The Minimal Course approach for teaching/learning Algonquian languages

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TheMinimalCourseApproachForTeachingLearningAlgonquianLanguages-20211017draft.pdf

1.   Introduction: the Minimal Course

- Both immersion- and grammar-based approaches to Indigenous languages can be overwhelming, and particularly hard for busy adult learners to access.

- A new approach, the _Minimal Course_, aims to both enhance immersion and/or provide an accessible introductory course for more time-constrained adult beginners. It introduces core Algonquian language patterns quickly and simply; and so far has been picked up and implemented in full or in part for

      - Wolastoqew/Maliseet
      - Passamaquoddy
      - Long Island Algonquian (Unkechaug-Shinnecock-Montaukett)
      - Shawnee
      - Anishinaabemowin
      - Michif
      - Western Abenaki

language efforts, among others (along with Makah, Irish, and Somali).

- _Here we'll draw our examples mainly from the Abenaki 101-102 course series at the Univ. of Southern Maine._

- This presentation will have three parts:

    (1)   a short presentation of the Minimal Course   *= principles, examples, etc.*

    (2)   observations and comments from community users (teachers, learners) of the Minimal Course

    (3)   a hands-on workshop for the last 30min, where you can start developing Minimal Course _lessonlets_ for your language right here and now

- Write to us in the chat which language/groups you'd like to be in, so that we can set up the right breakout rooms for you for the hands-on workshop!

- Lots of people to credit!

SMFN: Victor Atwin, Toni Brooks, Kelsey Leonard, Anatasha Lyon, Daryll Nicholas, Andrea Bear Nicholas, Joleen Paul

Abenaki: Jesse Bruchac, Joseph Joubert   *Michif*: Heather Souter

LIA: Leighton Delgado, Lizbeth Gonzalez, Irene Navas, Tina Tarrant, Wunetu Tarrant, Harry Wallace

Makah: Maria Pascua, Christopher Martinez   *Shawnee*: Joel Barnes, Karl Meyer, Anastasia Miller-Youst
Anishinaabemowin: Bronwyn Bjorkman, Leon "Boycee" Valliere
Unama'ki Mi'kmaw: Dean Simon + all mentors in Mi'kma'ki

Carol Dana, Jerry Francis, and Gabriel Paul (*Penobscot*)

Margaret Apt, David Francis, John Homan, John Holmes, Andrew Moore, Kenneth Newell, Roland Newell, Susan Newell, Annette Sockabeson, Dwayne Sockabeson, Hilda Soctomah, Madonna Soctomah, Jane Taylor, Alice Tomah (*Passamaquoddy/Sipayik*)

Janine Metallic, MaryAnn Metallic, Roger Metallic, Diane Mitchell, Kathy Sorbey, Janice Vicaire, Joseph Wilmot (*Listuguj Mi'gmaw*)

...and many, many other speakers and learners along the way!

- The Minimal Course is specifically designed to help learners face the heavy added challenges of becoming a proficient speaker of a language that has been marginalized.

- It counters the common misunderstanding (especially among heritage learners) that their often very non-English languages are "unlearnable"—by providing a _completely non-technical_ (but meticulously linguistically informed) presentation of the language's

    (a)   _practical everyday usage_, and
    (b)   _core patterns_ for building phrases, sentences, and conversations,

always combined together—and all in a step-by-step series of small, easily learnable chunks we call "_lessonlets_".

- Learners move forward by always Looping Back to the first small set of lessonlets, and Expanding on them, relating new expressions to those now-familiar ones.

- The core lessonlets are very brief, so a Minimal Course can be shared entirely orally (*writing is possible but <u>never</u> required*), or flexibly adapted into existing courses and/or various digital formats.

- And once they've mastered the essentials of just a single lessonlet, even beginners can "<u>*Teach It Forward*</u>".

    = *they can pass on what they've learned directly to friends/family, <u>outside</u> of the classroom*

- The Minimal Course is tied to a broader approach to language reclamation: the *Relational Approach*.

2.   The Relational Approach

- Language reclamation work, as we understand it, is also _Relational_: it is not to create _individual_ speakers, but to create/(re-)build a _community_ of speakers.

