



Indigenous Empowerment In Language Revitalization Movements

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A_x x'agáax'i yéi k_gwatée: ch'u tleix k_ugaagastee Lingít.

My prayer will be this: let Tlingit exist forever.

– K_aalkáawu Cyril George, K_ak'weidí

A káx k_unaylagaaw haa yoo x'atángi! K_unáx káx k_unaylagaaw!

Hél daa sá a yáx koogei haa yoo x'atángi.

Fight for our language! Really fight for it!

Nothing measures up to our language.

– Shaksháani Marge Dutson, Ishkeetaan

A language movement begins by
protecting existing speakers while
creating new ones.

Language revitalization is **using** the language and
creating spaces where the indigenous language
is the **language of power and use.**

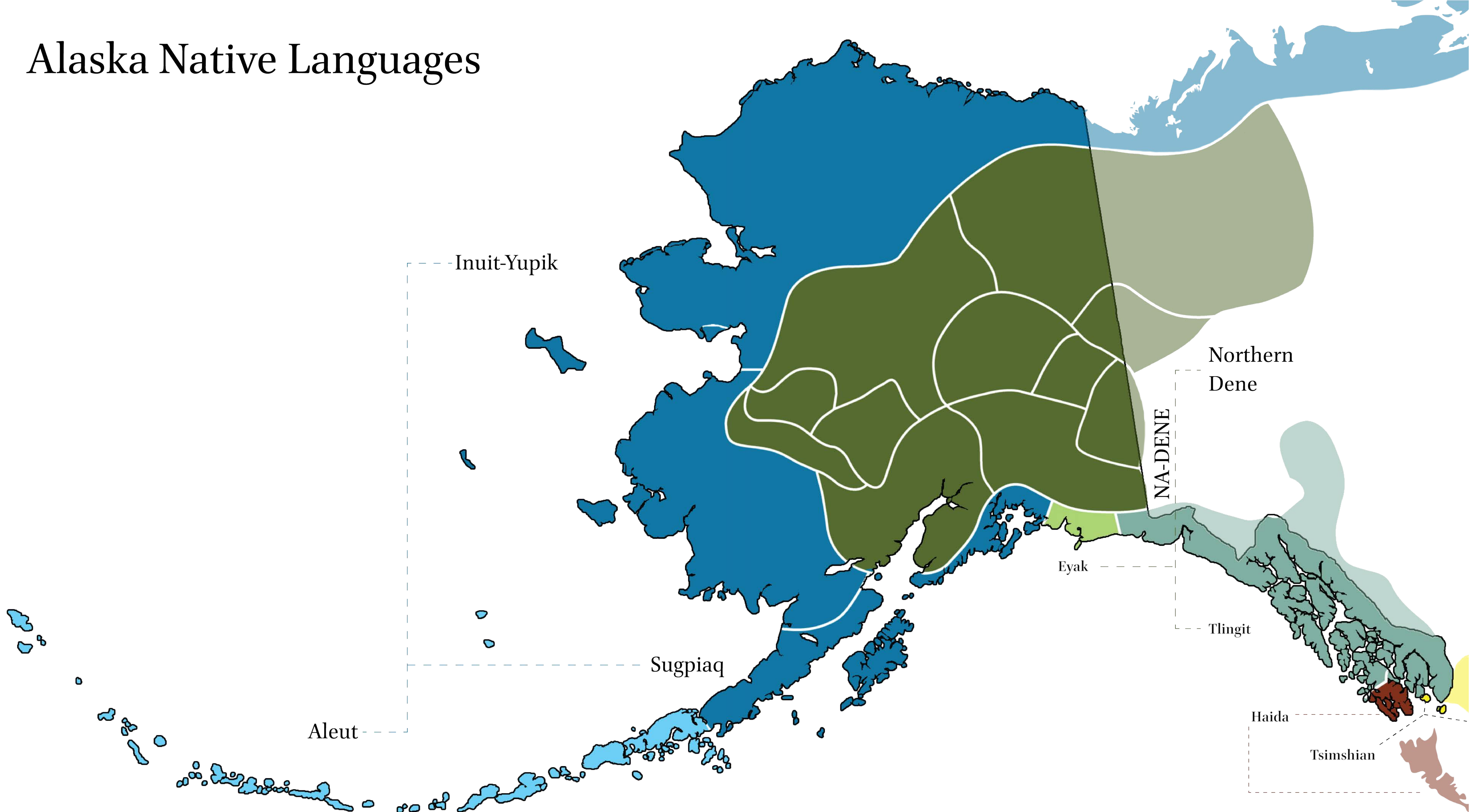
William “Pila” Wilson

Gwál yáat'aa tsú,
Kaa Tú Kaxsakee Héeni,
haa tóo yéi yatee.
Haa toowú yéi gaxtusakéi.

Maybe this one too,
this peaceful river,
is inside of us.

We are going to untangle our minds.

