international jurisdictions that have different histories than Canada. I came across no other research during the systematic search using Western University’s electronic library databases that focused on the inclusion and configuration of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI). I also came across no research that explicitly referred to Settlers within Canada’s ELCC programmatic curricula. However, the findings from Langford (2010), McCuaig (2014), and Prochner and Kirova (2018) focus on the development, content, and purposes of specific provincial and territorial ELCC frameworks and provide relevant insights.

Prochner and Kirova (2018) provided the widest scope of analysis when they analyzed the early learning and child care (ELCC) frameworks of the following jurisdictions: British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island (PEI), Manitoba, Alberta, Northwest Territories, and Québec. Langford (2010) and McCuaig (2014) also included most of the jurisdictions above in their studies, though McCuaig did not analyze Alberta and the Northwest Territories’ frameworks, and Langford did not analyze PEI, Manitoba, Alberta, and the Northwest Territories’ frameworks. As a result, only Québec, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and New Brunswick’s ELCC frameworks were analyzed by all the researchers. Each study identified similarities in the ELCC frameworks. These similarities include the following: (1) children are competent learners; (2) play is important, and planned curriculum that recognizes this importance supports children’s innate curiosity to learn; (3) educators are responsible to foster strong responsive relationships with children, families and communities; (4) the emphasis is on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and (5) children’s development is best supported through focusing on their strengths. The methods to fulfilling these principles are diverse, but the

foundational intent remains. These commonalities demonstrate the dominance of developmentalism in ELCC discourses, though constructivism² and multiculturalism also influence the theoretical orientations.

Prochner and Kirova (2018) described how the Northwest Territories early learning and child care (ELCC) framework includes Indigenous Knowledge systems which explicitly link to Elders who are knowledge keepers and central figures to ELCC practices. Perhaps the dominance of developmentalism in these ELCC frameworks may perpetuate the silencing of children that exist outside of the developmentalist universalized view of the child. The conscious integration of reconceptualist orientations that respect other ways of being could guard against this silencing. Also, Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2014) suggested that the pedagogical narrations found in British Columbia, New Brunswick, and Saskatchewan ELCC frameworks suggest that pedagogical narrations can be used that have the potential to integrate diverse voices and experiences that can further children and educators' meaning-making processes.

The dominant discourses prevalent throughout Langford (2010), McCuaig (2014), and Prochner and Kirova's (2018) analyses further Settler futurity. White et al. (2015) suggested that more research should be done through reconceptualist orientations. However, Battiste (2002) warned that when attempting to weave Indigenous and Settler knowledge the issue of whose knowledge is considered valid surfaces.

In "Chapter Two: Literature Review," I have described the process of early learning and child care frameworks becoming ubiquitous within the settler colonial nation-state Canada. This research occurring on First Nations, Métis, and Inuit land requires myself as a White Settler researcher to move with responsibility and accountability. I elaborate on the justification for deliberately moving with accountability and responsibility in "Chapter Three: Methodology."

² Langford (2010) explained that constructivism emphasizes the importance of educators developing responsive relationships with children and families.

Chapter 3

3 Methodology

The objective of the research is to contribute to the scholarship of evaluation and assessment within early learning and child care (ELCC) environments where Indigenous ways of knowing and being are central (e.g., Ball & Simpkins, 2004; Battiste, 2002). As such, in this chapter, I outline the pertinent methodology and methods that guided this study, and I describe the ways in which I worked with the collaborators.

3.1.1 Working Collaboratively

I was invited to be the principal investigator of a research collaboration with guidance from my dissertation supervisors Dr. Rachel Heydon and Dr. Erica Neeganagwedgin, leaders of an Indigenous child care and family centre, and funding partners Mitacs and a municipal funder (see Table 2). I was contacted via telephone by my supervisor, Dr. Rachel Heydon, on August 19, 2020 asking if I was interested in being part of the collaboration. My role would be to lead a research project comprised of three interconnected reports with all aspects of the project being completed virtually³. Early on during collaboration, my supervisors and I recognized that inviting Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie to collaborate on the project would be meaningful and provide guidance relating to Indigenous early childhood education. Liz Akiwenzie joined the meetings as much as her schedule allowed.

I submitted a Mitacs Accelerate Fellowship proposal to the funders, Mitacs and a municipal funder, on November 6, 2020, a prerequisite for being able to undertake the work. My co-supervisors and I were granted the fellowship and then, on February 22, 2021, I officially began working on the project with the end date of the fellowship being August 31, 2021. In the spring of 2021, I knew that I would need more time to complete

³ All aspects of the research project were completed virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Ideally, the collaborators would have met in person when possible. Also, Mitacs typically offers principal investigators office space but this was not available during the height of the pandemic.

the project, so an extension until October 31, 2021 was granted. For the first report, I focused on the state of knowledge relating to Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks (submitted June 24, 2021). Then, the second report focused on patterns within Indigenous ELCC outcomes frameworks used by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care and family centers (submitted September 24, 2021). The final report provided recommendations for creating an ELCC outcome framework for the collaborating Indigenous ELCC centre (submitted October 27, 2021). Each report was submitted to the managers of the Indigenous ELCC centre, municipal funding partner, Mitacs, and the municipal partners. After the reports were provided, I continued collaborating with Liz Akiwenzie with the guidance of my supervisors to create a dissertation (see Table 2). The ongoing meetings were part of the axiology, ensuring continuous contact and sharing of ideas to support the principal investigator.

Table 2

Telephone Call and Meetings throughout the Project

Date	Purpose
August 19, 2020	Telephone call inquiring if B. Johns was interested in being part of the project.
August 25, 2020	Virtual meeting planning the Mitacs Accelerate Fellowship proposal.
September 16, 2020	Virtual meeting introducing B. Johns to the funding partners.
October 13, 2020	Virtual meeting finalizing the Mitacs Accelerate Fellowship proposal.
February 24, 2021	Virtual meeting introducing ourselves, discussing the work schedule, and sharing documents to ensure we all have access.

March 03, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update and sharing of information that resonated with the collaborators from the previously shared documents.
March 10, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update.
March 17, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update.
March 24, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update.
March 31, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update.
April 07, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update, determining that moving forward, progress meetings will be scheduled as needed. An invitation by S. Small for B. Johns to attend a meeting (June 28, 2021) with the Journey Together Committee to discuss the work.
April 21, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update and a discussion of how/what B. Johns will share with the Journey Together Committee meeting.
April 26, 2021	Virtual meeting discussing how/what B. Johns will share with the Journey Together Committee meeting.
May 19, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update.
June 02, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update.

June 25, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update and a discussion on how/what B. Johns will share with the Journey Together Committee meeting.
June 28, 2021	Virtual meeting that included a discussion about the process of the collaborating partners, preliminary findings, next steps for the process, and exchange of questions.
July 28, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update and a discussion of what was shared and discussed with the Journey Together Committee meeting.
August 25, 2021	Virtual meeting with B. Johns providing a progress update.
September 29, 2021	Virtual meeting discussing the schedule for completion.
October 12, 2021	Virtual meeting discussing the collaboration process and findings.
October 14, 2021	Virtual meeting discussing the finalization of the findings for the partners.
November 22, 2021	Virtual meeting discussing how the collaboration informs the dissertation.
January 21, 2022	Virtual meeting discussing the writing of the dissertation for an international academic audience and providing B. Johns verbal feedback about the dissertation.
February 24, 2022	Virtual meeting providing B. Johns verbal feedback about the dissertation.

July 29, 2022	Virtual meeting providing B. Johns verbal feedback about the dissertation.
August 24, 2022	Virtual meeting providing B. Johns verbal feedback about the dissertation.
November 15, 2022	Virtual meeting providing B. Johns verbal feedback about the dissertation.
February 01, 2023	Virtual meeting providing B. Johns verbal feedback about the dissertation.
March 01, 2023	Virtual meeting providing B. Johns verbal feedback and guidance about completing the dissertation.

I function within the posthumanist, ethico-onto-epistemology agential realism. Barad (2003) described this *posthumanist* account as being an orientation that calls into question the givenness of the differential categories of “human” and “nonhuman,” examining the practices through which these differential boundaries are stabilized and destabilized. (p. 808)

I turn to posthumanists such as Barad because of the focus on the stabilization and destabilization of differential boundaries with consideration for historical contexts and possibilities for futures. In other words, Barad recognized the iterative materialization of the world with possibilities for change. Barad (2007) also referred to *ethico-onto-epistemologies* as conceptualizations of existence and interactions where perceptions of existence are interrelated matters of ethics.

Part of moving ethically through the research process included meeting with Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie as much as possible to discuss the research methods and share feedback, especially while writing the dissertation. Although Liz and I are collaborators, we are grounded within different ontologies, epistemologies, and axiologies; Liz is

grounded within Ojibway/Oneida ways of knowing, while I am grounded in the new materialist, agential realism orientation. Tuck and McKenzie (2015) explained that *new materialism* and Indigenous ways of knowing should not be confused as the same. For new materialists, there is “no separation between epistemology, ontology, and ethics” (p. 77). They then described an Indigenous epistemology as understanding that “Knowledge is holistic, cyclic, and relational. Knowledge is not just mental, but physical, emotional, spiritual” (p. 77).

Liz trusted me to lead the methodological structure of the research while integrating her feedback. This collaboration between Liz and I created a superposition, where if one of us had not been involved, the research would have been different. Barad (2007) described a superposition:

when two water waves overlap, the resultant wave can be larger or smaller than either component wave. For example, when the crest of one wave overlaps with the crest of another, the resultant waveform is larger than the individual component waves. On the other hand, if the crest of one wave overlaps with crest of another, the disturbance partly or in some cases completely cancel one another out, resulting in an area of relative calm. Hence the resultant wave is a sum of the effect of each individual component wave; that is, it is a combination of the disturbance created by each wave individually. This way of combining effects is called *superposition* [emphasis in original]. (p. 76)

We strived to balance our intra-actions so that at no time would we cancel out one another’s contributions. This involved me consistently returning to our intra-actions and Liz Akiwenzie’s feedback.

Also, throughout this project I intra-acted with texts. I use the terminology *intra-action* instead of *interaction* to recognize the ontological inseparability of entities and to signify “*the mutual constitution of entangled agencies* [emphasis in original] (Barad, 2007, p. 33). Agency, Barad (2007) explained, is not something humans and nonhumans have in them waiting to be used as a choice; agency is a doing/being and a matter of the ongoing (re)configuring of the world. In particular, my intra-actions during this research informed

the differences and exclusions that emerged while collaborating with Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie. Barad stated that,

it is important to note that the “distinct” agencies are only distinct in a relational, not an absolute, sense, that is, *agencies are only distinct in relation to their mutual entanglement; they don’t exist as individual elements* [emphasis in original]. (p. 33)

Recognizing this relational distinction, the findings of the dissertation may be transferable: Dick (2014) explained, “the transferability of a research finding is the extent to which it can be applied in other contexts and studies” (p. 2). A strategy for transferability is described by Korstjens and Moser (2018) as thick description. As such, I describe the texts and context so that the findings can become meaningful to someone outside this specific research process. A reader of this dissertation can make a transferability judgement of whether the findings are transferable to their contexts. Additionally, I engaged with what Korstjens and Moser (2018) referred to as an audit trail, being transparent about the research steps and recording process.

Within the following sections of this chapter, I explain the research steps and recording process. First, however, I articulate the theoretical reasonings for the research steps and recording process by focusing the upcoming subsection on Barad’s (2003; 2007; 2014) conceptualizations of intra-acting.

3.1.2 Intra-acting

Barad (2007) noted that an intra-action may or may not involve humans and that different intra-actions produce different phenomena:

intra-actions always entail particular exclusions, and exclusions foreclose the possibility of determinism, providing the condition of an open future. But neither are anything and everything possible at any given moment. (p. 234)

Also, specific intra-actions are how *phenomena* come to matter, in both senses of the word; however, “saying something is so does not make it so” (p. 211). Specifically, Barad stated that, “*phenomena are the ontological inseparability of intra-acting agencies* [emphasis in original]; in other words, “*phenomena are ontological entanglements* [emphasis in original]” (p. 333). Phenomena are relational performances of the world.

Barad (2003) explained that performativity for agential realists is “a contestation of the unexamined habits of mind that grant language and other forms of representation more power in determining our ontologies than they deserve” (p. 803). When referring to power, I turn to Barad (2007) for the centering of “materializing potential” (p. 230):

Power is transmitted through the repeated application of pressure on the body. The body reacts to the forces, manifest as shifting material alignments and changes in potential, and becomes not simply the receiver but also the transmitter or local source of the signal or sign that operates through it. (p. 189)

This discussion of materializing potential includes how I conceptualize *discourse* because “[d]iscursive practices define what counts as meaningful statements” (Barad, 2007, p. 146). How Barad conceptualized discourse is prevalent to the research because I conceptualize evaluations/assessments as influencing what counts as meaningful statements within early learning and child care environments. Barad (2007) articulated that “[d]iscourse does not refer to linguistic or signifying systems, speech acts, or conversations” (p. 146). More specifically,

Discourse is not what is said; it is what constrains and enables what can be said. Discursive practices define what counts as meaningful statements. Statements are not mere utterances of the originating consciousness of a unified subject; rather, statements and subjects emerge from a field of possibilities. The field of possibilities is not static or singular but rather is a dynamic and contingent multiplicity. (pp. 146-147)

The field of possibilities refers to *the void*, and the void is “the yearning and the imagining of what might yet have been, and thus also the infinitely rich ground of imagining possibilities of living and dying otherwise” (Barad, 2017b, p. 56). So, discourse, as reiterated by Barad (2007), “does not refer to linguistic or signifying systems, grammars, speech acts, or conversations” (p. 146). For this research project, I focused on what constrains and enables, what can be said and how this influences what counts as meaningful statements.

Entanglements are distinct from unities. Barad (2014) articulated that “they [entanglements] do not erase differences; on the contrary entangling entails differentiatings, differentiatings entail entanglings; one move – *cutting together-apart*

[emphasis in original]” (p. 176). An example of an entanglement is space, time, and matter. Barad (2007) referred to this phenomenon as spacetime-matter. Additionally, Barad explained that there are exteriority-within-phenomena also referred to as agential separability and this “*provides the condition for the possibility of objectivity* [emphasis in original] (p. 175). Objectivity is conceptualized as “a matter of accountability [and responsibility] for what materializes, for what comes to be” (Barad, 2007, p. 361). I, as the researcher, am responsible and accountable for the emergences that occurred during the study. I was compelled to seek out and implement the feedback from Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie. Accountability and responsibility are described by Barad as requiring attentiveness to what matters and also to what is excluded from mattering; beings are responsible for what they seek to know. In addition, beings are also responsible for the exclusions they participate in enacting. My responsibility includes the exclusions I enact through this research process. However, as Barad explained, there are possibilities to change what matters and what is excluded from mattering. Barad stated that “questions of responsibility and accountability present themselves with every possibility” (p. 182), so accountability and responsibility are central to me throughout the study.

The methodology and methods I used throughout this research process could have been different as there are many different ways the objective could have been engaged with. The specific choices and agential cuts I made enacted phenomena; however, cuts are not enacted once and for all (Barad, 2007). This cutting together and apart is what Barad (2007) described as a part of causal intra-activity, where

part of the world becomes determinately bounded and propertied in its emergent intelligibility to another part of the world, while lively matterings, possibilities, and impossibilities are reconfigured. (p. 149)

Furthermore, Barad (2012) argued that at the heart of being is indeterminacy. The existence of indeterminacies does not mean that there are no histories: “on the contrary, indeterminacies are constitutive of the very materiality of being, and some of us live with our pain, pleasure, and also political courage” (Barad, 2014, p. 177).

As a White Settler researcher on Turtle Island (Canada), I would be contributing to *settler futurity* if I were to ignore the pain and courage of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (see Tuck & Yang, 2012). The concept of settler futurity is explained by Tuck and Yang (2012) as being connected to the settler move to innocence and *settler adoption fantasies*. They elaborated:

These [settler adoption] fantasies can mean the adoption of Indigenous practices and knowledge, but more, refer to those narratives in the settler colonial imagination in which the Native (understanding that he is becoming extinct) hands over his land, his claim to the land, his very Indian-ness to the settler for safe-keeping. This is a fantasy that is invested in a settler futurity and dependent on the foreclosure of an Indigenous futurity. (p. 14)

Regarding politics, Barad (2017a) asserted that, “the very stuff of the world is a matter of politics. Matter is not only political all the way up and all the way down; it has all matters of matter inside it” (p. 117). As such, this research, my choices as a researcher, and what emerges is a matter of politics and I am accountable to/for those emergences. However, these emergences and how they are known will not be universal because as Barad (2007) explained, “knowing entails specific practices through which the world is differently articulated and accounted for” (p. 149). Hence, I provide, in the sections that follow, methods for responding to the research questions, and I discuss the constraints when completing this research. However, before that, I explain what a diffractive analysis can be in the next subsection.

3.1.3 Diffractive Analysis

Diffractive analysis provides a way to read texts for research purposes through *diffractive reading*. Diffractive reading is described by Barad (2007) as “reading insights through one another in ways that help illuminate differences as they emerge” (p. 30); “reading through” is also called diffraction grating, and when researchers are “reading through” they strive for, “respectful engagement that attends to detailed patterns of thinking of each; fine-grained details matter” (p. 90). Although Barad emphasized the illumination of differences as they emerge, this does not mean similarities cannot be discussed as I demonstrate throughout this diffractive reading. I also decided to engage with a

diffractive analysis because, as described by Barad, the concepts of accountability and responsibility are central, and I strove to be accountable and responsible with Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie.