- Since community _is_ Relations, our design principles everywhere emphasize _Relations_:

= how learners Relate to   _fellow learner-speakers_   = group-support (_WeHelpEachOther_) strategies

= how learners Relate to   _first-language speakers_   = _coping_ strategies =

    - for highly critical (even mean) first-language speakers
    - for _anxiety_ about speaking w fluent spkrs = how to not feel like you're "wasting their time"

= how learners Relate to   _learning the lg itself_   = _lowering the often unquestioned pressures we put on_
                                                             ourselves
    = helping learners let themselves be actively and confidently _not perfect_.

- "Can't make something polished if you don't let yourself make the roughed-out version first."

- Your rough version of the language *is* the first accomplishment: its scruffy edges don't matter as much as this:

> - *it's already recognizably the language*
> - *it's already working as the language <u>more than it's not</u>*

- So the emphasis is on judging yourself for what you have done <u>*right*</u>, not for what you haven't. On what *is* there, not what isn't—and building forward from there.

- *(Ask us abt our <u>CopingStrategies</u> for maintaining/surviving a conversation = building speaking confidence!)*

- We also ask learners to think about

= how each Minimal Course lessonlet Relates to   *those before and after it*
= how these lessonlets Relate to   *real everyday conversation/usage*

= how learners Relate to   *themselves as learner-teachers*
    = TeachItForward

3.   Relations to the language itself (and yourself): *TeachItForward*

- *TeachItForward* =

- Every learner is a teacher-to-be, learning it to teach-it-forward to the next learner

= makes it less about _you_ the learner, and more about _others_ who will depend on you

= you're not learning it for yourself [= could just give up], but for others = better motivation

= could be more pressure, but usually works out to more willingness to move past setbacks

= unschooling = "portable" oral _lessonlets_ free the lg effort from the _We Are (Back) In School_ pattern

= instead: learn language on the couch, with friends; no bottleneck of "I can't make that class time"

= every learner who's mastered a one-line lessonlet can now teach it to anyone else

= for learners to have the means to really *TeachItForward* well, they need to understand *Relations*

within the language itself, and the *Relations* within the process of learning it

        = so to learn each lesson, for *TeachItForward*, includes Three Questions:

        (a)   *What are the key details of Meaning and Sound for this lessonlet?*

        (b)   *How does this lessonlet tie to lessonlets before and after it?*

        (c)   *How does this lessonlet connect to the rest of the language, and to the real-world community use*
               of the language, especially for teaching-it-forward?

4.   Core Principles of the Minimal Course

  - *MeaningFirst*

  - *LessIsMore*

  - *ModelPhrases & Loopback (+ SwapIn, and Expansion)*

  - *Landmarks*

- We can see most of these principles at work in lessonlet #2, which is

2   Kia na kigawess?   - Ôhô, nia na nigawess.

   Is that your mother?   - *Yes, that is my mother.*

- *MeaningFirst*   = radical focus on *Meaning* of the phrase (and every word in it), instead of the Form

   = looking at language patterns as *tools* to express Meaning, not *rules* [to follow]to "say it right"

- "Grammar" tends to get taught with less attention to Meaning, and a lot more attention to the exact *Forms* of the words, etc.: what endings to use, what order of words, etc. Endless charts, that so often make us lose track of the essential *Meaning*, or never even learn it.

- If we flip this, though, and focus on Meaning first, then any Form we learn is grounded and Related: it actually *Means* something to us. We know how it matters, for actual communication.

- So in the Minimal Course, most lessonlets start from and introduce at most *one* basic Meaning-ful *pattern* at a time.

- Each lessonlet uses a Pairing—a Relation—of (usually) just 2 new Forms (*like the pattern for <u>YOU</u> vs. <u>ME</u>*), so learners can focus on their <u>*Meaning*</u>/use.

#2   Kia na kigawess?   - Ôhô, nia na nigawess.
            Is that your mother?   - *Yes, that is my mother.*

- Both new Forms are always tied directly to the <u>one</u> key difference in <u>*Meaning*</u> that the lessonlet teaches: here the Meaning <u>YOU</u> vs. <u>ME</u>.