Alaska Native Languages



Language Speakers

70%

40-69%

25-40%

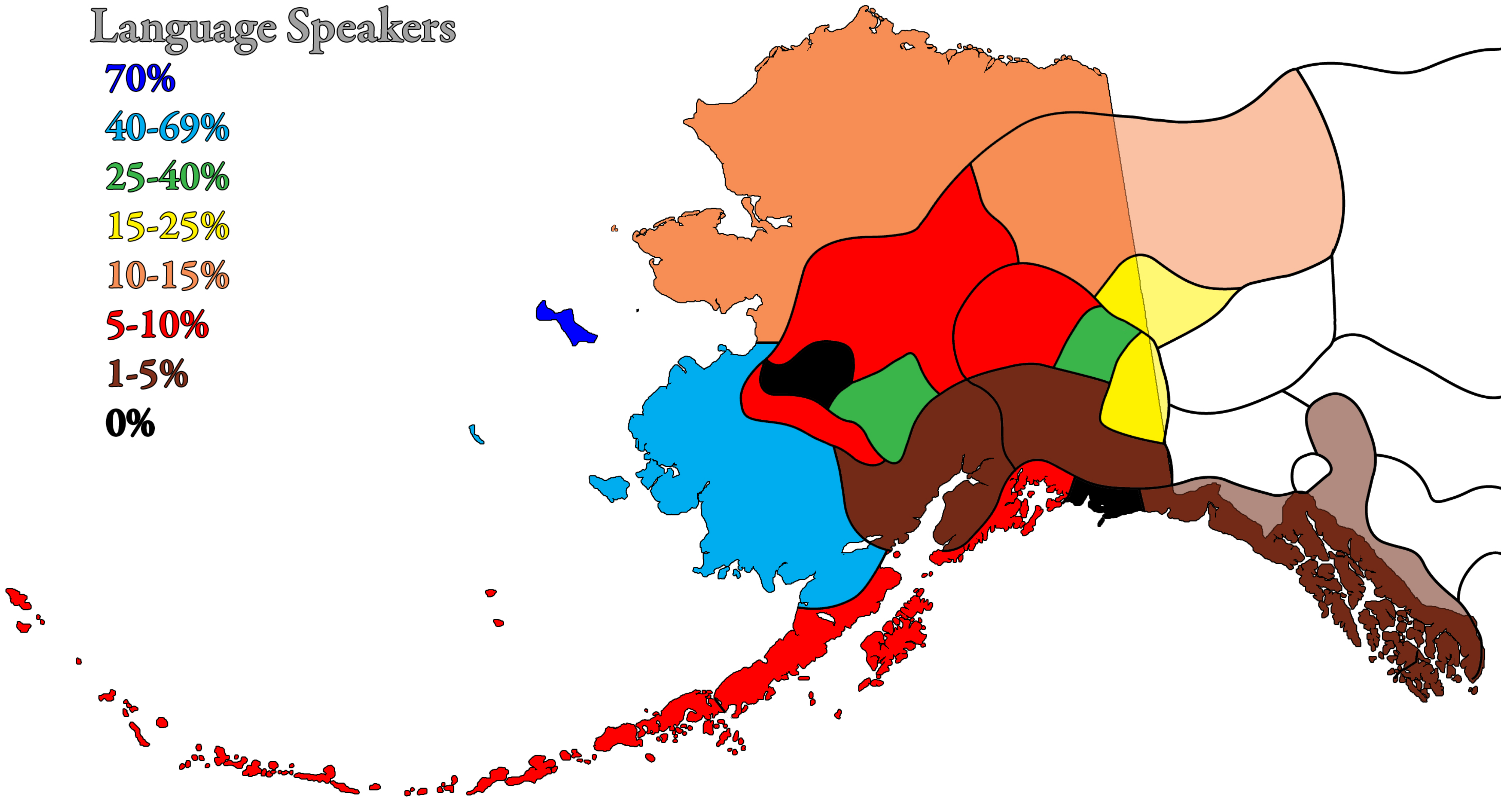
15-25%

10-15%

5-10%

1-5%

0%



“ ... we stand to lose more Indigenous North American languages in the next 60 years than have been lost since Anglo-American contact.”

Michael Krauss

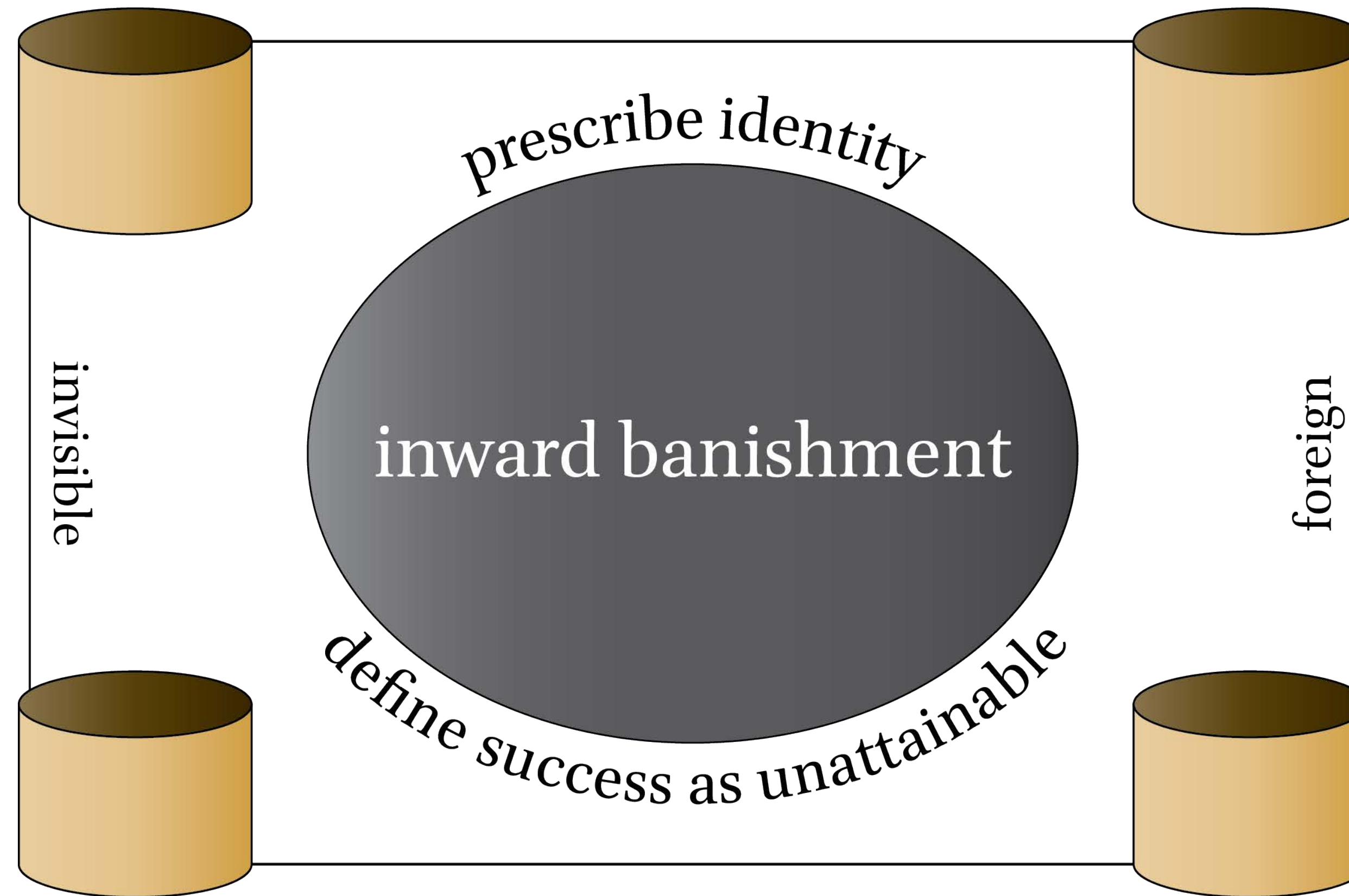
"If times change, can we make new realities too? Can we also dare to be brave, and long once again to be free? If there is anything that we need to reclaim most of all in translating the ideas of mana motuhake of self determination into action, it is the belief in our right to be free. If colonization does more than anything else to damage our people, it is to make our people lose faith in ourselves."