Reading texts in relation to one another is influenced by *diffraction*:

Diffraction has to do with the way waves combine when they overlap and the apparent bending and spreading out of waves when they encounter an obstruction. Diffraction phenomena are familiar from everyday experiences. A familiar example is the diffraction or interference pattern that water waves make when they rush through an opening in a breakwater or when stones are dropped in a pond and the ripples overlap. [...] While some physicists continue to abide by the purely historical distinction between diffraction and interference phenomena, I use the terms “diffraction” and “interference” interchangeably. (Barad, 2007, pp. 28-29)

Barad (2007) conceptualized diffraction and interference as the same, physically speaking. They are the same physically, because amplitudes combine when waves overlap; waves such as water, sound, and light exhibit diffraction patterns under certain conditions. Also, Barad articulated that under certain conditions particles exhibit diffraction patterns. Thinking of diffraction patterns while reading requires “reading insights through one another in ways that help illuminate differences as they emerge” (Barad, 2007, p. 30). The process of reading insights through one another as described by Barad is a process of being open to possibilities within the iterative materialization of the world. Regarding possibilities, Barad stated, that like boundaries, possibilities do not sit still, and “new possibilities open up as others that might have been possible are now excluded” (p. 234). Similar to waves combining as they overlap, when I engaged throughout this research process with texts, supervisors, and Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie, they influenced the patterns that emerged during the Diffractive Analysis.

Also, the theoretical underpinning of diffractive analysis, agential realism, rejects *representationalism* because as Barad (2007) explained, the notion of separation is foundational to representationalism—separating words and things into separate domains.

Moving toward performative alternatives shifts the focus of questions to matters of practices and doing, rather than correspondence between descriptions and reality. This is important to the research, particularly when focusing on considerations for the development of Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks because this focuses on practices/doing. Regarding *reality* and *realism*, Barad specified, “Realism...is not about representations of independent reality but about the real consequences, interventions, creative possibilities, and responsibilities of intra-acting within and as part of the world” (p. 37). Reality is composed of things-in-phenomena, and phenomena are specific material configurations of the world; an example of a phenomena is a human. When referring to material configurations of the world or material-discursive phenomena, this is also referring to discursive practices because as Barad explained,

discursive practices and material phenomena do not stand in a relationship of externality to each other...Neither is articulated or articulable in the absence of the other; matter and meaning are mutually articulated. (p. 152)

Diffraction analysis is a way of reading texts in relation to one another with attention toward differences that matter as part of the relational encounter between the literature and the researcher (Barad, 2007). The next sections focus on the method for responding to the research questions.

3.2 Methods for Responding to Research Questions One and Two

The first and second research questions are

1. *What is the state of knowledge related to Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks?*
2. *What are some tensions, debates and potentialities when establishing an early learning and child care outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives?*

To respond to these questions, I began by identifying core texts that could help me to respond to these questions. To do so, I selected texts that predominantly focused on Turtle Island (Canada) but included Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, Finland, and the United States of America. I included other countries because

during the screening process of identifying texts, there was literature that responded to the guiding questions. Also, the managers of the collaborating Indigenous early learning and child centre, during the planning of the research, expressed interest in Nordic countries and Aotearoa New Zealand's early learning and child care pedagogies.

Throughout the process, I had meetings with managers at the collaborating Indigenous early learning and child care centre, stakeholders, my supervisors, and Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie (see Table 2: Telephone Call and Meetings throughout the Project).

I was influenced by Srivastava and Oh's (2010) method of searching, screening, and reviewing literature, and I began the search process by framing "concepts...that could be managed for database research" (Srivastava & Oh, 2010, p. 463). This framing helped identify keywords to complete multiple systematic searches using databases accessed through Western University's electronic library. Out of the 775 databases available to me, I deemed 16 as potentially providing relevant literature surrounding Indigenous early childhood education and policy. Then, out of the 16 databases, eight provided relevant results and those databases were: *Bloomsbury Education & Childhood Studies*, *Canadian Public Policy Collection*, *Education Databases*, *ERIC*, *iPortal: Indigenous Studies Portal Research Tool*, *JSTOR*, *ProQuest Education Journal*, and *Taylor & Francis Online*. The keywords used to complete multiple systematic searches using the databases included the following: *Indigenous*, *First Nations*, *Métis*, *Inuit*, *Aboriginal*, *Native*, *early learning and child care*, *early childhood education*, *family centre*, *outcomes framework*, *pedagogy*, and *Canada*. When a database produced more than 100 results, the first 100 were included in the search.

Through the systematic search, I identified 51 documents that could potentially support responding to the guiding questions. Then, I chose 15 through a screening process influenced by Srivastava and Oh (2010) when using "the titles and descriptors...to grasp the basic idea of what the resource material could provide" (p. 463). Reviewing involved "the substantive [diffractive] reading of the documents deemed relevant for the review" (p. 463). In the end, I focused on 15 peer-reviewed texts which were 13 journal articles,

one report, and an Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes framework (see Appendix A).

Since “the details of diffraction patterns depend on the details of the apparatus” (Barad, 2007, p. 91), I created a diffraction apparatus or material configuration that is attentive to the fine details specific to the research. Apparatuses were described by Barad (2007) as boundary drawing practices and material-discursive practices: “*apparatuses are not mere observing instruments but boundary-drawing practices – specific material (re)configurings of the world – which come to matter* [emphasis in original]” (p. 206). Additionally, diffractive apparatuses are described by Barad as being open to rearrangements and rearticulations. When reading texts and insights through one another, a posthumanist understanding of data is one where researcher and data are neither prior to one another (MacLure, 2013). Murriss and Bozalek (2019) posited that no one text is foundational to the analysis, and Barad (2007) described the texts as being in conversation. Specifically, the diffraction apparatus I used was a descriptive annotated bibliography. I used a descriptive annotated bibliography because this afforded me a system to organize specific content from the literature, including author descriptions, theoretical orientation, methodology, context, main points, and type of literature such as research study or report (see Appendix A). Using the descriptive annotated bibliography as a diffractive apparatus was a tool for returning to the literature as invitations for further reading. I returned to each text at least three times for possibilities of emergences. This supported a thick description when responding to the research questions. The diffractive apparatus was also used to report back to the managers of the Indigenous early learning and child care centre, stakeholders, supervisors, and Ojibway and Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie during the meetings. When writing the dissertation, I continued to collaborate with Liz Akiwenzie.

3.3 Methods for Responding to Research Question Three

The third research question is

3. *What are patterns within Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada)?*

To respond to this question, I first identified Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) centres across Turtle Island (Canada). Next, I catalogued the identified Indigenous ELCC centres' location, website, language, mission statement, key programs and services, Indigenous ELCC outcomes framework, and founding date.

I catalogued the information with Microsoft Excel software and then reformatted in Microsoft Word for readability (see Appendix B). The timeframe to respond to this question was three months and the meetings continued throughout.

To respond to research question three, I modified Srivastava and Oh's method that is outlined in the *Section 3.2*. However, I modified the method to accommodate using websites and an online search engine, instead of using databases and journal articles. During a meeting, we discussed how identifying Indigenous ELCC centres websites could be done using an online search engine. Using the search engine *Google*, I identified 20 Indigenous-led organizations. I began the systematic search by turning to the Government of Canada's (2017c) *Municipalities* webpage that provides 13 hyperlinks, each leading to a list of provinces and territories' municipalities. The Government of Canada (2016) stated, "Each provincial/territorial government has its own criteria for determining what qualifies as a municipality" (para. 5). The provinces of the settler colonial nation-state Canada are Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Québec, and Saskatchewan. The territories are Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon. The registered municipalities with the corresponding province and territory were used as keywords in the search engine such as "*Abbotsford [city]*", "*British Columbia [province]*". The other keywords that were used for each search were: *Indigenous*, *Aboriginal*, *child care*, *early learning*, and *family centre*. If the search engine provided multiple pages of results, then only the first page of results became part of the searching and screening process.

This diffractive apparatus is comprised of 20 Indigenous-led organizations that provide child care and other services for Indigenous children and families located on Turtle Island (Canada). Ten of the 20 websites provided or referred to resources that speak to the assessment and evaluation of early learning and child care programs. The 20 Indigenous-

led organizations were identified through the inclusion and exclusion criteria (see Table 3).

Table 3

Inclusion–Exclusion Criteria of Indigenous-led Organizations

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous-led organization provides child care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and other services for Indigenous children and families who live within a city, municipality, or town • Indigenous-led organization is the provincial and territorial coordinating body that is responsible for the implementation for Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada’s (2018) <i>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework</i> • Content on the website is provided in the English language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous-led organization solely provides child care • Indigenous-led organization is solely an Indigenous EarlyON • Indigenous-led organization serves specifically Indigenous children and families who live on a Reserve

I developed these inclusion and exclusion criteria to allow for an efficient search of the literature. A narrowed focus was important because I had three months to respond to this question. I focused on services for Indigenous children and families that do not live on a Reserve. Barker (2012) explained that “Reserve land is not private property; it is held in trust by the government ostensibly for Indigenous peoples’ use” (p. 63).

Then, continuing to be influenced by Srivastava and Oh (2010), I used “the [websites’] titles and descriptors ... to grasp the basic idea of what the resource material could provide” (p. 463). Reviewing involved “the substantive [diffractive] reading of the [websites as] documents deemed relevant for the review” (p. 463). To prepare for the diffractive reading of the content of websites, I created a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to catalogue the data to then be diffractively read. I returned to read the spreadsheet four times for possible emergences. I determined that searching, screening, and reviewing a website was completed when I had located the information for the spreadsheet or when I thought to identify the necessary information would require me to contact a person associated with the organization. No organization was telephoned or electronically mailed. I was unable to identify specific Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks within the websites of the 20 Indigenous-led organizations. However, 10 of the 20 websites provided or referred to resources about the assessment and evaluation of ELCC programs.

3.4 Methods for Responding to Research Question Four

The fourth research question is

4. *What are considerations for the development of Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks?*

To respond to this question, I diffractively read the descriptive annotated bibliography (see Appendix A) and the spreadsheet that includes each Indigenous ELCC centres’ location, website, language, mission statement, key programs and services, Indigenous ELCC outcomes framework, and founding date (see Appendix B). I read the data of apparatuses through one another three times. Through this diffractive reading and meetings with Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie, supervisors, and stakeholders, considerations emerged. Before “Chapter 4: Diffractive Analysis,” I provide within *Section 3.5* some constraints of the theoretical orientation concerning this research.

3.5 Constraints

A potential theoretical constraint of the study is the void. As Barad (2017a) explained, the field of classical physics has used the void as

a much-valued colonialist apparatus...a way of offering justification for claims of ownership in the “discovery” of “virgin” territory – the notion that “untended,” “uncultivated,” “uncivilized” spaces are *empty* rather than plentiful, has been a well-worn tool used in the services of colonialism, racism, capitalism, militarism, imperialism, nationalism, and scientism [emphasis in original]. (p. 113)

I turned to Barad’s (2017b), conceptualization of the void as a field of possibilities—that is the “yearning and imagining of what might yet have been, and thus also the infinitely rich ground of imagining possibilities for living and dying otherwise” (p. 56). I strived to not intra-act with the void as a colonialist apparatus.

Indeed, as a White Settler engaged with the collaboration, I needed to continuously be checking in with myself to bring my attention to whether I was engaging in what Tuck and Yang (2012) called *settler moves to innocence* (see Chapter 2 of dissertation). Particularly, I was cautious of assuming the “free your mind” and the rest will follow mindset. I needed to remember that continuously striving to decolonize my mind would not be enough to dismantle a settler colonial nation-state. Having a support system, my dissertation supervisors and committee, was also important for guidance. In addition, receiving feedback from Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie and the managers of the collaborating Indigenous early learning and child care centre was invaluable to guard against engaging in settler moves to innocence.

Another constraint of this research involves the theoretical underpinnings of agential realism that do not decenter Whiteness. Todd (2016) explained that ontologies grounded in relationality and/or ethics are not unique:

when we cite European thinkers who discuss the ‘more-than-human’ but do not discuss their Indigenous contemporaries who are writing on the exact same topic, we perpetuate the white supremacy of the academy. (p. 18)

I collaborated with Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie and incorporated any feedback throughout the dissertation. I am accountable and responsible for being aware and careful of my actions as part of the iterative materialization of the world with possibilities for change.

Chapter 4

4 Diffraction Analysis

In this research, I focused on contributing to the scholarship of evaluation and assessment within early learning and child care (ELCC) environments where Indigenous ways of knowing and being are central (e.g., Ball & Simpkins, 2004; Battiste, 2002). This chapter is informed by the reports completed throughout the collaboration with my dissertation supervisors Dr. Rachel Heydon and Dr. Erica Neeganagwedgin, leaders of an Indigenous child care and family centre, and funding partners Mitacs and a municipal funder. Each of the following sections respond to the research questions outlined in the third chapter:

1. *What is the state of knowledge related to Indigenous ELCC outcomes frameworks?*
2. *What are some tensions, debates, and potentialities when establishing an ELCC outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives?*
3. *What are patterns within Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada)?*
4. *What are considerations for the development of Indigenous ELCC outcomes frameworks?*

The final section of this chapter offers considerations surrounding leadership and advisement, resources and supports, structural considerations, and content considerations during the construction of an Indigenous ELCC outcomes framework. Although these provocations are organized into subsections for clarity and readability, they are interconnected.

4.1 State of Knowledge Related to Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Frameworks

When referring to early learning and child care (ELCC) and a primary education system of Canada, Ott and Hibbert (2019) offered that “in one sense there is no Canadian education system” (p. 2). They described Canada as a federation of ten provinces and three territories, “with great differences in regional economies, majority languages, and population densities” (p. 2). Also, the British Columbia Association of Aboriginal

Friendship Centres (2010), hereinafter referred to as the BC Aboriginal Friendship Centres, noted that there is no universal terminology for what they call, Indigenous outcomes measurement frameworks⁴ (IOMFs). When referring to outcomes measurement frameworks the BC Aboriginal Friendship Centre articulates that outcomes measurement frameworks have typically been developed through a Western European perspective and are inherently value laden.

Ma, Shen, Krenn, Hu, and Yuan (2016) provided an example of the dominance of Western European perspectives within outcomes measurement frameworks. They identified two prevalent approaches:

- 1) The use of “critical domains of child development to identify and define desirable learning outcomes for children at a certain developmental stage” (p. 777).
- 2) The reliance “on standards of teaching and learning. This approach aims to develop explicit expectations on learning outcomes of children” (p. 777).

Ma et al. (2016) turned to the National Education Goals Panel (1991) to describe the critical domains and explained domains are dependent on cultural context. The critical domains included physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive development. Regarding standards of teaching and learning, Ma et al. (2016) explained these include what opportunities, environment, and interactions are afforded to children.

4.1.1 Perspectives of Indigenous Outcomes Frameworks

The BC Aboriginal Friendship Centres (2010) identified three models of Indigenous outcomes measurement frameworks (IOMFs) demonstrated within the literature they analyzed. However, only one of the models is anchored within Indigenous perspectives. The BC Aboriginal Friendship Centres referred to this model as an,

Indigenous Indigenous outcomes measurement framework. This model refers to a tool designed specifically by and for the Indigenous community, anchored in an Indigenous worldview. If the Indigenous designers of the tool choose to use

⁴ The British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (2010) analysis was not specifically focused on early learning and child care environments.

universal outcomes, there is clear evidence that the outcomes support the Indigenous agenda [emphasis in original]. (p. iii)

Even though only one of the models is anchored within an Indigenous worldview, the BC Aboriginal Friendship Centres recommended being and remaining anchored within an Indigenous worldview throughout the creation and maintenance of an Indigenous outcomes measurement framework (IOMF). They explained that IOMFs are diverse: they are created and used for a variety of reasons such as financial accountability and informing community practices. However, a focus on financial accountability, they warned, “can result in less flexibility to pursue innovative and/or community driven approaches to measurement” (p. iii). Also, the BC Aboriginal Friendship Centres suggested that inherent to the process of creating an IOMF is an Indigenous research methodology:

Indigenous research methods will influence the components of a framework such as:

- The accompanying values and purpose of measurement
- The language used to describe outcomes and indicators
- How evidence is defined and where it will be used
- Whose needs are being met by engaging in measurement
- The limitations of measurement. (p. 9)

Additionally, the association explained that “an Indigenous approach to measuring and evaluating outcomes may result in a product that looks very different from more mainstream frameworks” (p. 30).

An example of what could be considered a Western-European approach to outcomes measurements is Harms, Clifford, and Cryer’s (2014) *Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-3* (ECERS-3), which is the third rendition of the early learning and child care (ELCC environmental rating scale. The environmental rating scale focuses on what opportunities, environments, and interactions are afforded to children. Garvis, Sheridan, Williams, and Mellgren (2018) explained that Harms et al.’s (2014) environmental rating scale was created in the United States of America and had been used for more than 30 years. However, the scale has not been mandatory within all ELCC environments within

the United States of America. Iokepa-Guerrero and de France (2007) shared that there are ELCC programs from Hawaiian perspectives that are striving “to include the transmission of the Hawaiian worldview through the revitalization of the Native language and other aspects of the culture” (p. 41).