- (*In these lessonlets, we always very intentionally design the conversation to <u>hinge</u> on on that exact Meaning, to be <u>about</u> that exact Meaning: so that the learner can't miss it. Like: is it <u>YOU</u> who's going to pay, or <u>ME</u>?*)

- Through this, learners can pick up key lg patterns that otherwise are usually presented through unfamiliar academic jargon—"Conjugate this verb!"—and now w/o any need for those terms!

- For learners to catch the Meaning easily, it has to be easy to find; it has to pop out at you. For that, we need very brief, very simple lessonlets, with very little going on in them.

= *MeaningFirst is supported by <u>LessIsMore</u>*

- LessIsMore = minimalism is what makes Meaning pop

- When learners hear they only need to master one Q&A pair per lessonlet/session—not a list of 25 vocab words, or a chart of 9 verb endings—they not only relax and feel more confident, but also can directly focus on the _Meaning_ of the essential patterns.

- What's in lessonlet #2 is so stripped down that learners can't help but notice the pattern _themselves_: the change from _kigawess_ '_your_ mother' to _nigawess_ '_my_ mother'.

- Just from this, we can get them to follow the pattern

      kigawess : nigawess   ...so   kokmess : nokmess
      your mother : my mother   _your grandmother : my g'mother_

- ...never memorizing big grammar tables to chart it out, or discussing abstract prefixes etc.
- ...and we can do it totally _orally_.

- The core pattern+Meaning just "pops"—because by design, we haven't distracted them with tons of other information to wrangle all at once.   _Or really any other info: and that's the point!_

= *LessIsMore feeds into* <u>*ModelPhrases*</u>

- ModelPhrases = _all_ you need to learn at first   (w later Loopback = SwapIn + Expansion)

- In Minimal Course design, the phrases like in lessonlet #2 become _ModelPhrases_. So in

#2	Kia na kigawess?	- Ôhô, nia na nigawess.
	Is that your mother?	_- Yes, that is my mother._

learners _only_ have them learn this exact Q&A. We do _not_ immediately load them up with other words for kin/family, etc.

- Key is the focus on the one small _pattern_, and above all, its _Meaning_—not the vocab. _As the first+foremost thing to learn solidly._

- Instead, we ask them to master just these _exact phrases_ (and the patterns+Meanings) within them.

    _- So the Minimal Course moves quickly from lessonlet to lessonlet, introducing next to no new vocabulary, but covering nearly _all_ the core patterns of the language in about _12-24 lessonlets_._

= _having "covered everything" briefly and quickly, LessIsMore then lets us do _Loopback_._

- Loopback is two things: _SwapIn_ and _Expansion_.

- _SwapIn_ = going back to earlier lessonlets and swapping new vocab into the _whole_ ModelPhrases. This crucially reverses the norm of teaching "grammar" as "start with vocab, then add endings".

- Instead, we start with whole ModelPhrases. These _already_ have their Relation-showing endings, etc., which learners have gotten the Meanings of, via the simple ModelPhrase Pairing approach.

- We keep the whole ModelPhrase a complete whole, and only make one change: _SwapIn_ a new bit of vocab _over_ the ModelPhrase's original one.

- Like here, with FRIEND SwappedIn over MOTHER:

#2-NEW	Kia na kidôba?	- Ôhô, nia na nidôba.
	Is that your friend?	_- Yes, that is my friend._

- For realtime talk'g, it's _much_ easier to customize existing phrases than to build words frm scratch.
- It also helps keep learners' expressions as close as possible to what they _know_ we can/do say in the language. And that gives them real confidence to speak.

- *Expansion* = going back to earlier lessonlets, and adding some new *Expansion* to the Meaning that the original lessonlet lets you express.