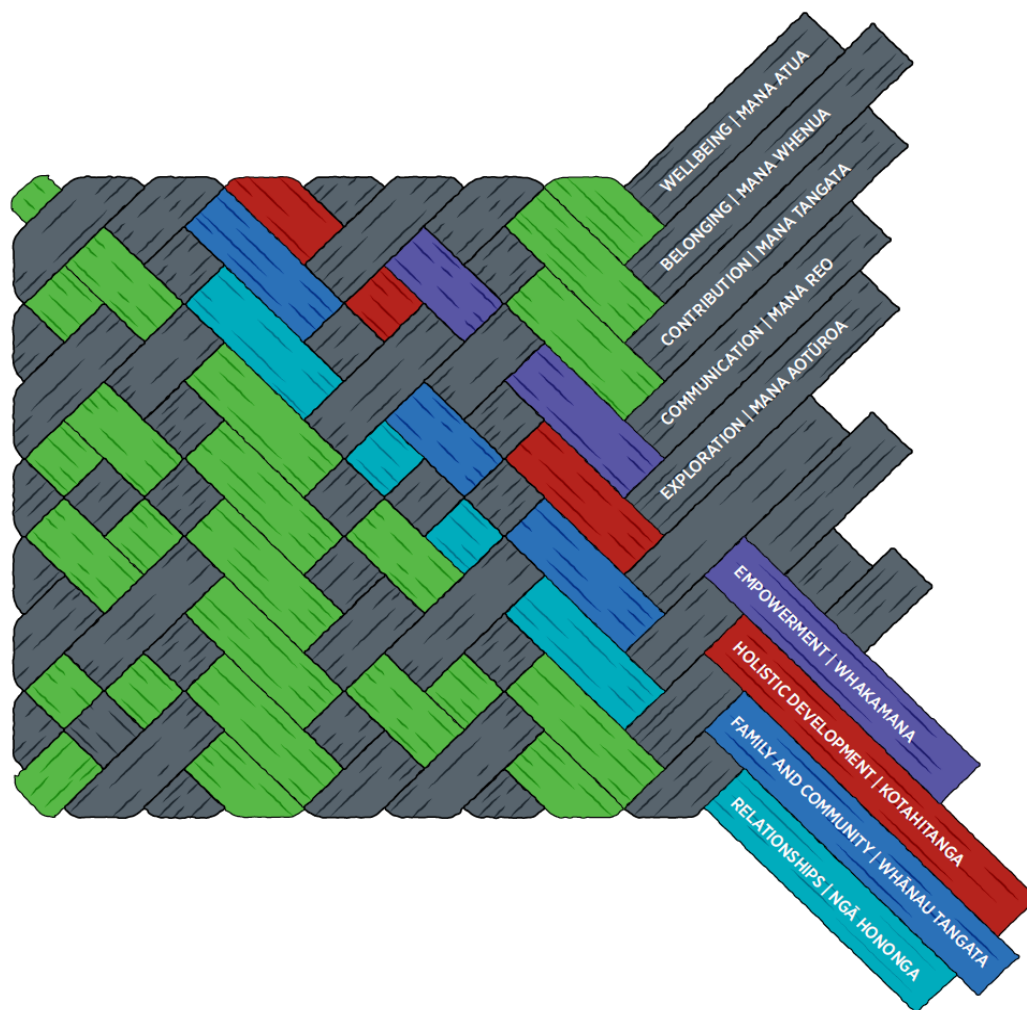
Interestingly, the first and second version of the environmental rating scale were translated to Swedish that could be used in Sweden’s preschool environments (Garvis et al., 2018). Sápmelaččat or Sámi are recognized as Indigenous people by the Swedish government, “the Sámi’s status as an indigenous people is based on their unique worldviews, their own history, livelihoods and language” (Keskitalo, Määttä, and Uusiautti, 2012, p. 329). Keskitalo et al. (2012) explained further that “Sámi education lacks self-determination leading to a situation where the Sámi do not have much control over the macro-level framework of education” (p. 336). Garvis et al. (2018) argued that for the ECERS-3 to be relevant, cultural adaptations were needed, specifically concerning physical environments, room organization, outdoor activities, transition times, weather conditions, and what is considered safe, risky, or dangerous challenges for children. For example, within many Swedish preschool environments, climbing a tree is perceived as an appropriately challenging activity, while Harms et al.’s ECERS-3 (2014) measures climbing a tree as a major hazard (Garvis et al., 2018). Similarly, regarding Swedish preschool environments, Sheridan (2000) suggested that when using ECERS (Harms & Clifford, 1980), enhancement begins when pedagogues and evaluators have discussions between program evaluations.

4.1.2 Examples of Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Frameworks

An example of what could be considered an Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes framework is Aotearoa New Zealand’s Ministry of Education (1996) *Te Whāriki*. Hedges (2020) explained that *Te Whāriki* is “partially written in Māori (the language of the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa, New Zealand)” (p. 345). *Te Whāriki* is described by Hedges (2020) as meaning, “‘the woven mat’: metaphorically it represents a curriculum created to cater for all children in an ECE setting” (p. 7; see Figure 4).

Figure 4*Depiction of a Whāriki or Woven Mat with Brief Written Description*

The *kōwhiri whakapae* whāriki depicted below symbolises the start of a journey that will take the traveller beyond the horizon. The dark grey represents Te Kore and te pō, the realm of potential and the start of enlightenment. The green represents new life and growth. The purple, red, blue and teal have many differing cultural connotations and are used here to highlight the importance of the principles as the foundations of the curriculum.



Note. Excerpt from Aotearoa New Zealand Ministry of Education (2017) early learning and child care curriculum document, *Te Whāriki* (p.11).

Te Whāriki has a focus on striving to honour the *Treaty of Waitangi* (Te One, 2013). Hedges (2020) shared that “Te Whāriki forefronts te reo (Māori language) and kaupapa Māori (Māori beliefs, theories, values, and culture) as a statement of commitment to the country's Indigenous history for all children” (p. 3). The Ministry of Education (2017) has focused on updating and strengthening *Te Whāriki*. Part of the revision involved significantly reducing the number of outcomes down to 20 learning outcomes (see Figure 5). The 1996 version had 118 learning outcomes (Ministry of Education, 1996). Alcock and Haggerty (2013) suggested this large number of outcomes had contributed to viewing children as early childhood products.

Within Aotearoa New Zealand, *Kei Tua o te Pae* was developed for the assessment for learning within early learning and child care (ELCC) environments:

Kei Tua o te Pae (KTotP) is a set of 20 resource booklets that were developed over a 9-year period, beginning in 2000, to provide examples of assessment practices that would maintain continuity with *Te Whāriki* [emphasis in original]. (Alcock and Haggerty, 2013, p. 23)

Another ELCC outcomes framework, or what Rameka (2011) referred to as an assessment framework, was developed by and for the “Best of Both Worlds Bilingual Preschool [that] is a Māori/English bicultural, bilingual early childhood service located in Papakura, South Auckland, New Zealand” (p. 251). Best of Both Worlds Bilingual Preschool depicts *Māui tikitiki a Taranga* as an assessment framework: “*Māui tikitiki a Taranga*, the ancestor hero, is known throughout Polynesia [emphasis in original]” (Rameka, 2011, p. 251). Rameka further explained that,

the articulation and reification of *Māui tikitiki a Taranga* as an assessment frame involved exploration and interpretation of behaviours, traits and characteristics, trial and error, ongoing discussion with community, whanau (extended family), knowledgeable others, and research [emphasis in original]. (p. 251)

However, the BC Aboriginal Friendship Centres (2010) cautioned that transcribing Indigenous stories for the purpose of creating cultural indicators presents the risk of losing meaning, because the intended mode of communication is often oral.

Figure 5*Overview of the Strands, Goals, and Learning Outcomes*

STRAND	GOALS	LEARNING OUTCOMES
Wellbeing Mana atua	<p>Children experience an environment where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Their health is promoted » Their emotional wellbeing is nurtured » They are kept safe from harm 	<p>Over time and with guidance and encouragement, children become increasingly capable of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Keeping themselves healthy and caring for themselves te ora nui » Managing themselves and expressing their feelings and needs te whakahua whakaaro » Keeping themselves and others safe from harm te noho haumarū
Belonging Mana whenua	<p>Children and their families experience an environment where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Connecting links with the family and the wider world are affirmed and extended » They know that they have a place » They feel comfortable with the routines, customs and regular events » They know the limits and boundaries of acceptable behaviour 	<p>Over time and with guidance and encouragement, children become increasingly capable of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Making connections between people, places and things in their world te waihanganga hononga » Taking part in caring for this place te manaaki i te taiao » Understanding how things work here and adapting to change te mārama ki te āhua o ngā whakahaere me te mōhio ki te panoni » Showing respect for kaupapa, rules and the rights of others te mahi whakaute
Contribution Mana tangata	<p>Children experience an environment where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » There are equitable opportunities for learning, irrespective of gender, ability, age, ethnicity or background » They are affirmed as individuals » They are encouraged to learn with and alongside others 	<p>Over time and with guidance and encouragement, children become increasingly capable of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Treating others fairly and including them in play te ngākau makuru » Recognising and appreciating their own ability to learn te rangatiratanga » Using a range of strategies and skills to play and learn with others te ngākau aroha

STRAND	GOALS	LEARNING OUTCOMES
Communication Mana reo	Children experience an environment where:	Over time and with guidance and encouragement, children become increasingly capable of:
	» They develop non-verbal communication skills for a range of purposes	» Using gesture and movement to express themselves he kōrero ā-tinana
	» They develop verbal communication skills for a range of purposes	» Understanding oral language ³ and using it for a range of purposes he kōrero ā-waha
	» They experience the stories and symbols of their own and other cultures	» Enjoying hearing ⁴ stories and retelling and creating them he kōrero paki
		» Recognising print symbols and concepts and using them with enjoyment, meaning and purpose he kōrero tuhituhi
Exploration Mana aotūroa		» Recognising mathematical symbols and concepts and using them with enjoyment, meaning and purpose he kōrero pāngarau
	» They discover different ways to be creative and expressive	» Expressing their feelings and ideas using a range of materials and modes he kōrero auaha
	Children experience an environment where:	Over time and with guidance and encouragement, children become increasingly capable of:
	» Their play is valued as meaningful learning and the importance of spontaneous play is recognised	» Playing, imagining, inventing and experimenting te whakaaro me te tūhurahura i te pūtaiao
	» They gain confidence in and control of their bodies	» Moving confidently and challenging themselves physically te wero ā-tinana
	» They learn strategies for active exploration, thinking and reasoning	» Using a range of strategies for reasoning and problem solving te hīraurau hopanga
	» They develop working theories for making sense of the natural, social, physical and material worlds	» Making sense of their worlds by generating and refining working theories te rangahau me te mātauranga

³ In this document, 'oral language' encompasses any method of communication the child uses as a first language; this includes New Zealand Sign Language and, for children who are non-verbal, alternative and augmentative communication (AAC).

⁴ For children who are deaf or hard of hearing, 'hearing' includes watching.

Note. Excerpt from Aotearoa New Zealand Ministry of Education (2017) early learning and child care curriculum document, *Te Whāriki* (pp. 24-25).

A Canadian example of an Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes framework is the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth's (2007) *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Cultures: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes*, hereinafter referred to as the *Framework of Outcomes*. The *Framework of Outcomes* was created through the collaboration of over 75 people "dedicated to the preservation, revitalization, and maintenance of Aboriginal languages and cultures" (p. v). The *Framework of Outcomes* specifically refers to the "Ojibwe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dene, Dakota, [Inuktitut] and Michif" languages (p. 7). The use of the *Framework of Outcomes* is not mandatory within schools. Instead, "the *Framework* is intended for use in additional language programming in which an Aboriginal language is taught as a separate subject" (p. 8). The *Framework of Outcomes* explained that the learner population, along with the needs of the school and community, influence which languages get offered to children. In addition, "the wisdom of *Elders* is central to cultural learning [emphasis in original]" (p. ix). Elders are described within the *Framework of Outcomes* as those who guided its development. Youths were also consulted, because "the youths of today are the future *keepers of knowledge* [emphasis in original]" (p. xii). The importance of Elders and youths as collaborators during the development of the framework is highlighted because their voices are shared, with permission, as excerpts from oral and written modes of communication that occurred during consultations.

The next section of this chapter begins with the continuation of the *Framework of Outcomes*. The framework provides an example of the tensions, debates, and potentialities when establishing an outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives.

4.2 Tensions, Debates, and Potentialities when Establishing an Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework from Indigenous Perspectives

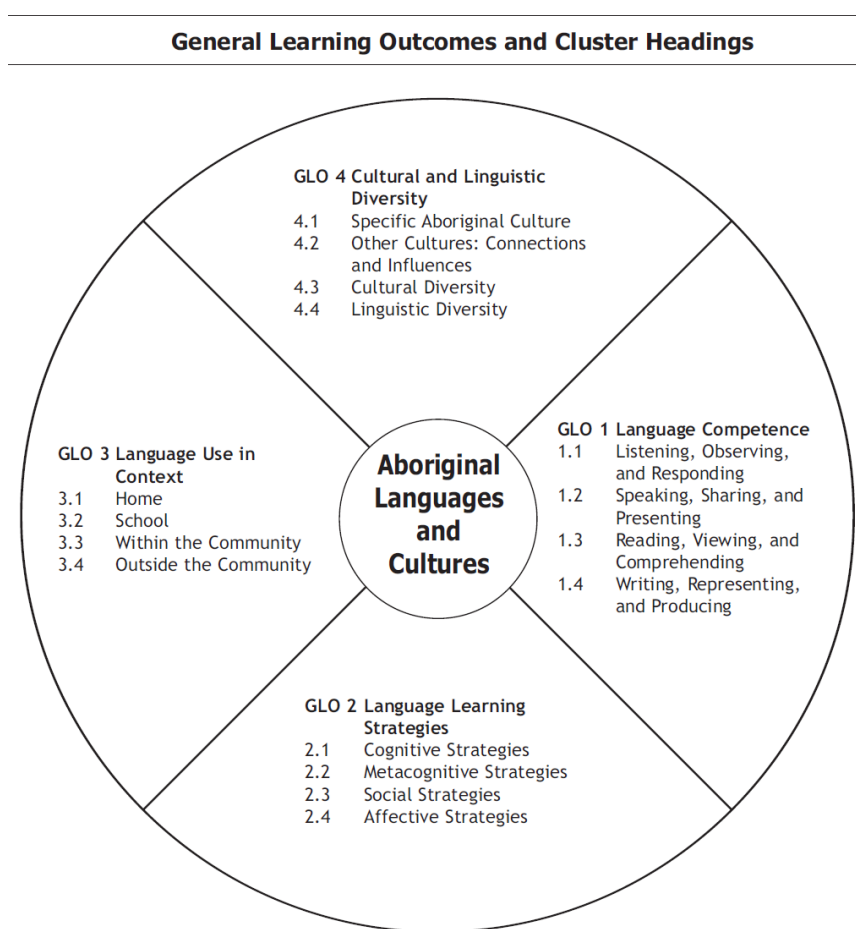
This diffractive reading of the literature shares the multiple and diverse tensions, debates, and potentialities that arise when establishing an early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives. This section of the analysis is organized into subsections beginning with standardization, moving to terminology considerations; and finally the importance of spirituality.

4.2.1 Standardization when Developing an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework

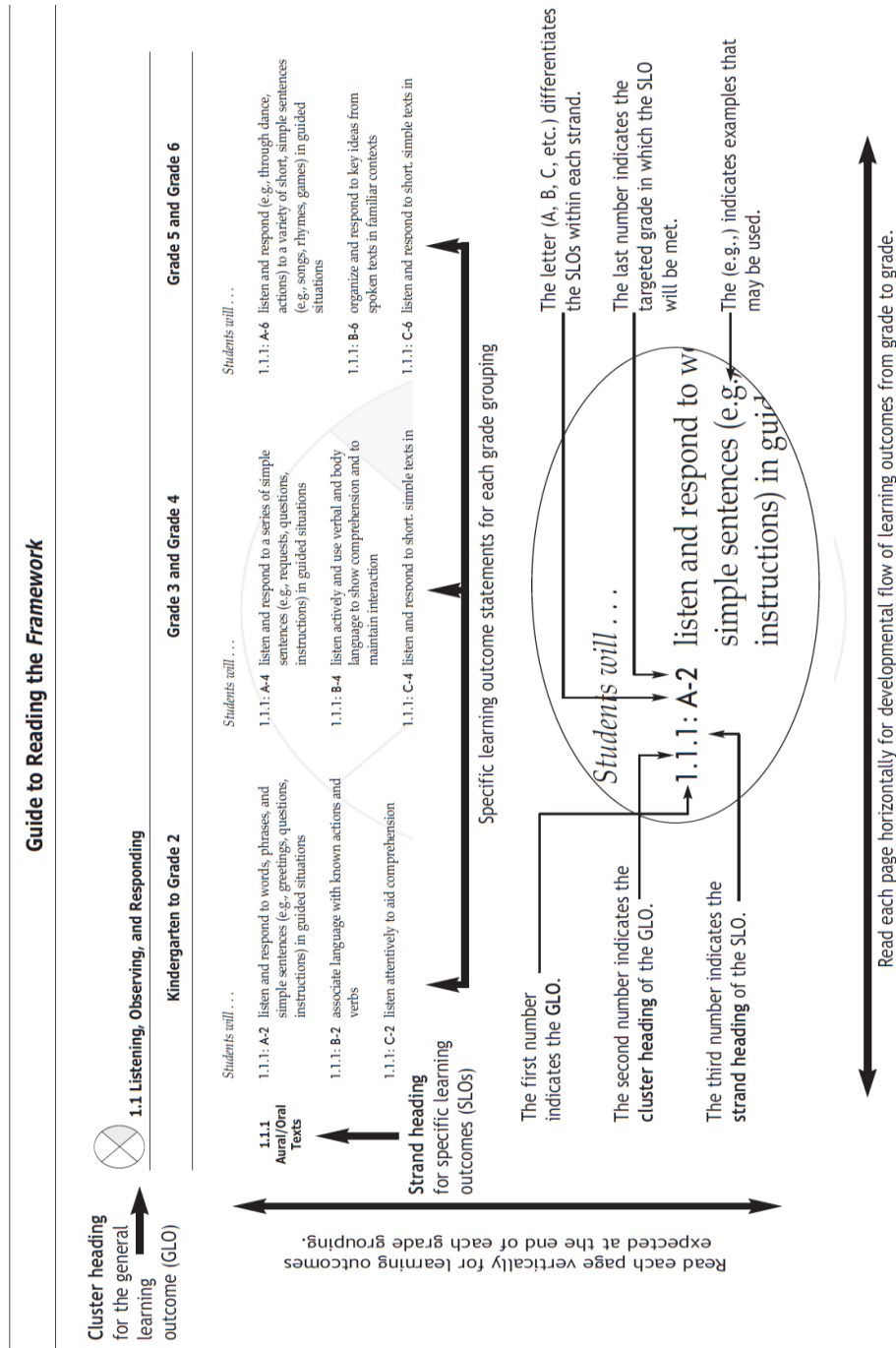
Tension and debate surround the concept of standardization within early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks from Indigenous perspectives. An example of a potential tension is the physical organization of the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth's (2007) *Framework of Outcomes* (see Figure 6 and Figure 7).

Figure 6

General Learning Outcomes



Note. From Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (2007) early learning and child care curriculum document, *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Cultures: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (p. 15).

Figure 7.*Physical Organization and Guide to Reading the Framework*

Note. From Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (2007) early learning and child care curriculum document, *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Cultures: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (p. 16).

Even though Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and youths were consulted during the development of the *Framework of Outcomes*, there seems to be a heavy influence of a Western worldview regarding the physical written organization and the focus of the *Framework of Outcomes*. I suggest that these tensions could exist because the intent “is to provide a focus and direction for student learning outcomes that will standardize learning experiences regarding the teaching of Aboriginal languages and cultures in Manitoba” (Manitoba Education, 2007, p. 4).

The Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth’s (2007) *Framework of Outcomes* refers to its organization as having “two main organizers” (p. 13); the first main organizer being,

general learning outcomes (GLO), which are broad statements identifying the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that learners are expected to achieve in the course of their language learning experience. (p. 13)

The GLOs of the *Framework of Outcomes* are language competence, language learning strategies, language use in context, and cultural and linguistic diversity. These four GLOs are not hierarchical and are demonstrated as circular (see Figure 6). The circle is described as “an important symbol to Aboriginal people. It represents an ongoing, continuous way of looking at life” (p. 13).

The second main organizer of the *Framework of Outcomes* “is specific learning outcomes (SLOs), which are outlined under each GLO for the respective grade” (p. 13). The SLOs are written as multiple tables with multiple predetermined outcomes that specify what children are expected to learn in a predetermined amount of time. There also seems to be an imbalance of responsibility—the focus being on children’s output and not including standards of learning and teaching. A SLO example for kindergarten to grade two is, “*Students will...1.1.1: A-2 listen and respond to words, phrases, and simple sentences (e.g., greetings, questions, instructions) in guided situations [emphasis in original]*” (p. 20; see Figure 7).

4.2.2 Terminology Considerations when Developing an Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Frameworks from Indigenous Perspectives

Terminology tensions arise when developing early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks from Indigenous perspectives. The British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (2010) shared that during their literature review, “although most of the Indigenous frameworks purported to be “Indigenous,” there was a lack of specificity as to what this term actually referred to” (p. ii). However, even when the terminology *Indigenous* is specified, tensions still may arise as Alcock and Haggerty (2013) provided regarding Aotearoa New Zealand and *Kei Tua a te Pae* (KTotP) assessment practices: “while resource developers may have intended to maintain pedagogical open-endedness, we suggest that KTotP may also have been instrumental in fostering overly future-focused curriculum emphasis” (p. 23). For example, Alcock and Haggerty noted that the Ministry of Education (2004-9) with KTotP present a format for narrative assessment that focuses on where to/what next— potentially ignoring who a child is.

4.2.3 Importance of Spirituality when Developing an Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework from Indigenous Perspectives

The honouring of spirituality is highly important when developing an early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives. As Doetzel (2018) shared, when discourses about spirituality are silenced, children could be prevented from experiencing connections to others and epiphanies. Also, Doetzel articulated that “denying students awe, passion and creativity is like claiming an ocean is separate from water” (p. 524). Within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, Rameka (2011) clarified that there is not a singular Māori identity: “contemporary ideas of Māori identity, of ‘being Māori’, are both complex and increasingly diverse” (p. 247). Rameka further explained regarding assessment practices that Māori assessment need not be parallel to Pākehā or Western assessment.

4.2.4 Indicator Considerations when Developing an Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework from Indigenous Perspectives

Tension can arise when making considerations about indicators when developing an early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives.

Regarding activities children are exposed to, Ball and Simpkins (2004) pointed out that these “are passing on values and beliefs, not just the specific activity” (p. 492). They also shared that “values that all child care practitioners carry with them and ultimately teach the children are difficult to see and seem impossible to measure” (pp. 491-492).

Concerning activities, values, and beliefs, Ball and Simpkins articulated that “there are also activities, behaviours, attitudes, and values that are so much a part of the cultural community that they cannot easily be separated into individual practices” (pp. 485-486).

Tensions also occurred for Van Heerden (2016) surrounding specifying indicators during research about how some mothers and teachers within South Africa, experienced and perceived quality within early learning centres. Van Heerden shared that teachers and mothers mainly focused on children being part of “a safe and secure place with a loving, trusting, caring, respectful atmosphere for children to promote learning and holistic development and to adhere to the children’s emotional and social well-being” (p. 9). Quantitatively observing such aspects of care can be difficult (Van Heerden, 2016).

However, quantitative observation is not necessarily required as Sumsion, Harrison, Letsch, Bradley, and Stapleton (2018) demonstrated during their collaboration with the babies’ room within an early learning centre that is part of an Aboriginal community within the state of Queensland, Australia. When Sumsion et al. were with the babies’ room, they focused on manifestations of belonging, which they expressed as a written vignette. They include photography from an interaction that demonstrated trust, collective responsibility, and confidence between an educator, two children, and a sliding door; the vignette is a potential “vernacular micro-expression of belonging” (p. 345).

4.2.5 Resource Allocation Considerations when Developing an Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework from Indigenous Perspectives

Maintaining an outcomes measurement system requires “significant resources and capacity to develop, implement, and maintain effectiveness” (British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2010, p. iii). Examples of resources identified by the British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres are “ample time, community input, and ingenuity towards developing a system that may stand in stark contrast to a Western-European approach to outcomes measurements” (p. iv). The following section responds to the third research question, focusing on patterns within Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada).

4.3 Patterns within Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada)

Ten out of the 20 Indigenous-led organization websites referred to or provided resources that at some point referred to the assessment and evaluation of the early learning and child care (ELCC) program. The first subsection focuses on when the Indigenous-led organizations referred to policy-oriented resources. The second subsection focuses on literature specific to Ontario ELCC environments that is referred to by some Indigenous-led organizations. Then, the final subsection elaborates on the tool of pedagogical documentation for educators.

4.3.1 Policies

During the diffractive reading of the Indigenous-led organizations websites, the British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society (n.d.d) provided a hyperlink to the *National First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Policy Framework* (2017) that stated, First Nations and government partners should “develop and facilitate an overall evaluation framework including measures for quality and outcomes” (p. 13). Reciprocal accountability can support the achievement of common goals and this is a shared

responsibility “amongst First Nations (at community, regional and national levels), and the Federal Government, and Provincial Governments” (p. 13). Alternatively, organizations refer to specific Acts, as when the Stó:lō Service Agency (n.d.a) stated, “our facility is fully licensed by Fraser Health Community Care and Assisted Living Act and employ’s professional early childhood educators” (para. 3). Also, the Saskatoon Tribal Council (n.d.a) stated that one of the goals of the *Early Learning Centre* is, “to continually maintain adherence to the Childcare Regulations as set out by the Childcare Act” (para. 4).

Additionally, the British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society (n.d.d) and Inuuqatigiit – Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families (n.d.b) referred to Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada’s (2018) *Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Framework* that articulates within the section focusing on accountability, research, and evaluation that,

To determine whether Indigenous ELCC programs are meeting the needs of Indigenous children and the expectations of their parents and communities, a responsive approach to supporting improved documentation, program planning, data collection, performance measurement, and multiple levels of evaluation (particularly Indigenous-developed) will need to be created. (p. 24)

The *Indigenous ELCC Framework* also voiced that “new approaches for sharing this information with program administrators, parents and communities for decision-making purposes are also needed” (p. 24). The framework specified the need for the development of such approaches to keep central the experiences of the Indigenous children and families being served. The approaches should be,

developed through a joint consultative process that involves federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, service providers, and early childhood development experts.” (p. 24)

The Opokaa’sin Early Intervention Society (n.d.c) also provided a hyperlink to the Government of Canada’s (2021) *Federal Secretariat on Early Learning and Child Care* that directs people through a hyperlink to Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada’s (2018) *Indigenous ELCC Framework*.

The following section focuses specifically on resources referred to by Indigenous-led organizations that pertain to Ontario early learning and child care.

4.3.2 Ontario Early Learning and Child Care

The literature that is specific to Ontario early learning and child care (ELCC) environments, referred to during the diffractive reading of the Indigenous-led organizations, are the Best Start Panel on Early Learning (2006), *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)*; Ontario Ministry of Education (2013), *Think, Feel, Act*; and the Ontario Ministry of Education (2014) pedagogical document, *How Does Learning Happen?*

The Ska:na Learning Centre (2015) referred to the Best Start Panel on Early Learning (2006), *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)*. This document described the evaluation of childhood settings as a multi-faceted affair that includes structural requirements such as child–educator ratio and professional education requirements. However, the primary focus was toward pedagogy and curriculum, including “the quality and type of interactions and relationships that support the children’s development and learning” (p. 63). *ELECT* also stated that, “quality early childhood settings use ongoing assessment and systematic evaluations to gather information on children’s learning and development and the quality of the programs” (p. 60); additionally, the assessment of children’s developmental skills can be expressed through observation and documentation, which supports curriculum planning. Furthermore, *ELECT* viewed assessments and evaluation as supporting “reciprocal communication with parents,” and being “sensitive to the cultural and community context of children’s lives” (p. 60).

Outlined by the Best Start Panel on Early Learning (2006) *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)* were practice guidelines that are described as providing a starting point to evaluating the *ELECT*’s impact on pedagogy and curriculum. The six principles of the *ELECT* include the following:

1. Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health.

2. Partnerships with families and communities strengthen the ability of early childhood settings to meet the needs of young children.
3. Respect for diversity, equity, and inclusion are prerequisites for honouring children's rights, optimal development and learning.
4. A planned curriculum supports early learning.
5. Play is a means to early learning that capitalizes on children's natural curiosity and exuberance.
6. Knowledgeable, responsive early childhood professionals are essential. (p. 6)

Moreover, monitoring the impact of programming within the community should be taking place because “the family within the community is the primary place where children grow and learn” (p. 63).

The Ontario Ministry of Education's (2013) *Think, Feel, Act*, also referred to by the Ska:na Learning Centre (2015), described how pedagogical documentation “offers a process for listening to children, for creating artifacts from that listening, and for studying with others what children reveal about their competent and thoughtful views of the world” (p. 27). Examples of technologies that can be used to document moments are photography and written or audio recordings. Also, “these documented traces of lived experiences, when shared with others, become tools for thinking together. To hear others' thoughts makes us realize there are many viewpoints” (p. 27).

The Ontario Ministry of Education (2014) pedagogical document, *How Does Learning Happen?* is referred to by the Ska:na Learning Centre (2015), Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre (n.d.b), and Keepers of the Circle (n.d.c). The Keepers of the Circle stated that this pedagogical document could be used alongside the teachings of the Medicine Wheel. The Keepers of the Circle shared that the Medicine Wheel “underlines the need for balance and encompasses all aspects of life” (para. 2). They further explained,

The Wheel represents all of the ages and stages of life. It encompasses the past, present and future and provides the foundation of why the organization exists, to help Indigenous families achieve this balance within their own circles and live Mino-Bimaadiziwin (the Good Life). (para. 4)

The Medicine Wheel is visually demonstrated by the Keepers of the Circle as a circle divided into four quarters. The top quarter is the shade white; the right quarter is the colour yellow; the bottom quarter is the colour red; and the left quarter is the shade black. Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie explained that the colours can be thought of as a depiction of how people from all nations are diverse but connected (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, February 1, 2023).

The Ontario Ministry of Education (2014) *How Does Learning Happen?* referred to educators supporting belonging, wellbeing, engagement, and expression, stating that

a process of critical reflection, learning, and growth is the basis of high-quality programs that continuously improve and create contexts that are meaningful for the children and families/caregivers they serve. (p. 22)

In addition, the Ontario Ministry of Education viewed that the environment, collaborative inquiry, and pedagogical documentation informs educators.

4.3.3 Pedagogical Documentation

In association with the Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association, mitchbarid (2020) described pedagogical documentation as being a process that can include documenting through photography and jotting notes. Jotted notes posted on a board are an invitation to collaboration between children, the environment, and the community, sharing different perspectives on what occurred. Specifically, mitchbarid stated, “we learn as collective – and make meaning together to inspire children’s learning” (para. 10). Similarly, the North Bay Indigenous Hub’s *Operating Information* (n.d.) described documenting children’s experiences through short learning stories and photography. The *Operating Information* also stated that documenting programming regularly can “provide a source of self-reflection and Families are encouraged to give regular feedback on our programming” (p. 4).

Also, mitchbarid (2020) explained that theories and ideas being shared through photography and jotted notes are synthesized into a narrative into one document, which includes the photography and is sometimes solely photography. Then, the document demonstrating the narrative is made visible in the area the learning occurred with the

chance of the pedagogical documentation bolstering more learning. Over time, and at the educator's discretion, a provocation is planned to bolster further interest. Additionally, mitchbarid shared that at the discretion of educators, the pedagogical documentation is added to the process wall that has post-it-notes available for people who want to be a part of the meaning-making process; this collaborative part of the documentation process often includes negotiating meaning, which can result in changes to the narrative, organization of photographs, or removal of writing. The physical documentation remains displayed where the learning occurred until more current pedagogical documentation is created. The older pedagogical documentation is stored in a binder for children and families to access (mitchbarid, 2020).

Regarding a sustained interest that leads to multiple pedagogical documentations, mitchbarid (2020) shared that multiple pedagogical documentations can be compiled into one long narrative. For example,

our Ukulele and Infants documentation spread ten feet long and spanned over six months! We display the narrative in the classroom, and children revisit those learning experiences again and again. (para. 9)

Furthermore, pedagogical documentation is described by mitchbarid as being influx through the inclusion of children, educators, and other community members' interpretations and re-interpretations: "We believe that knowledge is a collaboration, that the community possesses many knowledge gifts if given the opportunity to share them" (para. 10).

4.4 Considerations for the Development of Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Frameworks

These considerations for the development of Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks are informed by the three other research questions guiding this dissertation, data (see Appendix A; Appendix B), and conversations with the Journey Together Committee, Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie, my supervisors, the managers of the collaborating Indigenous ELCC centre, funders, and stakeholders. Although this research was initially completed for a specific Indigenous child care and family centre the considerations may be transferable to international

contexts. When I refer to the heart, mind, body, and spirit, this is specific to the teachings of Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie, specific to the Ojibway and Oneida nations. Other Indigenous peoples may have particular conceptualizations of the heart, mind, body, and spirit connected to their nation(s). This section of the chapter is organized as considerations and provocations which are grouped into four subsections. First, I present some considerations and provocations relative to the composition of leadership and advisement during the construction of an ELCC outcomes framework. Second, I focus on some considerations and provocations related to the resources and supports that might be consulted during the construction of the framework. Third, I offer some considerations and provocations focused on the structure of an Indigenous ELCC framework's development. Fourth, I provide content considerations for the construction of an Indigenous ELCC outcomes framework. The subsections are interconnected, and though I present the considerations as numbered lists for readability, they are not hierarchical.

4.4.1 Leadership and Advisement during the Construction of an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework

An Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes framework must be led and developed by people with particular knowledges and identities. Listed in no particular order, here are some considerations and provocations identified during the research:

1. The framework must be led by people who are local and fundamentally enmeshed within Indigenous ways of being (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, February 1, 2023; see Rameka, 2011).
2. The framework must be led by people who are connected to the ELCC organization the framework will be a part of (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, February 1, 2023; see British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2010).
3. Leaders embrace ingenuity, collaboration, and accept that the process of developing, maintaining, and implementing an Indigenous framework is a living,

on-going process that evolves (see Alcock & Haggerty, 2013; British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2010).

4. Leaders are aware that there is no universal way to approach assessment and evaluation (see Sumsion et al., 2018).
5. Leaders create communication pathways with program administrators and families accessing services to share information and invite them to share their perspectives within ongoing, reciprocal relationships (see Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2018; mitchbarid, 2020).
6. Leaders consider how Indigenous research methods can influence components of an outcomes framework such as,
 - The accompanying values and purpose of measurement
 - The language used to describe outcomes and indicators
 - How evidence is defined and where it will be used
 - Whose needs are being met by engaging in measurement
 - The limitations of measurement. (British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2010, p. 9)
7. Leaders consider that outcomes frameworks require significant resources such as time, finances, ingenuity, community input, and advocacy for the allocation of resources (see British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2010).
8. Leaders might ask what a responsive approach entails when developing, maintaining, and implementing an ELCC outcomes framework that honours the heart, mind, body, and spirit? (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021; see Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2018).
9. Leaders might ask how reciprocal accountability might be fostered amongst the ELCC organization the framework will be a part of, Cultural Governance, and the Government of Canada to achieve common goals? (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021; see *National First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Policy Framework*, 2017).

4.4.2 Resources and Supports during the Construction of an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework

Throughout the research, different forms of resources emerged that could be consulted to support the construction of an Indigenous early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes framework. Key considerations surrounding resources include the following:

1. Elders, Knowledge Keepers, youths, and children (future Knowledge Keepers) should be invited to consult throughout the construction of an ELCC outcomes framework (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021; see Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2007).
2. Early childhood educators working with the organization where the framework will be used should be involved with the process of its construction and on-going maintenance (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, February 1, 2023; see Garvis et al., 2018).
3. Pre-existent literature such as the Ontario Ministry of Education (2014) *How Does Learning Happen?* for the Ontario context could be put into conversation with local Indigenous knowledges and ways of being, then called on as a tool during the development of an Indigenous ELCC outcomes framework (see Keepers of the Circle, n.d.c).
4. An organizations leadership might ask how to establish and maintain a Circle comprised of multiple partners who are dedicated to developing, maintaining, and implementing the Indigenous ELCC outcomes framework? (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021; see Her Majesty the Queen in the Right of Canada, 2018).