- Some Loopback Expansions include:

- going back to a *YOU vs. ME* lesson and now Expanding each to talk about *Y'ALL vs. US*

#2	Kia na kigawess?	- Ôhô, nia na nigawess.
	Is that your mother?	*- Yes, that is my mother.*

[#2]	Kiowô na kigawessowô?	- Ôhô, niona na nigawessena.
	Is that y'all's mother?	*- Yes, that is our mother.*

- going back to a *WhatIsThat* lesson and Expanding it to talk about *WhatAreThose* = plurals
- going back to a *YOU vs. ME* lesson and Expanding to talk about *H/HER/THEM*

- Through the Loopback approach, we keep the original lessonlet radically simple—making it easy to get and master the *Meaning* and the pattern that expresses it. And only later, after this is mastered, do we come back to build more, *Related* expressions off of it.   *(Moving fwd by circling back...)*

- So that each original thing learned is intensely simple and grounded—and then is the foundation for weaving up a rich network of new expressions, all clearly and solidly _Related_ to each other.

- ModelPhrases like in lessonlet #2 also become *Landmarks.*

- Landmarks let us to talk about the language patterns <u>*using the patterns themselves*</u> as names/ examples.

- So any corrections/guidance are just, "Remember [*kigawess* and *nigawess*]? Say it like that."

- "*Kigawess* = talking about YOU, *nigawess* = talking about ME—right?—so if *kidôba* = your friend, and you want to say 'my friend', then how would you say it?"

- Landmarks are not just simple; they are *inclusive.* As a first-language speaker-teacher, you don't need to know any technical linguistics terms/analysis to teach this course—all you need to know is each simple Landmark phrase itself, and how it's used as an example and an explanation of a basic meaningful pattern of the language.

- Landmarks detechnicalize how we can talk about language, making it more accessible and less overwhelming.

- We <u>*never*</u> need academic jargon to talk precisely about the language and its patterns.

5.   Minimal Course design principles: the intro lessonlet series

- So now let's look at these priniciples in the lessonlets themselves!

#1 introduces Landmarks of NA vs. NI   (Neh+Michif *ana* vs. *anima*; Anish *a'aw* vs. *i'iw*)

1   Awani na?   -_____ na.   Kagwi ni?   -_____ ni.
      Who is that?   *- That is _____ .* *What is that?*   *- That is _____.*

- This is a day-one confidence-builder: showing learners that w/ just these phrases, they can learn the language *using* the language; you can pick up words for people/things on your own, by asking.

- From there, much of its real effectiveness is what it does NOT do.

- Intentionally does NOT make a big deal of the NA vs. NI contrast in the words for 'that'. Instead, it just sets them up as a simple-use Landmark. So that using NA and NI is just a familiar given, one that <u>later</u> we can go back to and look at in more detail/with more polish.

#2 introduces the Landmarks of *kigawess* vs. *nigawess*—as we saw earlier. This then gets immediately referred back to—i.e., used as a *Landmark*—in #3 in *kolamalsi* vs. *nolamalsi*.

2	Kia na kigawess?	- Ôhô, nia na nigawess.
	Is that your mother?	*- Yes, that is my mother.*
3	Kolamalsi?	- Ôhô, nolamalsi.
	You feel good?	*- Yes, I feel good.*

- Key here is that we don't ever need to cut up the words. To get the pattern of #3, just use #2:

"Remember	*kigawess* talking about YOU,	vs.	*nigawess* talking about ME?""
"Now	*kolamalsi* is talking about YOU,	vs.	*nolamalsi* talking about ME!"

- It's that that simple: no discussions of abstract prefixes. Just Landmarks: the lg building on itself.
- *We will use this approach even more deeply in #7-#8-#9 below.*

- Key idea: we're always talking in terms of *real words*, not cut-up bits—keeping it accessible to first-language speakers—and also reinforcing all of those words' real everyday full fluent use, and of course, underlining the *Relations* between all of them.

- Intentionally *NOT* including the H/HER Form. YOU-ME alone is a simple Paired opposition of Meaning, immediately usable in conversation. In Alg lgs, it also has very simple opposition of Form.

- Bringing in the H/HER right here adds new complications of Form. And it also would make beginners juggle *three* different Meanings rather than a crystal-clear *two*-way YOU-ME opposition.

- Once YOU vs. ME alone is mastered, it's *then* easy (in a Loopback Expansion) to introduce H/HER. As literally just the only possible Meaning+Form left! I.e. just exactly the one and only one pattern here that you don't already know: which *now* is a very simple step.

- Reaching all three through this set of separate steps works much better than tossing all three (or more) at beginners at once.

#4 just makes sure learners know how to say something is NOT, almost as soon as they can say it IS.

(It is just an Expansion, needed immediately so people don't start saying "*Ôda kolamalsi?")

4   Ôda kolamalsiw?   - Ôhô, ôda nolamalsiw.

       You don't feel good?   *- Yes, I don't feel good.*

#5 introduces the the other set of key endings for YOU (-*an*) and ME (-*a*) ASAP, before learners can start overapplying the *kigawess*/*nigawess* pattern to eveything.

5   Kagwi waji wlamalsi<u>an</u>?   - _____, ni waji wlamalsi<u>a</u>.
       Why do <u>you</u> feel good?   *- _____, that's why <u>I</u> feel good.*

- By sticking to just <u>YOU</u>+<u>ME</u> at first, we don't fall into the trap of making learners master every possible *<u>k</u>olamalsi*/*<u>n</u>olamalsi* Form before even starting this new pattern, which is just as common in use.

- Instead, they learn both patterns in parallel—which is how the language actually uses them—and from there add onto their knowledge of each pattern at the same time, step by step.

- And again, beginners can focus better on the <u>*Meaning*</u>/use of each—especially the <u>*Meaning*</u> difference between each set—when there are just two new Forms to first learn each pattern through: YOU+ME.

- So this is how we move so quickly from one core language pattern to the next.

- Importantly, in this lesson, the "fill-in-the blank" _____ reason-why here is explicitly allowed/ supposed to be in _English_.

5   Kagwi waji wlamalsi<u>an</u>?   - _____, ni waji wlamalsi<u>a</u>.
     Why do <u>you</u> feel good?   - _____, that's why <u>I</u> feel good.

- This lets learners focus on the core Meaning-ful pattern, the _-an_ vs. _-a_, without distracting them by asking them to learn even _more_ new material just to express the(ir) reason-why.

- It also gives them permission not to have to speak ALL in Abenaki, but instead just say MOST of it in Abenaki —especially, starting and finishing what you say in Abenaki—and so working more relaxedly towards ultimately doing it ALL in the language.

#6 is the same as #4 above: it just makes sure learners know how to say the _NOT_ version of this new pattern—again, basically a Loopback that weaves/Relates parts (#4+#5) together.

6   Kagwi waji ôda wlamalsiwwan?   - _____, ni waji ôda wlamalsiwwa.
      Why do you not feel good?   - _____, *that's why I don't feel good.*

#7-#8-#9 offers probably the most crucial/central series of lessons. See how the simple step-by-step buildup works across them:

#7   Mili ni.   Mila ni.   = *simple dinner-time use, only 2 forms*
     Give me that.   *Give her that.*

#8   K'mili̱n ni?   K'milô̱n ni?   = *same as #7, just Q/statement, not request*
     You're giving me that?   *You're giving her that?*

#9   K'mil(e̱)len ni.   K'milg̱on ni.   = *same as #8, just roles flipped*   = *Core Four!*
     I'm giving you that.   *She's giving you that.*

- By doing these in sets of two—simple pairings to make the Meanings "pop" against each other—learners can build up to a clear understanding of all of the "Core Four" patterns seen in #8 and #9.

- These Core Four literally show *all* the basic relationships in actions: all the markers of the *Givee*, thing Given, and Giver.   [REF: one-step away from alll of these…; abbrev acct of this]

                              [*much more on this in the SAIL 2021 talk, if interested!!!*]

- Further lessonlets!