4.4.3 Structural Considerations during the Construction of an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework

The following considerations concerning the physical structure of early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks developed with Indigenous-led ELCC organizations emerged from the research:

1. The approach to assessment and evaluation through Indigenous worldviews can result in an outcomes framework that looks very different from a tool developed through a Western worldview (see British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2010).
2. The promotion of Indigenous languages (Indigenous Languages Act S.C. 2019, c. 23) could mean the framework itself is multilingual or is made accessible as multiple languages (see Rameka, 2011).
3. Some activities, behaviours, attitudes, and values cannot be separated into individual practices to be viewed through an outcomes framework (see Ball and Simpkins, 2004).
4. What might be local Indigenous ways of viewing the impacts early childhood education and services can have on families? How might these views reshape the concept of outcomes? (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021).

4.4.4 Content Considerations during the Construction of an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework

Considerations and a provocation for the development of content for an early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives include the following:

1. Focus on what opportunities, interactions, and environments are afforded to children, families, and other Indigenous people accessing services rather than evaluating children (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021; see Ma et al., 2016).
2. Honour the importance of connection and reconnection with spirituality and identity (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021; see Doetzel, 2018).
3. Respect that moments of learning can be recorded through a variety of mediums such as, photography, writing, audio recording, etc., and these can support early childhood educators with creating multimodal pedagogical documentation (see Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

4. Respect and support children and families' mother tongues and connections to land through the heart, mind, body, and spirit (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021; see Rameka, 2011).
5. Embrace that family, exploration, play, inquiry, and laughter are important particularly within the early years of life (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021; see Best Start Panel on Early Learning, 2015).
6. Consider how all engagements can be grounded within Indigenous ways of knowing and respect the modalities of that knowing; for instance, transcribing Indigenous stories can present the risk of losing meaning as the intended communication mode is often oral (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, February 1, 2023; see British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, 2010).
7. Consider how the content of the ELCC outcomes framework can be based within local Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and encourage early learning experiences that promote the wellbeing of the children, families, educators, and nations that form the ELCC organization. What about the ELCC organization that the outcomes framework will be a part of will children carry with them into adulthood? (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021).

In the final chapter, there are further suggestions to parties responsible for creating early learning and child care outcomes frameworks for Indigenous early learning and child care environments. The final chapter also includes methodological considerations and other considerations for the future.

Chapter 5

5 Discussion

The objective of the research is to contribute to the scholarship involved with evaluation and assessment within early learning and child care (ELCC) environments where Indigenous ways of knowing and being are central (e.g., Battiste, 2002; Ball & Simpkins, 2004). Early learning and child care has also been referred to as early childhood education and care which Richardson (2019) described within the context of Canada as being, “Any program or service providing care/education for children under the age of 12” (p. 7). I focused on evaluation practices of services for children ages zero to six.

To engage with the objectives, I was guided by the following research questions:

1. *What is the state of knowledge related to Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks?*
2. *What are some tensions, debates, and potentialities when establishing an early learning and child care outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives?*
3. *What are patterns within Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada)?*
4. *What are considerations for the development of Indigenous early learning and child care outcomes frameworks?*

The field of early learning and child care within Canada drastically changed during 1867 and Prochner and Kirova (2018) explained this was because of the *British North America Act*. Education, including evaluation and assessment, fell under provincial instead of federal jurisdiction. Historically and currently, theoretical perspectives of curriculum and evaluation have ebbed and flowed to meet diverse and emerging needs (see Madaus & Kellaghan, 1992). Theorist, Ralph Tyler, who Pinar et al. (2006) described as remaining influential concerning curriculum, explicitly included evaluation within his rationale. Tyler (1949, 2013) asserted that there are intermediate or preliminary stages of evaluation which involve determining if the learning experiences and objectives align. During the 1960s, many assessments were focused on behavioural objectives because they were understood to contribute to accountable curriculum (Pinar et al., 2006). Pinar et al. (2006) further explained that behavioural objectives were seen as establishing “measureable

goals and outcomes for curriculum, a means for quantifying these outcomes” (p. 165). Regarding outcomes, Madaus and Kellaghan (1992) noted that it can be unsatisfactory to have an overemphasis on outcomes because the quality and way of teaching the outcomes are not addressed. Also, during this time Eisner (1967a) asserted that “educational objectives need not precede the selection and organization of content” (p. 258), because curriculum can be open-ended. Eisner additionally explained that some “modes of achievement [are] incapable of measurement” (p. 257). Then, during the 1970s a variety of evaluation approaches emerged from dissatisfaction with the Tylerian definition (see Pinar et al., 2006). Schwab (1973) introduced curriculum commonplaces that are of equal importance and include “the learner, the teacher, the milieu, and the subject matter” (pp. 508-509). Schwab emphasized that decision making is situational. Gitlin and Goldstein (1987) asserted that when teachers are evaluated within their classrooms to improve practices, a horizontal evaluation that structures dialogue between teaching peers is desired as teachers can collaborate and focus on their intentions, purposes, and goals. Gitlin and Goldstein further explained that these relationships can lead to institutional change, bolstered by the joint enquiry.

“By the 1990s,” Pinar et al. (2006) explained, “qualitative inquiry generally and qualitative curriculum evaluation specifically ha[d] achieved legitimation in the field” (p. 737). However, Donmoyer (1990) asserted that “we have tended to not change the way we think about and do evaluations” (p. 274). Now, many reconceptualists function within a realm of uncertainty as an ethical practice, yet this is more than just a way educators practice (Nxumalo et al., 2018). Functioning within uncertainty contributes to a diversity of early learning and child care (ELCC) assessment practices. Such an approach to assessment within ELCC is what Stooke (2019) described as authentic assessment— “the ongoing gathering and interpretation of information about what a child says or does in a naturalistic education setting.” (p. 7), and this is to inform pedagogical decision-making. Stooke explained further that there is more than one way to engage in authentic assessment, such as pedagogical narration, learning stories, and Reggio-inspired documentation. Stooke also articulated that standardized developmental screens are instruments, instead of authentic assessments.

Regarding early learning and child care (ELCC) policy within Canada, White et al. (2015) asserted little research has been done and future research should consider a reconceptualist orientation. I experienced this dearth of literature when using Western University's electronic library databases to locate literature that focused on the inclusion and configuration of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and explicitly referred to Settlers within Canada's ELCC programmatic curricula. However, while attempting to weave Indigenous and Settler knowledge, the issue of whose knowledge is considered valid occurs. I consider evaluation and assessment practices within ELCC across Turtle Island (Canada) to often be colonial practices. As Stooke (2019) shared, "there is fear among ECEs that formal assessment tools used to measure achievement at school will be used inappropriately in ECE settings" (pp. 4-5). For Indigenous ELCC environments required to have an outcomes framework, this dissertation provides some considerations to parties responsible for creating ELCC outcomes frameworks for Indigenous early learning and child care environments. Additionally, the dissertation contributes to the dearth of literature and focuses on the state of knowledge, tensions, debates, and potentialities when establishing an ELCC outcomes framework from Indigenous perspectives. Furthermore, the dissertation provides an interpretation of patterns within Indigenous ELCC outcomes frameworks across Turtle Island (Canada). These and methodological contributions are further discussed within this chapter, beginning with methodological contributions.

5.1 Methodological Contributions

Engaging with a diffractive analysis as a dissertation while focusing on early learning and child care was a new approach. As a White Settler within Turtle Island (Canada), the field of possibilities or void that Barad (2007) referred to is a place of many possibilities that includes hope but also despair. As Barad (2017a) explained, within classical physics the void has been used as a colonial apparatus that, "has been a well-worn tool used in the services of colonialism, racism, capitalism, militarism, imperialism, nationalism, and scientism" (p. 113). As a person and researcher who tries to practice for allyship through intra-actions, self-reflection, and check-in, I try to ensure that I am not embodying what Tuck and Yang (2012) described as settler moves to innocence. Invaluable to the research

process was Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie as she shared insights and gave feedback. Also, through our intra-action, a superposition emerged as we strived to balance our collaboration. The research is relevant to the national audience because of the focus on Turtle Island (Canadian) literature and the analysis of the Indigenous ELCC websites on Turtle Island (Canada). The audience of this research is additionally international because the literature review includes research from Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Finland, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States of America. I suggest that the recommendations provided within this dissertation can be contextualized by the audience in situ.

Barad (2007) described a diffractive analysis as being engaged with through diffractive reading, which involved returning to and reading written texts multiple times for a thick description. What was also imperative for this diffractive analysis was intra-acting with managers at the collaborating Indigenous ELCC centre virtual meetings and the Journey Together Committee functioning within Southwestern Ontario via a virtual meeting. Who attended the meetings differed per meeting as our needs evolved. By intra-acting with community leaders throughout the diffractive analysis, I had invaluable guidance to ensure that research was relevant to the needs of the collaborating Indigenous early learning and child care centre. This collaboration between myself within new materialism and Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie demonstrates that new materialist orientations such as agential realism are not to be confused as an Indigenous methodology (see Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). Additionally, from my experience engaging with the diffractive analysis, the environment a diffractive analysis can cultivate may be physically and intellectually isolating. Thus, I suggest for scholars whose daily experience is intra-acting with written documents to create and maintain partnerships with community partners, Knowledge Keepers, and other scholars. Next, I discuss some contributions of the diffractive analysis and considerations for the future.

5.2 Contributions of the Diffractive Analysis and Considerations for the Future

There are several contributions from this diffractive analysis. The first contribution is adding to the literature specifically for parties responsible for creating early learning and

child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks for Indigenous ELCC environments. This project demonstrates that creating and maintaining outcomes frameworks for ELCC environments can be a colonial practice. Outcomes frameworks are tools of measurable desired objectives (see Tyler, 2013). As the British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (2010) asserted, an outcomes framework developed and maintained through Indigenous worldviews may result in an outcomes framework that looks very different from a tool developed through and for a Western worldview. Thus, government licensors and funders must respect that some activities, behaviours, attitudes, and values cannot be separated into individual practices to be viewed through an outcomes framework (Ball and Simpkins, 2004). Liz Akiwenzie suggested that parties responsible for creating an ELCC outcomes framework for an Indigenous early learning and child care environment engage with local Indigenous leaders and families. Liz explained the leaders should do this to understand the effects of early childhood education and services on families, and question how the Indigenous nations and families' ways of knowing might reshape the very concept of outcomes (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021). Further expressed by Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie is that the purposes of standardization and whose standards need to be questioned when developing an Indigenous ELCC outcomes framework (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, February 1, 2023).

Another contribution is the table titled, *Appendix B: Diffraction Apparatus for Website Content* (see Appendix B). With consideration of the inclusion and exclusion criteria, other scholars and policy makers could use the table for future research endeavors and policy or framework creations. I analyzed the data within the posthumanist ethico-onto-epistemology agential realism with the particular purpose of providing some considerations for parties responsible for creating early learning and child care (ELCC) outcomes frameworks for Indigenous ELCC environments. A consideration for future research is using the data through a different theoretical orientation and/or with a different purpose. The table of data could also be used as inspiration for scholars to generate research questions.

One consideration for future research is finding ways to involve the people your research is potentially impacting. From my experience, this purposeful involvement can be grounding and maintain operationalization throughout the research experience. While intra-acting with some people that this research could potentially impact, I was influenced by Liz Akiwenzie when she articulated that it is important to respect connections to land and this involves the heart, mind, body, and spirit (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, October 12, 2021). People's experiences and connections with the land are diverse as was experienced throughout the intra-actions during this research. Not appropriating Indigenous nations understandings of the heart, mind, body, and spirit, is relevant not only to this research context, but also to other White Settlers occupying Turtle Island (Canada) (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, February 1, 2023). Ojibway/Oneida Knowledge Keeper Liz Akiwenzie explained that since time immemorial, children have been the center of nations and through colonization were forcibly removed from their nations. As we collaborated, we located children at the center of our objective; it was time to "Bring[...] the old to the new and the new to the old" (L. Akiwenzie, personal communication, February 1, 2023). Moving forward as a Registered Early Childhood Educator, I strive for an Indigenous futurity through intra-acting with children, families, and other professionals.

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Wolfe, P. (2006). Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 8(4), 387-409. doi: 10.1080/14623520601056240

Appendices

Appendix A: Descriptive Annotated Bibliography

Alcock, S., & Haggerty, M. (2013). Recent policy development and the “schoolification” of early childhood care and education in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Early Childhood Folio*, 17(2), 21-26.

Sophie Alcock provided she is “a senior lecturer in early childhood education at, Unitec Institute of Technology” (p. 26). The other researcher Maggie Haggerty, provided she is “a senior lecturer in education at Victoria University of Wellington” (p. 26). They focused the journal article on Aotearoa New Zealand to analyze the growing emphasis on early childhood care and education (ECCE) as mainly preparation for academic school success and producing children as economic resources. They were influenced by posthumanists and borrowed strategies from critical discourse analysis. Alcock and Haggerty accessed during 2012-2013 the following Ministry websites: (1) Education, (2) Social Development, and (3) Health to analyze connections between the websites and ECCE. When analyzing the Ministry of Education website, their focus was particularly on connections between ECCE and the school sector National Standards of literacy and numeracy. Additionally, to analyze patterns over time, they included the twenty resource booklets *Kei Tua o te Pae* and the early childhood draft curriculum, *Te Whāriki*. Alcock and Haggerty described patterns of shifting language that contributed to an overly future-focused curriculum and the decomplexifying of children to simply learners.

Ball, J., & Simpkins, M. (2004). The community within the child: Integration of Indigenous knowledge into First Nations childcare process and practice. *American Indian Quarterly*, 28(3/4), 480-498.

Jessica Ball and Maureen Simpkins described themselves as having “extensive experience living and working with First Nations people but are not of First Nations heritage themselves” (p. 481). Their journal article highlights “some of

the approaches taken by First Nations community members to understand and work with Indigenous knowledge in community program development” (pp. 480-481). Ball and Simpkins described the way they conceptualize the generation of curriculum as dialogical constructivism. The research was completed with 27 First Nations early childhood development graduates and 31 parents, childcare administrators, and community Elders who are from three First Nations in British Columbia, Canada. Between 1998 and 2000, Ball and Simpkins carried out a program evaluation to observe materials and activities available in the childcare program that is in operation by the three First Nations. Then, during the winter of 2003, they engaged in interviews with individuals and groups that were free-flowing and conversational: “The interviews predominantly consisted of listening to accounts of how the interviewees saw culture as part of their own process and practice with young children” (p. 481). Also, the First Nations practitioners shared that there are values, behaviours, attitudes, and activities that cannot be separated as individual practices in childcare programs because they are so much a part of cultural community. Additionally, Ball and Simpkins heard about the importance of language, Elder involvement, being a role model, and knowing who you are as part of childcare processes and practices.

British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres. (2010). *Indigenizing outcomes measurement: A review of the literature and methodological considerations*. https://thesummerinstitute.ca/wp-content/uploads/indigenous_measurement_lit_review.pdf

The British Columbia Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) embarked on the initiative *Standing Up for Our Children*: “[T]he project is founded on an Indigenous approach to service delivery and includes the Indigenous Outcomes Measurement Framework (IOMF)” (p. 1). This BCAAFC report is described as “the first-phase literature review for the IOMF” (p. 1), and the literature review methodology is a systematic search using keyword descriptors in academic database search engines and the search engine *Google*. The BCAAFC accessed nine IOMFs that spanned the period 2004 to 2009. They

specified that “two-thirds of the Indigenous frameworks were designed exclusively for Aboriginal health, and one-third were for Aboriginal mental health, Aboriginal health and human services, or Aboriginal learning” (p. 11). The literature used in the report is from Canada, United States of America, New Zealand, and Australia. The report is organized into three main sections that are (1) analytic lens, (2) review of IOMFs, and (3) discussion offering “some methodological considerations for constructing Indigenous measurement frameworks” (p. 2). They emphasized the importance of being guided by an Indigenous research methodology for the process of generating an Indigenous framework. As part of the discussion BCAAFC articulated that “the process of defining an ‘Indigenous’ outcomes measurement framework can be a complex task, as the term itself is defined in various ways throughout the literature” (p. 24). They suggested that the overall analysis identified three models of IOMFs, referred to as: Western IOMF model, Western with Indigenous input model, and Indigenous IOMF model.

Doetzel, N-A. (2018). Cultivating spiritual intelligence: Honoring heart wisdom and First Nations Indigenous ways of knowing. *Interchange*, 49, 521-526.

Nancy-Angel Doetzel, First Nations with Ojibwa roots, was taught to honour spiritual ways of knowing and heart wisdom. Doetzel explained the aim of the journal article was to empower educators to turn to “a holistic heart-centered dynamic with the goal of inspiring students to become their full potential selves and make their world a better place” (p. 525). The journal article is a literature review and Doetzel articulated the theoretical acknowledgement of spiritual ways of knowing: “knowledge begins in the spiritual realm and is passed on to them from their Creator and elders’ wisdom” (p. 522). Hearts play major roles in learning journeys because the heart can provide spiritual ways of knowing and being. Doetzel suggested there is a need to ignite students’ hearts to cultivate spiritual intelligence, and educators should be able to express spirituality as it can support student’s cultivation of spiritual intelligence. Also, heart wisdom does not function in isolation as heart wisdom and mind intelligence can function as an

interdependent dynamic within education. In addition, heart knowledge enables students to cultivate spirit, create community within classes, and bond with peers.

Garvis, S., Sheridan, S., Williams, P., & Mellgren, E. (2018). Cultural considerations for ECERS-3 in Sweden: A reflection on adaption. *Early Child Development and Care*, 188(5), 584-593. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2017.1377192>

The four researchers are professors at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. “Susanne Garvis is a professor of child and youth studies (early childhood)[;] ... Sonja Sheridan, Professor in Education[;] ... Pia Williams, Professor in Child and Youth studies[;] ... [and] Elisabeth Mellgren is a senior lecturer” (pp. 591-592). Garvis et al. described the intention of the journal article as being to share their “reflections about the use of ECERS-3 which, is one instrument, developed in a cultural context [United States of America], and now being used in a Swedish context” (p. 584). The researchers described ECERS as “an environmental rating scale used to measure the quality in early childhood settings that has been used for more than 30 years” (p. 586); the first and second version have been translated into Swedish with cultural adaptations, and ECERS-3 has not been translated into Swedish but “was created in 2015 in English” (p. 587). The guiding question for their study is, “what items in ECERS-3 are in need for cultural adaptations in a Swedish preschool context” (p. 584)? The research team used the ECERS-3 in 153 Swedish preschools. The reflections of Garvis et al. about the cultural and contextual differences surrounding ECERS-3 and the Swedish context are communicated as three sections: (1) physical environment and room organizations, (2) interaction and supervision, and (3) learning activities and language development. They “hope to translate and adapt the scale into the Swedish preschool context” (p. 591).