#7-#8-#9 (+ #10-#11)   = just 4 words based on GIVE (= *generosity!*) = ModelPhrases showing
<u>all</u> the basic relationships in actions!   = *I-love-YOU*   *YOU-love-Me*
kisâkihin   *kisâkihitin*
gizaagi'   *gizaagi'in*

#12-#15   = intro to rich word-building patterns using   <u>*tastes*</u>*-good*   <u>*smells*</u>*-bad*
(*+ their relations to NA/NI*)   *mino<u>spakwan</u>*   *maci<u>mâkwan</u>*
mino<u>pogwad</u>   *maci<u>maagwad</u>*

#16   = HER-MOTHER pattern   = *na nigawess/kigawess*   → <u>*nihi*</u> *wigawess<u>A</u>*
= *ana nimâmâm/kimâmâm*   → <u>*anihi*</u> *omâmâm<u>A(H)</u>*
= *a'aw nimaamaam/kimaamaam*   → <u>*niw*</u> *omaamaam<u>AN</u>*

- In a total of about 24 lessonlets, we also introduce:

   - basic word-building: for richly describing things
   - particles: ones that show source of information, uncertainty, old/new/contrasting info, etc.
   - word-building for talking about location and movement
   - word-building for talking about time and perspective
   - WHY-, HOW-, and WHERE-expressions + IF- and THEN-expressions to build complex phrases
   - taking the GIVE relationship down to simpler ones like HELP, EAT, etc.

   - LINKERS: words and patterns that connect up simple phrases into rich, complex sentences

- That last point is the key one: we want learners to feel like they can say complex, adult-conversation things as soon as possible...certainly no later than the first "semester" of learning.

- _Linkers_ help do that.

- With Linkers, learners knowing just a few words can nonetheless say very complex and nuanced things, almost immediately:

Nolidahôzi	**ta**	kolidahôzi.	*= nice long, full sentence, now can add AND... indefinitely*
I'm happy	*and*	*you're happy.*	

Nolidahôzi	**kanwa**	kolidahôzi.	*= whoa, now we have some real interpersonal drama!*
I'm happy	*but*	*you're happy.*	

Nolidahôzi	**wzômi**	kolidahôzi.	*= this one is pretty nice!*
I'm happy	*because*	*you're happy.*	

- This sends learners home w/a solid sense that they can really live their lives in this language, that they can *quickly* get to express what they need for complex, adult-level interactions.

(Linkers are also key to group story-building exercises = a powerful approach brought to us by Heather Souter!)

- Linkers often build off of more specific patterns, like IF here in Abenaki—but even it only needs lessonlet #4. So which Linkers get introduced early, and how, depends on the details of the lg:

Nolidahôzi		wlidahôzian**a**.	*= possibly passive-aggressive; something's going on...*
I'm happy		*if you're happy.*	

- Overall, our design is about having everything come together, all the time, weaving together and building up and up—beginners are never asked to learn anything they can't use today and/or can't use with what they've already learned.

- *[Our job is only to help learners do what they can't easily do themselves. So we do some careful vocabulary prioritization (and vocabulary-relation) work for them, but otherwise we assume that they can teach themselves Numbers, Colors, and Animals, etc. on their own. We just help them with the crucial but less obvious patterns that help learners then go <u>use</u> those words in living, everyday conversation.]*

6.   Hands-on Workshop Key Points

- If you haven't already put in the chat which group you'd like to be with, now is your chance!

- There will be a 2-3min breaklet while we set those rooms up, which you can use to digest things a bit and start experimenting/planning.

- We'll try to put some of the presenters in each group, to answer anything your group might get stuck on; but your group will also do this on your own either way; and I'll be jumping through the groups to help out everyone

- We'll have a *final wrap-up* at 5min before the top of the hour. Anyone who wants to can talk a bit more over/into the break.

- Key thing: to start, just go for just literally what you're seeing in the Abenaki—and/or identify why that might not work = not at all, or not optimally, etc.

7.   Pronunciation

- The Minimal Course approach to pronunciation is its own story; but some key principles are:

- _RhythmFirst_ = prrioritizing _rhythm and melody_: often not or barely taught, but when they solidly know word-rhythm + word-melody—the song of the lg—learners can express real Feeling. And their words sound so much better to spkrs—which causes a positive feedback loop of confidence.

- Teaching tricky sound contrasts like long vs. short vowels _orally_ first—before ever introducing how they're spelled. A simple _oral_ sound-contrast approach introduces a single ModelWord for each vowel (etc.), which any sound in a new word can be matched against. This lets them "spell out" the words orally (by Relating them). First-lg spkrs who don't write are no longer excluded, since they too can easily learn this way of helping learners get all the sounds precisely, by ear.

- W/o this, ppl learn not Sounds but _Spellings_, w/the Sounds mastered slowly or even never.

- Learners who master the sounds orally first have little problem w/spellings, bc those represent (what are now) meaningful Sound distinctions. Only then does the writing system make sense: it gives learners non-English ways to spell non-Eg sounds they can already comfortably hear and say.

8.	Smartphone recording technique

- Designated class time to stop and record orally the essentials of what you've learned today.
- Your notes are with you everywhere, and you know exactly how to say them, because they're in your own voice.

- Provides a record of learners saying the phrase when they had the most confidence that they are doing it right = exactly when we are telling them, yes, you've got it right now, you're good enough to record.
- More benefits to them *actively* engaging with their own pronunciation than drawbacks of sometimes reinforcing errors:

- Still need to hear fluent-speaker models, too, of course. But we also want speakers *fluently* roughing it out enough to then polish/perfect it from there. (Ties back to not leaving pronunciation a mystery.)

- Also has the Metallic Method benefit of self-documentation: your old recordings will later on show you how much better you've gotten, how much you've accomplished.

9.   The power of puppets 🦊

- Adult learners are intensely anxious about making mistakes.

- Put puppets on their hands, and they relax a bit. Puppets are fun!

- But even more importantly, when the puppets are talking to each other, you're not looking at a human face, and no one is looking at your face.

- So that sense of "Someone is about to judge me for my mistakes...!" is dialed down massively. Since you're not looking at them, and they're not looking at you: everyone is looking at the puppets. And the puppets aren't you.

- So we can get people to do the exact same language work, without them feeling nearly as much like their bumpy performance actually reflects directly on them.

10.   BodyCentered approach to (_prioritizing_) vocabulary-building

- Having earlier emphasized vocabulary-_minimalism_, we now also outline a vocabulary _prioritization_ plan that starts from the actions/experiences of the body itself.

- Focus not on classic "learning the body parts", but on their outward _actions_ + inward _sensations_:

eyes:	LOOK+SEE	LOOKS.LIKE	LOOK.FOR + FIND	(_colors, etc._)
ears:	LISTEN+HEAR	SOUNDS.LIKE		
heart/mind:	FEEL(_ings_)	THINK(_about, have opinion_)		(_feelings, etc._)
	KNOW(_thing, person_)	UNDERSTAND	REMEMBER+FORGET	
mouth:	EAT+DRINK (hungry, thirsty)	TASTES.LIKE		
	SAY+TELL ASK+ANSWER	SPEAK(at all; language; talk/chat)		
hands:	GIVE+TAKE	GRAB+HOLD+LET.GO	CATCH+THROW	(+ _many more!!!_)
legs/body:	GO+COME STAY+LEAVE	WAIT.FOR+FOLLOW	STAND+SIT+LIE	WALK+RUN

- These initial BodyCentered vocab items start from a minimal, manageable level that already gives learners a wide range of expression—and then also set them up for step-by-step expansion to an even wider range of now always systematically _Related_ vocab starting from this simple core.

- Then moves from Body _outward_: _clothing→home+vehicle→ natural+urban envir., kin+community envir._

12.   Relational Approach

- These design efforts emphasize *Relation(s):*

    - how words relate to each other (vs. indiv. words abstractly analyzed), in phrases + as usage;

    - how lessons relate to everyday life (all phrases are take-home usable every day);

    - how learners relate to the language and to each other.

- Techniques cultivating mutual support and a *TeachItForward* spirit further enhance immersion experiences and also provide an accessible introductory course for more time-constrained adult beginners.

- *MeaningFirst, etc.*-based lessonlets make it easy for adults to make real progress quickly.

- Overall, these emerging design principles support de-centering academic approaches and re-centering community-based ones.