Hedges, H. (2020). Curriculum in early childhood education (New Zealand). *Bloomsbury Education and Childhood Studies*, 1-7.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350996496.0004>

Helen Hedges completed a literature review focusing on early childhood education curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand. She provided in the journal article that *Te Whāriki* is the current early childhood education framework and is theoretically oriented toward a bioecological model. This theoretical orientation has “been challenged by more recent approaches to early childhood pedagogy that follow sociocultural theoretical perspectives and acknowledge the centrality of relationships” (p. 3). Hedges provided that *Te Whāriki* was updated in 2017 and the previous version “was lauded for its inclusion of progressive, bicultural, and process-oriented approaches” (p. 2). Also, provided is that “Te Whāriki forefronts te reo (Māori language) and kaupapa Māori (Māori beliefs, theories, values, and culture) as a statement of commitment to the country’s Indigenous history of all children” (p. 3). *Te Whāriki* is also described by Hedges as asset-based with assessment being about children’s strengths, interests, and abilities. In the revised version, there are 20 outcomes. Three challenges are also described, and the challenges are (1) learning outcomes, (2) “the way that ideas and philosophies, old and new, are being embraced by kaiako” (p. 4), and (3) kaupapa Māori being present in everyday practices. Hedges concluded that “Te Whāriki is a valued and enduring curriculum due to the scholarship and engagement it has inspired nationally and internationally (p. 5).

Iokepa-Guerrero, N., & de France, C. R. (2007). Nest of voices: Early child care and education in Hawaii. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 30(1), 41-47.

Noelani Iokepa-Gurrero is associated with the Punana Leo Preschool Administration Division of Hawaii and Carmen Rodríguez de France is associated with the University of Victoria. This literature review described “the Aha Punana Leo program as well as other culturally relevant programs and services that have focused on providing quality service to children and families” (p. 41). They

described the *Aha Punana Leo* preschools as relying “heavily on the use of the traditional language, thus revitalizing not only the Hawaiian language, but also the values, culture, and traditions of the people” (p. 41). They also discussed the *Good Beginnings Alliance* that was enacted through legislation and is the non-profit umbrella organization coordinating Hawaii’s early childhood system. Then, they focus on organizations serving specifically Indigenous Hawaiians; the *Aha Punana Leo* program is further discussed and “success is judged almost exclusively in terms of native language enhancement” (p. 44). The other Indigenous Hawaiian initiatives described are *Kama’aina Kids* and the *Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture*. Additionally, Iokepa Guerrero and de France described six organizations serving all Hawaiian children. They concluded that quality early childhood education programs that attempt to transmit the Hawaiian world view require the participation of various community members such as parents, Elders, and administrators “who share the vision of relevant and culturally thriving child development programs and services” (p. 46).

Keskitalo, P., Määttä, K., & Uusiautti, S. (2012). Sámi education in Finland. *Early Child Development and Care*, 182(3-4), 329-343.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2011.646723>

The researcher Pigga Keskitalo is an “associate professor at Sámi University college (Sámi allaskuvla) in Kautokeino, Norway. ... Pigga Keskitalo is a Sámi woman herself and lives in Enontekiä” (p. 340). The other researchers are associated with the University of Lapland. Kaarina Määttä is a professor of educational psychology with the Faculty of Education and Satu Uusiautti “is a postdoctoral researcher at the Faculty of Education” (p. 340). Their journal article is a literature review and is focused “on the following questions: (1) What is the status of Sámi education in Finland; (2) What are the challenges of Sámi education in Finland; and (3) How could Sámi education be developed in Finland” (p. 330)? The theoretical orientation was described as a practical framework that was created by Keskitalo, Määttä, and Uusiautti (2011) and was designed for the development of Sámi education. Keskitalo et al. (2012) explained

that Sámi cultures are diverse and there are several languages that are spoken in Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Russia that are endangered. Specific to Finland, the researchers identified three Sámi languages spoken with dialects varying by region. Sámi self-determination lacks recognition and “Sámi’s real participation in national curriculum planning and defining the standards is limited” (p. 337). Now, regarding developing schools, Keskitalo et al. posited that it “is an all-round happening that concerns the whole personnel and pupils as well as requires cooperation with families, the community and society” (p. 339). The structures of the schools should support teachers and teaching through focusing on the improvement of individual teacher’s motivation and skills. The researchers concluded their discussion by referring to Graham Smith’s (2003) use of the term conscientization.

Ma, X., Shen, J., Krenn, H. Y., Hu, S., & Yuan, J. (2016). A meta-analysis of the relationship between learning outcomes and parental involvement during early childhood education and early elementary education. *Educ Psychol Rev*, 28, 771-801.

Researchers Xin Ma, Shanshan Hu, and Jing Yuan are associated with the University of Kentucky’s Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology; Jianping Shen is associated with Western Michigan University’s Department of Education Leadership and Evaluation, Measurement, and Research; Huilan Y. Krenn is associated with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Their journal article is a meta-analysis focused on the United States of America and draws from national and international literature though most studies were conducted in the United States of America: “this meta-analysis examined the relationship between learning outcomes and parental involvement during the unique period of early childhood education and early elementary (school) education based on 100 independent effect sizes (findings) from 46 studies” (pp. 789-790). Ma et al. explained that the macrostructure took “root in the interface of three distinct functional contexts of families, schools, and communities” (p. 773); these are unique and complementary in their roles surrounding child development.

The researchers explained that there are often two common approaches to defining learning outcomes. One way is “to identify and define learning outcomes of children at certain developmental stages” (p. 777): “the other approach to define learning outcomes for children...relies on standards of teaching and learning” (p. 777). Ma et al. noted that “there is a strong and positive correlation between learning outcomes and parental involvement” (p. 790). Also, the researchers concluded that “it appears that highly structured parental involvement programs are what is needed for the unique developmental period” (p. 793).

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. (2007). *Kindergarten to grade 12 Aboriginal languages and cultures: Manitoba curriculum framework of outcomes*. School Programs Division.

The writers of the *Framework of Outcomes* are Wanda Barker and Darlene Beauchamp. The *Framework of Outcomes* was also created with Elders/Community Advisors, Youth Advisors, the Project Advisory Team, the Aboriginal Languages and Cultures Curriculum Project Team, and the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth Staff. The *Framework of Outcomes* “was developed through the collaborative efforts of individuals and groups dedicated to the preservation, revitalization, and maintenance of Aboriginal languages and cultures” (p. v). Also, the *Framework of Outcomes* draws from curriculum documents that were developed as part of *The Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education, Kindergarten to Grade 12* and Manitoba curriculum documents. They articulated that “the intent of the *Framework* is to provide a focus and direction for student learning outcomes that will standardize learning experiences regarding the teaching of Aboriginal languages and culture in Manitoba” (p. 4). Then, they explained in the *Framework of Outcomes* that “the language programming will focus on providing language and cultural content relevant to the community” (p. 8). The rest of the *Framework of Outcomes* focuses on (1) assumptions from an Aboriginal perspective and linguistic perspective that guided the *Framework*’s development; (2) aspects of effective language learning with particular emphasis on cultural content being

taught in the Aboriginal language; (3) an Aboriginal philosophy; (4) the conceptual model of communicative competence and the four interrelated, circular components of this model (language competence, language learning strategies, language use in context, and cultural and linguistic diversity); and (5) the organization of the general learning outcomes with specific learning outcomes, focusing on the “knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to achieve through their language and culture learning experiences from Kindergarten to Grade 12” (p. 4).

Ott, M., & Hibbert, K. (2019). Assessment in primary education (Canada). *Bloomsbury Education and Childhood Studies*, 1-7.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781474209434.0007>

Mary Ott and Kathryn Hibbert completed a journal article that was a literature review focused on public primary education assessment in Canada. They concluded that there is no universally used assessment tool across Canada as there is no universally used curriculum. However, Ott and Hibbert articulated that “all provinces emphasize the essential role teacher judgement plays in supporting student learning through formative assessment, and all incorporate some form of centralized accountability testing” (p. 2). They also clarified that in Canadian provincial education frameworks there is no formalized balance between formative and summative assessment; specifically, regarding Ontario, it was announced that “in 2017 that it would begin review of its LSA [large-scale assessment] system as part of its ongoing curriculum renewal strategy” (p. 3). In addition, the process of identifying students with special needs differs across provinces and school districts; “however, all Canadian provinces share common policies and values on inclusive education” (p. 4).

Rameka, L. K. (2011). Being Māori: Culturally relevant assessment in early childhood education. *Early Years*, 31(3), 245-256.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2011.614222>

Lesley Kay Rameka is associated with the *Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa New Zealand Childcare Association* in Hamilton, New Zealand. Rameka described the journal article as being the result of two interrelated studies that “aimed at exploring assessment tools that are grounded in Māori ways of knowing and being” (p. 245). The specificities of the interrelated studies are not provided in the journal article; however, “participation in the assessment project allowed teachers to explore assessment understandings and processes and required reflection on what made them Māori, what made them different from mainstream early childhood services and how this was and could be reflected in practice” (p. 246). This reflection required

exploration and articulation of what the early childhood centres did that was specifically Māori, what expressed and reflected ‘being Māori’ and dialogue on why these practices, routines and understandings were important to ‘being Māori’. (p. 246)

An important part of identity and being Māori is Whakapapa (genealogy and history). Regarding assessment, Rameka explained that balance is a key feature, with respect being fundamental. Actions are viewed in terms of harmony and balance. For example, the *Māui tikitiki a Taranga* assessment framework was developed by the Best of Both Worlds Bilingual Preschool and “is a Māori/English bicultural, bilingual early childhood service located in Papakura, South Auckland, New Zealand” (p. 251). *Māui tikitiki a Taranga*, a demi-god, “the ancestor hero, is known throughout Polynesia” (p. 251). Rameka described how “the articulation and reification of *Māui-tikitiki-a-Taranga* as an assessment frame involved exploration and interpretation of his behaviours, traits and characteristics, trial and error, ongoing discussion with community, whanau (extended family), knowledgeable others, and research” (p. 251). Rameka explained that the *Best of Both Worlds Bilingual Preschool* assessment framework

includes Mana, Manaakitanga, Whanaungatanga, Rangatiratanga, Whakatoi, and Tinihanga.

Sheridan, S. (2000). A comparison of external and self-evaluations of quality in early childhood education. *Early Child Development and Care*, 164(1), 63-78.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0300443001640106>

Sonja Sheridan is associated with the Department of Education at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Sheridan stated, “the study emanates from the Lerum project” (p. 63). The aim of the journal article “is to compare evaluations of quality between an external evaluator and the pedagogues['] self-evaluations of quality in preschool, using the [Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale] ECERS” (p. 64). There is an expectation in Sweden that pedagogues evaluate the quality of their preschool unit. Specifically, Sheridan questioned, “are external evaluations and self-evaluations of quality as evaluated by the Swedish version of the ECERS, equal to one another or will they differ” (p. 24)? External and self-evaluation were expected to differ. Regarding the ECERS, Sheridan explained, “in this study the ECERS was used both as an instrument to evaluate the quality and as a “tool” for reflection and improvement of quality” (pp. 66-67). The research began with external evaluations using the ECERS with a sample of 20 preschool units. The units were selected out of the community’s 67 preschool units, that included 14 preschool centres. The sample of the preschool units was selected with the intent of all 14 preschool centres being included.

The second part of the study is described by Sheridan as consisting of the “selection of an intervention- and control group from the original 20 preschool units” (p. 68). The target group of the study was the intervention group which consists of nine preschool units with 31 pedagogues. The 31 pedagogues experienced “a common and overall introduction on quality in general and on pedagogical quality as evaluated by the ECERS” (p. 69). Of the 31 pedagogues, 18 were preschool teachers with an academic education and 13 childcare attendants with a secondary school level of education. After a one-month period,

Sheridan expected the pedagogues to provide a copy of their ECERS self-evaluations with rationales for their scores. Thirty pedagogues provided the information. For Sheridan's analysis of the study, "the external- and self-evaluations of quality are both statistically and qualitatively analysed in three different ways" (p. 69). Next, Sheridan organized the results as follows: (1) a comparison of the total average ECERS scores between the evaluators and pedagogues' evaluations, (2) a comparison of three dimensions of quality from the evaluations, and (3) the seven pedagogues' self-evaluation rationales. Results that were discussed are three preschool units evaluated as low quality by the evaluator and the results of four pedagogues from one preschool unit evaluated as high quality by the evaluator. Sheridan articulated that "some working teams rated their preschool units['] quality either above or below the evaluator" (p. 70); however, mean scores demonstrated general agreement, meaning agreement of 80 percent or above. The researcher concluded "this study shows that external- and self-evaluations of quality differ. The level of agreement differs both between the evaluator and the pedagogues and among team members of each working team" (p. 75). Sheridan added, "the differences in evaluations between preschool teachers and child care attendants can be interpreted as the result of the preschool teachers['] professional education" (p. 76). Sheridan also concluded that meeting between evaluations is where quality enhancement begins.

Sumsion, J., Harrison, L., Letsch, K., Bradley, B. S., & Stapleton, M. (2018). 'Belonging' in Australian early childhood education and care curriculum and quality assurance: Opportunities and risks. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 19(4), 340-355.

"Jennifer Sumsion is a professor emeritus of early childhood education at Charles Sturt University. ... Linda Harrison is a professor of early childhood at Macquarie University and adjunct professor at Charles Sturt University. ... Karen Letsch has worked in early childhood education and care services in Australia over three decades ... Benjamin Sylvester Bradley...is a professor emeritus of psychology at Charles Sturt University...[and] Matthew Stapleton is the Director and owner of

Centre Support, a company that assists early childhood services and educators to improve their knowledge and practice” (p. 355). Also, Stapleton identified as an Indigenous Australian researcher. Sumsion et al. argued that the 2009 national early childhood curriculum of Australia, titled *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework* (EYLF), and the National Quality Standard provide little guidance about how belonging “might or should be conceptualised beyond the level of everyday explanations and understandings” (p. 341). They suggested that this “gives rise to risks and opportunities that will continue to require careful negotiation if these key Australian policy documents are to have transformative effects” (p. 341). As part of the *Babies and Belonging* study, Sumsion et al. discussed a vignette of what they described as a “vernacular micro-expression of belonging in an ECEC centre in a small rural Aboriginal community in the state of Queensland” (p. 345). The vignette focused on the babies’ room at the Gundarah Early Learning Centre, one of four case sites. Letsch, over a 7-month period, completed 29 full-day visits to Gundarah and was responsible for “video footage, field notes, and conversational interviews with the centre’s director and the educational leader” (p. 346). At the centre, the researchers emphasized, infants have a choice in where they physically play throughout the day. This choice speaks to the acceptance educators have of children’s preferences. In addition, the researchers suggested the infants felt connected to each other. Then, they explained that their reading of the vignette as a micro-expression of belonging was not a universal reading, and others may have different interpretations.

Van Heerden, J. (2016). Quality in South African early learning centres: Mothers’ and teachers’ views and understanding. *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 6(1), 1-11. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v6i1x.423>

Judy Van Heerden is affiliated with the Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Pretoria, South Africa. The study the journal article is based from investigated “how the quality of early learning centres [ELCs] in South Africa was experienced and perceived by ... mothers and teachers of early

learning centres and how that knowledge compares with the model of quality development developed by Woodhead (1996)” (p. 2). Developmental psychologist Martin Woodhead (1996), also influenced Van Heerden’s theoretical framework throughout the explanatory instrumental case study. Additionally, the study cases “refer to mothers’ and teachers’ experiences of quality in early learning centres” (p. 4). The participants were recruited from 213 ELCs in nine provinces. An inclusion criterion was that centres must be oriented in a play-based curriculum. Then, fieldworkers completed audio recordings of face-to-face open-ended interviews with 235 teachers and 235 mothers. The data analysis consisted of coding the transcribed interviews into themes relevant to the theoretical framework; then, subthemes were identified to demonstrate the interrelatedness of the data.

Regarding infrastructure and learning, mothers and teachers discussed “safety and security, hygiene, neatness and cleanliness, sufficient space, well-equipped playgrounds and qualified teachers as important quality factors” (p. 5). Also, teachers and mothers stated that children needed to experience love at the ELC. Mothers shared the importance of children being happy and enjoyment while at the centre. What was “indicated by mothers and teachers as quality factors, were process indicators and were concerned with children’s socio emotional well-being, holistic development, values and respect” (p. 5). Van Heerden explained that “it seems that those aspects perceived by mothers and teachers as indicators of a good quality early learning centres were predominately process indicators and hard to ‘measure’ in a quantitative way” (pp. 8-9). A limitation Van Heerden noted was that fathers were not interviewed.

Appendix B: Diffraction Apparatus for Website Content

Table Number 1

<u>Centre:</u> British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society
<u>Website:</u> https://www.acc-society.bc.ca/
<u>Location:</u> British Columbia
<u>Contact Information:</u> Regional Community Facilitator < [REDACTED] > < [REDACTED] >
<u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1996
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "WHAT WE DO We help Indigenous communities develop high quality, culturally grounded, spiritually enriching, community child care services that are based in the child's culture, language and history [emphasis in original]" (British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society, n.d.a, p. 2).
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> "Coordinating body for the implementation of the national Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) Framework in BC" (BCACCS, n.d.d, para. 2) ; BCACCS preschools - Singing Frog Aboriginal Headstart Preschool and Eagle's Nest Aboriginal Headstart Preschool (BCACCS, n.d.b) ; Campaigns and Projects ; Aboriginal child care resource referral program ; community of practice (BCACCS, n.d.c)
<u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search. However, BCACCS (n.d.d) provide a hyperlink to the <i>National First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Policy Framework</i> (2017) and in section "6.5 Reciprocal Accountability, Research and Evaluation" (p. 13) provided various strategic actions with a short term structural action being "Develop and facilitate an overall evaluation framework including measures for quality and outcomes Who: First Nations and government partners [emphasis in original]" (pp. 13-14). Also, the framework states that "Reciprocal accountability means shared responsibility - amongst First Nations (at community, regional and national levels), and the Federal Government, and Provincial Governments - to achieve common goals" (p. 13). Additionally, the BCACCS (n.d.d) provided through a hyperlink Her Majesty the Queen

in Right of Canada's (2018) *Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework* which stated, "ACCOUNTABILITY, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ... To determine whether Indigenous ELCC programs are meeting the needs of Indigenous children and the expectations of their parents and communities, a responsive approach to supporting improved documentation, program planning, data collection, performance measurement, and multiple levels of evaluation (particularly Indigenous-developed) will need to be created. New approaches for sharing this information with program administrators, parents and communities for decision-making purposes are also needed. These approaches should be developed through a joint consultative process that involves federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, service providers, and early childhood development experts, as well as centred around the experiences of those being served - Indigenous children and families" (p. 24).

Table Number 2

<u>Centre:</u> Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development Inc.
<u>Website:</u> https://cahrd.org/
<u>Location:</u> Manitoba
<u>Contact Information:</u> Contact via <[REDACTED]>; e-mail through the website https://cahrd.org/contact-us/
<u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.
<u>Founding Date:</u> 2002 Kookum's Place Daycare
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "Our Mission To relieve and prevent unemployment among Aboriginal people in Winnipeg, and help them to achieve self-sufficiency by providing education and training, employment services, and support programs, such as counselling, daycare, and housing; and To do all such things ancillary and incidental to the attainment of the above purpose" (Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development, n.d.a)

<p><u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Kookum's Place Daycare, Neeginan Village, Healthy Living Program (Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development, n.d.c), Neeginan Learning and Literacy Centre, Aboriginal Community Campus, Neeginan College of Applied Technology (Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development, n.d.b)</p>
<p><u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search.</p>

Table Number 3

<p><u>Centre:</u> Circle of Indigenous Nations Society</p>
<p><u>Website:</u> https://www.coinations.net/our-programs</p>
<p><u>Location:</u> British Columbia</p>
<p><u>Contact Information:</u> Program Manager: [REDACTED] < [REDACTED] > < [REDACTED] ></p>
<p><u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.</p>
<p><u>Founding Date:</u> March 2013</p>
<p><u>Mission Statement:</u> "Our Mission Statement We provide programs rooted in Indigenous practices that strengthen cultural connections and support holistic healing and learning [emphasis in original]" (Circle of Indigenous Nations Society, n.d.a, para. 2).</p>
<p><u>Key Programs/Services:</u> "Healing Our Spirits" Aboriginal Mental Health and Substance Use Program ; Aboriginal Family Services Development Program ; Aboriginal Early Years and Early Intervention Program ; Aboriginal Family Connections Program ; Aboriginal Supported Child Development Program ; Aboriginal Infant Development Program ; Aboriginal Community Outreach Program ; Talking Little Feet: Aboriginal Head Start Child Care Center ; Aboriginal Community Wellness Program (Circle of Indigenous Nations Society, n.d.b)</p>

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework: Not specified through search.

Table Number 4

<u>Centre:</u> Dryden Native Friendship Centre
<u>Website:</u> https://www.dnfconline.org/early-on-centre-and-daycare
<u>Location:</u> Ontario
<u>Contact Information:</u> Contact via <[REDACTED]>; e-mail through the website < https://www.dnfconline.org/contact-us >
<u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1984
<u>Mission Statement:</u> Not specified through search. However, stated is that "The vision of the Friendship Centre movement is to improve the quality of life for aboriginal people living in an urban environment by supporting self-determined activities which encourage equal access to and participation in Canadian society and which respect Aboriginal cultural distinctiveness" (Dryden Native Friendship Centre, n.d.a, para. 2)
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Akwe:Go, Apatisiwin Employment and Training, Community Connections Program, Diabetes Education Program, EarlyON Centre, Healing and Wellness, Health Outreach Worker, Indigenous Combined Court Worker, Indigenous Mentor, Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin, Life Long Care Program, Life Long Care Home Maintenance, Urban Aboriginal Healthy Kids, Urban Aboriginal Healthy Living Program, Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound, Wasa-Nabin (Dryden Native Friendship Centre, n.d.b)
<u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search.

Table Number 5

<u>Centre:</u> First Light St. John's Friendship Centre
<u>Website:</u> https://firstlightnl.ca/program/first-light-childcare-centre/
<u>Location:</u> Newfoundland and Labrador
<u>Contact Information:</u> First Light Childcare Centre < [REDACTED] > < [REDACTED] > < [REDACTED] >
<u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1983
<u>Mission Statement:</u> Not specified through search. However, stated is that "First Light is a registered non-profit organization that serves the urban Indigenous and non-Indigenous community alike by providing programs and services rooted in the revitalization, strengthening and celebration of Indigenous cultures and languages in the spirit of trust, respect, and friendship" (First Light, n.d.a, para. 1).
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Centre for Performance & Creativity, School Aged Cultural Presentations, Breathe, Baby and Me, Parent Child Mother Goose, Community Cupboard, Men's Group, First Light Youth Program (First Light, n.d.c), Cultural Support, Aboriginal Patient Navigators (First Light, n.d.d), First Light Childcare Centre (First Light, n.d.b)
<u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search.

Table Number 6

<u>Centre:</u> Giiwedno Mshkikiiwgamig – North Bay Indigenous Hub
<u>Website:</u> https://www.giiwednomshkikiiwgamig.ca/
<u>Location:</u> Ontario

<p>Contact Information: Contact via email through the website <https://www.giiwednomshkikiiwgamig.ca/contact/></p>
<p>Language: Language is described in the Operating Information (n.d.) as "music, song, games, books, cultural props in both Ojibway and Cree dialects" (p. 5).</p>
<p>Founding Date: 2018</p>
<p>Mission Statement: "The Centre adheres to the Ministry of Education's pedagogical approach, "How Does Learning Happen" in parallel with our cultural programming. The Centre connects children with Indigenous identity and language through land-based activities and cultural teachings. We offer programming designed to meet the needs of the whole child and strive to meet the needs of each child as an individual who is competent, curious and capable of complex thinking and rich in potential [emphasis in original]" (Operating Information, n.d., p. 6).</p>
<p>Key Programs/Services: Primary Care, DayCare/EarlyON Centre (Giiwendo Mshkikiiwgamig, n.d.), Traditional Healing (North Bay Indigenous Hub, n.d.b), one-on-one support, ceremonies, drumming/drum teachings, round dance, art & craft workshops, sharing circles, cedar baths, storytelling, language, tipi teachings, traditional cooking, traditional teachings, family & parenting, traditional medicine, land-based activities (North Bay Indigenous Hub, n.d.a).</p>
<p>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework: Not specified through search. However, the <i>Operating Information</i> (n.d.) states that, "The Centre will document children's play through pictures and short learning stories that documents the children's experiences. Our Educators will participate in continuous professional development to ensure we are always evolving. Educators will document programming regularly to provide a source for self-reflection and Families are encouraged to give regular feedback on our programming so that we can continuously learn and grow as a Centre through our experiences. We will incorporate both indoor and outdoor play, as well as quiet rest time while keeping in mind individual needs of the children receiving child care" (p. 4). They also stated, "We recognize and believe it is a shared responsibility to live and teach the <i>Seven Grandfather Teachings</i> [emphasis in original]" (p. 4).</p>

Table Number 7

<u>Centre:</u> Inuuqatigiit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families
<u>Website:</u> http://inuugatigiit.ca/
<u>Location:</u> Ontario
<u>Contact Information:</u> General Info. Head Office and Early Years' Centre <[REDACTED]>; Ilagiinut EarlyON Child and Family Centre <[REDACTED]>; Director of Programs: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
<u>Language:</u> Inuktitut (Inuuqatigiit - Centre for Children, Youth and Families, n.d.d, para. 1).
<u>Founding Date:</u> August 2005
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "Our Mission In partnership with parents and the community[,] the Inuuqatigiit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families fosters strong and proud Inuit children, youth and families" (Inuuqatigiit - Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families, n.d.c, para. 1).
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Inuit cultural online resource ICOR portal, Inuktitut apps, Inuit games, Uqausivut culture and language, well-being and living in Ottawa, early years' parent council, Ilagiinut Kativvik - EarlyON program, Sivummut Head Start, Tumiralaat Child Care, Tukimut Afterschool, Akwe:Go program, Wasa-Nabin Urban Aboriginal, Right to Play programs, Youth employment skills and strategy, Makkuktukuvik art studio, Sivulivut Nukiqautivut Elders and youth (Inuuqatigiit - Centre for Children, Youth and Families, n.d.a)
<u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search. However, Inuuqatigiit – Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families (n.d.b) provided a hyperlink to the Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada (2018) <i>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework</i> that stated, "ACCOUNTABILITY, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ... To determine whether Indigenous ELCC programs are meeting the needs of Indigenous children and the expectations of their parents and communities, a responsive approach to supporting improved documentation, program planning, data collection, performance measurement, and multiple levels of evaluation (particularly Indigenous-developed) will need to be created. New approaches for sharing this information with program administrators, parents and

communities for decision-making purposes are also needed. These approaches should be developed through a joint consultative process that involves federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, service providers, and early childhood development experts, as well as centred around the experiences of those being served - Indigenous children and families" (p. 24).

Table Number 8

<u>Centre:</u> Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
<u>Website:</u> https://www.irc.inuvialuit.com/program/inuvialuit-child-development-program
<u>Location:</u> Northwest Territories
<u>Contact Information:</u> Health and Wellness division - Manager Early Childhood Programs: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>; Health and Wellness division - Early Childhood Intervention Coordinator: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>
<u>Language:</u> "The Inuvialuit belong to three linguistic groups. Collectively the three dialects they speak are known as the Inuvialuktun language: · <i>Uummarmiutun</i> meaning "people of the evergreens and willows" is spoken in the three-lined inland communities of Aklavik and Inuvik. · <i>Sallirmiutun</i> is spoken in the coastal communities of Tuktoyatuk, Paulatuk and Sachs Harbour. · <i>Kangiryuarmiutun</i> meaning "people of the large bay" is spoken in the community of Ulukhaktok (Holman) on Victoria Island [emphasis in original]" (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, n.d.b, para. 1).
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1984
<u>Mission Statement:</u> <i>"Provide and implement a quality and culturally relevant child centred learning approach in the areas of growth and development by setting a solid foundation that reflects the child's needs [emphasis in original]"</i> ((Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, n.d.a, para. 3).

<p><u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Inuvialuit Child Development Program, Early (Childhood) Intervention Project, Brighter Futures, Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program, regional prenatal program, Inuvialuit Cultural Centre Pitquhiit-Pitqusiit (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, n.d.c)</p>
<p><u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search.</p>

Table Number 9

<p><u>Centre:</u> Keepers of the Circle</p>
<p><u>Website:</u> https://keepersofthecircle.com/</p>
<p><u>Location:</u> Ontario</p>
<p><u>Contact Information:</u> EarlyON programs: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]></p>
<p><u>Language:</u> Ojibwe and Algonquin (Keepers of the Circle, n.d.a)</p>
<p><u>Founding Date:</u> 1997</p>
<p><u>Mission Statement:</u> Not specified through search. However, the Keepers of the Circle (n.d.b) stated, "TNWSG values respectful, judgement free relationships. · The organization is family focused and community oriented. · The organization honours the unique circumstances of each individual and the power of the collective to enact positive change. · The organization incorporates Anishnaabe teachings in its planning and delivery of programming. · Our core values emanate from the Medicine Circle and The Seven Grandfather Teachings" (para. 1).</p>
<p><u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Health Team, Cultural Programming, Family Support (Keepers of the Circle, n.d.e), Ryerson Inclusive Early Childhood Program, EarlyON, Burnside Dr. Kirkland Lake Site, Shepherdson Rd. New Liskward Site, Scott St. New Liskeard Site (Keepers of the Circle, n.d.d)</p>

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework: Not specified through search. However, the Keepers of the Circle (n.d.c) *Keepers of the Circle Parent Handbook* states, "Keepers of the Circle Aboriginal Family Learning Centre Child Care Facility offers a strong and vibrant environment for Native families and the community. They do this by supporting the balance in each other and the world around them, according to the teaching of the medicine wheel and the document *How Does Learning Happen?*" (p. 1). The Ontario Ministry of Education's (2014) *How Does Learning Happen?*, when referring to educators supporting belonging, wellbeing, engagement, and expression, stated that, "A process of critical reflection, learning, and growth is the basis of high-quality programs that continuously improve and create contexts that are meaningful for the children and families/caregivers they serve" (p. 22). Additionally, the Ontario Ministry of Education refers to collaborative inquiry, the environment, and pedagogical documentation as informing educators.

Table Number 10

<u>Centre:</u> Makonsag
<u>Website:</u> https://www.makonsag.ca/
<u>Location:</u> Ontario
<u>Contact Information:</u> General info. contact via <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>; EarlyON Coordinator <[REDACTED]>
<u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1997
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "Mission Statement Our childcare teachers and staff offer your child love, acceptance and understanding while fostering the growth and development of each individual. Aboriginal Head Start children socialize with peers, begin to problem solve and learn through play in a positive, culturally-enriched environment" (Makonsag, n.d.a, para. 3).

<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Indigenous Child Care, Aboriginal Head Start, EarlyON, Sharing in the Circle, Turtle Island Gathering Place (Makonsag, n.d.b)
<u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search.

Table Number 11

<u>Centre:</u> Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
<u>Website:</u> https://nativechild.org/
<u>Location:</u> Ontario
<u>Contact Information:</u> Contact via < [REDACTED] > < [REDACTED] >
<u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1986
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "Native Child and Family Services of Toronto strives to provide a life of quality, well-being, caring and healing for our children and families in the Toronto Native Community. We do this by creating a service model that is culture-based and respects the values of Native people, the extended family and the right to self-determination" (Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, n.d., para. 4-5).
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> "Our many services include: · Children and youth mental health and case management including one-on-one counselling, group, and play therapy; · Prevention-focused Family Skills Building and Support programs, including our Family Resource Program and the Ninoshe and Zhishay programs; · The country's largest Aboriginal Head Start program with four locations across the city; · Child and Family Well-being, including Kin Finding and permanency options for children; · A variety of Early Years, Early Childhood Development, and parenting group programs; · Childcare; · Transitional Housing for men; · Transitional Housing

for women with young children; · Summer day and overnight on-the-land camps; · Physical Literacy program; · Pre and Post Natal Services; · Community events including Culture Nights, drum socials, feasts, and an annual Pow Wow; · Three Aboriginal Child and Family Centres that deliver a host of programming for children 0-6, their older siblings and their families; and · A Healing Lodge for women and their children while they are undergoing treatment for substance and/or mental health issues" (Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, n.d., para. 7).

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework: Not specified through search.

Table Number 12

<u>Centre:</u> Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg
<u>Website:</u> https://niwasa.ca/
<u>Location:</u> Ontario
<u>Contact Information:</u> Program Office <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>
<u>Language:</u> Mohawk and Ojibwe (Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg, n.d.b, para. 2).
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1997
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "Our mission is to provide services and supports in safe spaces for Indigenous people across the life cycle that are rooted in culture and language" (Niwasa Kendaaswin Tegpara, n.d.a, para. 2).
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Head Start Preschool, Early Learning and Child Care Centre, EarlyON Centre and Outreach Program, NYA:WEH (Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg, n.d.e, para. 1), youth drop in (Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg, n.d.f) Community Action Program for Children (Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg, n.d.c), Food Bank (Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg, n.d.d)

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework: Not specified through search.

Table Number 13

<u>Centre:</u> Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association
<u>Website:</u> https://oahsa.ca/waabinong/
<u>Location:</u> Ontario
<u>Contact Information:</u> Contact via <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>
<u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1993
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "Mission Statement OAHSA is collectively united, with respect to our traditional teachings, to inspire, promote and support life-long learning and empowerment of our Aboriginal Head Start in urban and northern communities [emphasis in original]" (Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association, n.d.a)
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> AHS sites, holistic development, spiritual development, social and emotional development, cognitive and language development, physical development (Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association, n.d.b)
<u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search. However, mitchbarid (2020) stated, "As educators we value the opportunities we have to witness, document, and celebrate these moments with children. ... Initially, educators watch for moments that make us wonder; things we cannot explain, repetitive movements, obstacles to be negotiated or something that grabs our attention. We have begun to get into the habit of snapping a few pictures of that process and jotting down quick notes. Later we combine these things together and place it on our process wall for consideration. Any

thoughts, questions, considerations or comments are invited from other educators, staff, families and children. ... Each one is added with post it notes onto the board. We believe that learning does not happen in isolation, but as a collaboration between children, the environment, the community and the natural world. There are many ways of knowing, many kinds of knowledge, and many types of sharing. We invite the community to share those with us, to offer different perspectives, theories, ideas, and experiences to learning and growth. ... In the next step, we synthesize the ideas and theories into a narrative, and place it together with the photographs into one document. We place these in the areas where the learning occurred, or as close by as possible, at the level of the children. We delight when children notice them, and we have the opportunity to revisit the experience again. For children with expressive language, it is also an opportunity to be sure that we have captured what they've said, or meant – and this is reflected in the documentation. We then add this document to the process wall, again for consideration from the community. ... Post it notes are offered for those wanting to participate in the meaning-making process. This is often a time of negotiation of meaning – in some cases changing the narrative to reflect other perspectives, the order or grouping of photographs, or in some cases, the removal of text completely. In some cases, pictures can speak a thousand words. We needed to learn when NOT to tell the whole story. ... These documentations stay up for a period of time, in the chance that more learning in that area occurs. When it does, we document that and add it alongside the others. If, over time, nothing further occurs, we may plan a provocation to spark that interest again. As new documentations arise, older ones are placed in a binder for families and children to access. When a documentation occurs and continues to occur – then we are managing a sustained interest. We document and make notes over a longer period of time, and in the end compile those documentations into one long narrative. Our Ukulele and Infants documentation spread ten feet long and spanned over six months! We display the narrative in the classroom, and children revisit those learning experiences again and again. ... Documentations are always in flux, interpreted and re-interpreted by the children, educators and community that view them. We believe that knowledge is a collaboration, that the community possesses many knowledge gifts if given the opportunity to share them. We learn as a collective – and make meaning together to inspire children's learning (para. 1-10).

Table Number 14

<u>Centre:</u> Opokaa'sin Early Intervention Society
<u>Website:</u> https://www.opokaasin.org/
<u>Location:</u> Alberta
<u>Contact Information:</u> Contact via <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>
<u>Language:</u> Blackfoot (Opokaa'sin Early Intervention Society, n.d.b)
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1996
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "Since our inception, Opokaa'sin Early Intervention Society's mission has been to nurture and support the strengths and resilience of Indigenous families, children, and youth" (Opokaa'sin Early Intervention Society, n.d.a, para. 1).
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Atan Head Start, Opokaa'sin Kindergarten, Opokaa'sin Childcare program, Opokaa'sins' Family Preservation Program, Opokaa'sin Family Resource Network (Opokaa'sin Early Intervention Society, n.d.c)
<u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search. However, the Opokaa'sin Early Intervention Society (n.d.c) provides a hyperlink to the Government of Canada (2021) <i>Federal Secretariat on Early Learning and Child Care</i> that refers to the Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada's (2018) <i>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework</i> and states, "ACCOUNTABILITY, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ... To determine whether Indigenous ELCC programs are meeting the needs of Indigenous children and the expectations of their parents and communities, a responsive approach to supporting improved documentation, program planning, data collection, performance measurement, and multiple levels of evaluation (particularly Indigenous-developed) will need to be created. New approaches for sharing this information with program administrators, parents and communities for decision-making purposes are also needed. These approaches should be developed through a joint consultative process that involves federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, service providers, and early childhood

development experts, as well as centred around the experiences of those being served - Indigenous children and families" (p. 24).

Table Number 15

<u>Centre:</u> Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre
<u>Website:</u> http://rlifc.ca/
<u>Location:</u> Ontario
<u>Contact Information:</u> Contact via < [REDACTED] > < [REDACTED] >
<u>Language:</u> "Being an urban-based service, Moozoons Child Care Centre will have children from varying Indigenous backgrounds represented in the Indigenous Community. An effort will be made to expose the children to other cultures and languages beyond their own mother tongue and cultural background" (Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre, n.d.b, para. 20).
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1964
<u>Mission Statement:</u> "Mission Statement To ensure that a community directed organization is working to improve the quality of life for Red Lake's First Peoples and their descendants by promoting traditional values such as unity, sharing, respect, honesty, caring and spirituality through social, recreational and cultural activities" (Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre, n.d.a, para. 2).
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Moozoons Child Care Centre, Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Akwe:go, Wasanabin, Community Action Program for Children, UAHL Healthy Kids, Kids Are Recreationally Equal (KARE), Homelessness Outreach Program, Red Lake Family Food Bank, FASD Community Support, Alternative Secondary School Program, Apatisiwin, Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin, Cultural Resource Coordinator, Life Long Care, Urban Aboriginal Healthy Living, Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program, Indigenous Criminal Courtwork (Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre, n.d.a)

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework: Not specified through search. However, Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre's (n.d.b) *About the Moozoons Child Care Centre* stated that, "Mnaamodzawin, along with the guidelines of the How Does Learning Happen? pedagogy, the four foundations of Belonging, Well Being, Engagement and Expression will be implemented with a Holistic approach, ensuring that children, staff and families live in harmony with each other and Mother Earth" (para. 3). The Ontario Ministry of Education's (2014) *How Does Learning Happen?* when referring to educators supporting belonging, wellbeing, engagement, and expression, states that, "A process of critical reflection, learning, and growth is the basis of high-quality programs that continuously improve and create contexts that are meaningful for the children and families/caregivers they serve" (p. 22). Additionally, the Ontario Ministry of Education referred to collaborative inquiry, the environment, and pedagogical documentation as informing educators.

Table Number 16

<u>Centre:</u> Saskatoon Tribal Council Urban First Nations Services
<u>Website:</u> https://www.sktc.sk.ca/corporations/stc-urban-first-nations-services-inc/
<u>Location:</u> Saskatchewan
<u>Contact Information:</u> Early Childhood Program Coordinator <[REDACTED]>
<u>Language:</u> Not specified through search.
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1982
<u>Mission Statement:</u> " The Saskatoon Tribal Council is dedicated to creating a respectful environment that inspires and encourages innovation and leadership while building and strengthening partnerships with communities, individuals and organizations. We do this by providing exceptional program and service delivery, sustainable economic development,

strong political support and a representative voice for Our Nations while respecting the sovereignty of each First Nation" (Saskatoon Tribal Council, n.d.c, para. 2-3).
<p><u>Key Programs/Services:</u> "Services offered to STC member communities · Economic Development - Economic ventures to create own-source wealth for STC member communities · Community Health Programs - health services and supports in community health nursing, mental health, additions, maternal child health, nutrition and diabetes, home care for chronic conditions, Indian Residential School programs, · Early Childhood Learning - early learning development for children on reserve · Environmental Health - ensure facilities, housing and drinking water meet health standards · Housing and Engineering - ensure community facilities and homes meet safety standards · Justice - assist members and communities with justice initiatives · Education - Facilitate education programs within STC member community elementary and two high schools · Labour Force Development - access to job training and career development supports" (Saskatoon Tribal Council, n.d.d, para. 2).</p>
<p><u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search. However, the Saskatoon Tribal Council (n.d.a) stated that, "Child Care facilities are licensed, and both Child Care and Headstart programs are monitored based on Saskatchewan First Nations Regulations and Policies, to ensure programs meet basic standards which are equivalent to, or better than provincial Child Care Regulations. This includes monitoring to meet Environmental Health standards and Nutrition guidelines" (para. 2). Also, Saskatoon Tribal Council (n.d.b) stated regarding the <i>Early Learning Centre</i> that one of the goals is, "To continually maintain adherence to the Childcare Regulations as set out by the Childcare Act" (para. 4).</p>

Table Number 17

<u>Centre:</u> Ska:na Family Learning Centre
<u>Website:</u> http://www.skanaflc.com/
<u>Location:</u> Ontario

<p>Contact Information: Contact via <[REDACTED]></p>
<p>Language: "The Curriculum's Aboriginal language and cultural component will be primarily based on the Ojibwa culture/tradition and balanced with respecting and including all children's cultures enrolled in the program" (Ska:na Family Learning Centre, 2015, para. 1).</p>
<p>Founding Date: 2003</p>
<p>Mission Statement: Not specified through search. However, Ska:na Family Learning Centre (n.d.) stated that, "A Lifetime of Learning Starts Here. You want the best for your child. You want your child to have fun in a stimulating environment while they develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Most of all, you want to know that your child is receiving the kind of quality care you would provide in a safe environment. Ska:na is a name you can trust to care for your child. Our experience allows you to simplify your busy schedule by using our services to meet the various challenges of childhood. At Ska:na, you will find areas specifically designed to encourage growth through play. Your child will discover while under the watchful eye of their teachers. Our centers open early and stay open late, serving breakfast and lunch onsite and transporting your child to and from their local school if you don't have time to. Discover the Ska:na difference" (Ska:na Family Learning Centre, n.d.a, para. 1-2).</p>
<p>Key Programs/Services: Indigenous EarlyON, City of Windsor EarlyON, Ontario EarlyON, Ministry of Education for Child Care resources, Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Infant Hearing Program, Preschool Speech and Language Program, Finding Quality Child care, Services for children who are blind or have low vision, Family Time-Stay and Play, Bringing Home Tradition: A parenting Course Through an Indigenous Lens, Wellness workshop and practical support series (Ska:na Family Learning Centre, n.d.c)</p>
<p>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework: Not specified through search. However, Ska:na Family Learning Centre (2015) stated that "...SFLC encompasses the research and legislation in Ontario's three major early learning documents: How Does Learning Happen, The Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) and Think, Feel, Act Lessons from Research about Young Children" (para. 2). The Ontario Ministry of Education's</p>

(2014) *How Does Learning Happen?* when referring to educators supporting belonging, wellbeing, engagement, and expression, states that, "A process of critical reflection, learning, and growth is the basis of high-quality programs that continuously improve and create contexts that are meaningful for the children and families/caregivers they serve" (p. 22). Additionally, the Ontario Ministry of Education referred to collaborative inquiry, the environment, and pedagogical documentation as informing educators. The Best Start Expert Panel on Early Learning (2006) *ELECT* states in the section, "Assessment, Evaluation and Monitoring" that "Quality early childhood settings use ongoing assessments and systematic evaluations to gather information on children's learning and development and the quality of the program. Results benefit children by informing decisions about pedagogy, and curriculum. The assessments and evaluations support reciprocal communications with parents and be sensitive to the cultural and community context of children's lives. Monitoring early child development at the community level helps practitioners understand how well individual early childhood settings are meeting the needs of families with young children" (p. 60). The *ELECT* also explains that assessment of children's developmental skills can be illustrated through observation and documentation, and these support curriculum planning. Then, regarding program evaluation the *ELECT* states, "Evaluating an early childhood setting is a multi-faceted affair; it must include consideration of its structural characteristics such as ratios, educational requirements and compensation. However, this Panel's considerations are primarily oriented towards the content of the program and the pedagogy, as well as the quality and type of interactions and relationships that support the children's development and learning" (p. 63). Additionally, the *ELECT*'s practice guidelines are described as providing a starting point to evaluating the *ELECT*'s impact on pedagogy and curriculum; the six principles are: "1. Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health. 2. Partnerships with families and communities strengthen the ability of early childhood settings to meet the needs of young children. 3. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion are prerequisites for honouring children's rights, optimal development and learning. 4. A planned curriculum supports early learning. 5. Play is a means to early learning that capitalizes on children's natural curiosity and exuberance. 6. Knowledgeable, responsive early childhood professionals are essential" (p. 6). Also, monitoring the impact of programming at the community level should take place because "The family within the community is the primary place where children grow and learn" (p. 63). The Ontario Ministry of Education's (2013)

Think, Feel, Act also speaks to pedagogical documentation and states, "It offers a process for listening to children, for creating artifacts from that listening, and for studying with others what children reveal about their competent and thoughtful views of the world. To listen to children, we document living moments with images, video, artifacts, written or audio recordings of what children have said, or other digital traces. These documented traces of lived experience, when shared with others, become a tool for thinking together. To hear others' thoughts makes us realize there are many viewpoints" (p. 27). Then, the Ska:na Family Learning Centre (n.d.b) acknowledged they are influenced by High Scope Curriculum and regarding assessment stated, "Assessment - The Infant-Toddler COR (Child Observation Record for Infants and Toddlers) is used to evaluate child progress in High/Scope infant-toddler programs. The assessment is developmentally continuous with the Preschool COR, and in cases where programs serve a mixed age group, both instruments are used [emphasis in original]" (Ska:na Family Learning Centre, n.d.b, para. 6).

Table Number 18

<u>Centre:</u> Snc'c'amala?tn Early Childhood Education Centre (Okanagan Indian Band)
<u>Website:</u> https://okib.ca/departments/education/snccamala-tn-daycare
<u>Location:</u> British Columbia
<u>Contact Information:</u> Contact via <[REDACTED]>
<u>Language:</u> Okanagan (Okanagan Indian Band, n.d.)
<u>Founding Date:</u> 1997
<u>Mission Statement:</u> Not specified through search. However, the Okanagan Indian Band (n.d.) stated that, "OUR PHILOSOPHY AT THE SNC'CAMALA?TN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTRE "WE BELIEVE" That only as a First Nations controlled facility could it be possible to provide a happy, healthy, safe, and stimulating environment for children which fosters their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, creative, and all necessary cultural development. All

<p>areas are related to and dependent upon child one another and are of equal importance to the child's development. In the individual worth and value of every child, and that each child is unique, with abilities that are different from those of other children. That the group setting must meet the individual needs of each child within the context of the group, allowing them to expand and enrich their overall development, through play and discovery. That the group care/school setting is a valuable family support system, allowing parents/guardians to pursue their own interests with peace of mind for their child's welfare. It is critical that the centre staff and parents/guardians work together as partners in meeting the needs of the children [emphasis in original]" (para. 8-13).</p>
<p>Key Programs/Services: "Okanagan Language · Okanagan/First Nations culture · Nutritious lunches and snacks · Qualified and Knowledgeable Staff · Safe and secure environment · Field Trips · Head Start Program for 3 years olds · Diverse and Stimulating programming · Family support and education · Summer Day Camp for 6-10 year olds" (Okanagan Indian Band, n.d.)</p>
<p>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework: Not specified through search.</p>

Table Number 19

Centre: Stó:lō Service Agency
Website: https://www.stolonation.bc.ca/
Location: British Columbia
Contact Information: Early Childhood Education < [REDACTED] >
Language: Halq'eméylem (Stó:lō Service Agency, n.d.b)
Founding Date: 1994
Mission Statement: "We empower, support and contribute to the health and well-being of all people by providing leadership and delivering a broad range of quality services. To create a

<p>better world for our people, we, the Stó:lō House of Government, endeavor to: Provide high quality services. Practice and promote cultural values. Protect and manage our resources; and Operate in a fair, honest and respectful manner. The vision will be realized through the combined efforts among and between the SN Chiefs Council, the SN Board, and the SN Executive staff. Altogether, they will be guided by the mission statement, as adopted by the Stó:lō Nation Chiefs in 1995" (Stó:lō Service Agency, n.d.c, para. 2-4)</p>
<p><u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Health and Wellness Programs/Services: community health, dental, early childhood development - daycare and Headstart, family empowerment team, family services, health management, home and community care, national insured health benefits, primary health care centre, Qwi:qwelstóm justice program, Stó:lō Elders lodge, support services, wellness services (Stó:lō Service Agency, n.d.a)</p>
<p><u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search. However, Stó:lō Service Agency (n.d.a) stated that "Our facility is fully licensed by Fraser Health Community Care and Assisted Living Act and employ's professional early childhood educators" (para. 3).</p>

Table Number 20

<p><u>Centre:</u> Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in</p>
<p><u>Website:</u> https://www.tron.dek.ca/e</p>
<p><u>Location:</u> Yukon</p>
<p><u>Contact Information:</u> General enquiries < [REDACTED] > < [REDACTED] ></p>
<p><u>Language:</u> "The citizenship of roughly 1,100 includes descendants of the Hän-speaking people, who have lived along the Yukon River for millennia, and a diverse mix of families descended from Gwich'in, Northern Tutchone and other language groups" (Tr'ondek Hwech'in Hän Nation, n.d.a, para. 1).</p>

<u>Founding Date:</u> 1997 Nena tthe Tr'inke-in
<u>Mission Statement:</u> Tr'ondek Hwech'in Hän Nation's (n.d.b) <i>Nena-the Tr'inke-in Aboriginal Head Start: Parent Handbook</i> states that "The purpose of the Nena tthe Tr'inke-in Aboriginal Head Start is to enhance the early childhood education of aboriginal children by providing them with age appropriate, culturally relevant learning activities to support their holistic growth and development. We will also enhance each child's self-esteem by encouraging them to be proud of their culture and language. This in turn will build their confidence and make them proud enough to choose a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a life time of learning [emphasis in original]" (p. 2).
<u>Key Programs/Services:</u> Counselling, Youth Program, Rentals, Aboriginal Head Start, Post-Secondary Education and Training, K-12 Funding Support, Education Outreach Program, Big Brothers Sisters Dawson, Work Opportunities Program, Family Wellness Program, Family Wellness Program, Medical Assistance and Home Care, Elder's Program (Tr'ondek Hwech'in Hän Nation, n.d.c)
<u>Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Outcomes Framework:</u> Not specified through search

Curriculum Vitae

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Post-secondary Education and Degrees:	<p>Fanshawe College London, Ontario, Canada 2012-2014 Diploma</p> <p>Fanshawe College London, Ontario, Canada 2014-2016 Hon. B.A.</p> <p>Western University London, Ontario, Canada 2016-2017 M.A. (fast tracked)</p> <p>Western University London, Ontario, Canada 2017-2023 Ph.D.</p>
Honours and Awards:	<p>Ontario Graduate Scholarship 2018</p> <p>Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Joseph Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship-Master 2016</p> <p>Western University AER Graduate Scholarship for Literacy Studies in Education 2016</p> <p>Western University Admission Scholarship 2016</p> <p>Fanshawe College President's Honour Roll 2014, 2016</p> <p>Fanshawe College Dean's Honour Roll 2012 Fall, 2013 Winter, 2013 Fall, 2014 Winter, 2014 Summer, 2014 Fall, 2015 Winter, 2015 Fall, 2016 Winter</p>

Related Work Experience

Graduate Student Assistant
Western University
2017 September-2023 April

Professor
Fanshawe College
2018 September-2018 December

Test Administrator
Programme for International Student Assessment
2018 March-2018 June

Researcher
Western University Professional and Managerial Association
2018 April-2018 May

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Western University
2016 September-2017 August

Early Childhood Educator
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2012 December-2016 August

Publications:

- Heydon, R., Akiwenzie, E., Cooper, E., Ghannoum, H., Havord-Wier, D., Johns, B., MacAlpine, K.A., McKee, L., Nagle, J., Neeganagwedgin, E., Pawlick-Potts, D., Poczubut, S., Ruthes Coelho, C., Stooke, A., Tran, A., & Zhang, Z. (2023). Guidelines for virtual early childhood and family learning: An equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization-informed systematic review of the literature. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*.
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