– Moana Jackson

Pillars of Colonialism & Inward Banishment

eliminate warrior societies

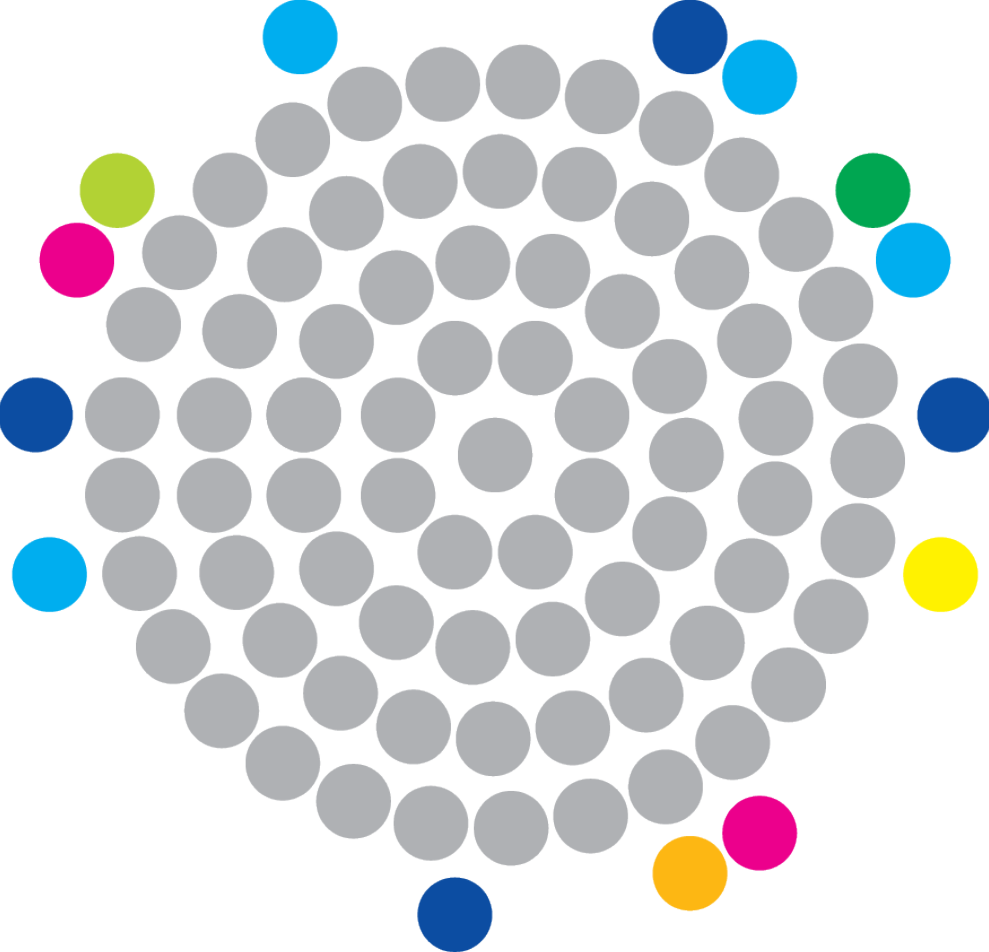
separate people and land



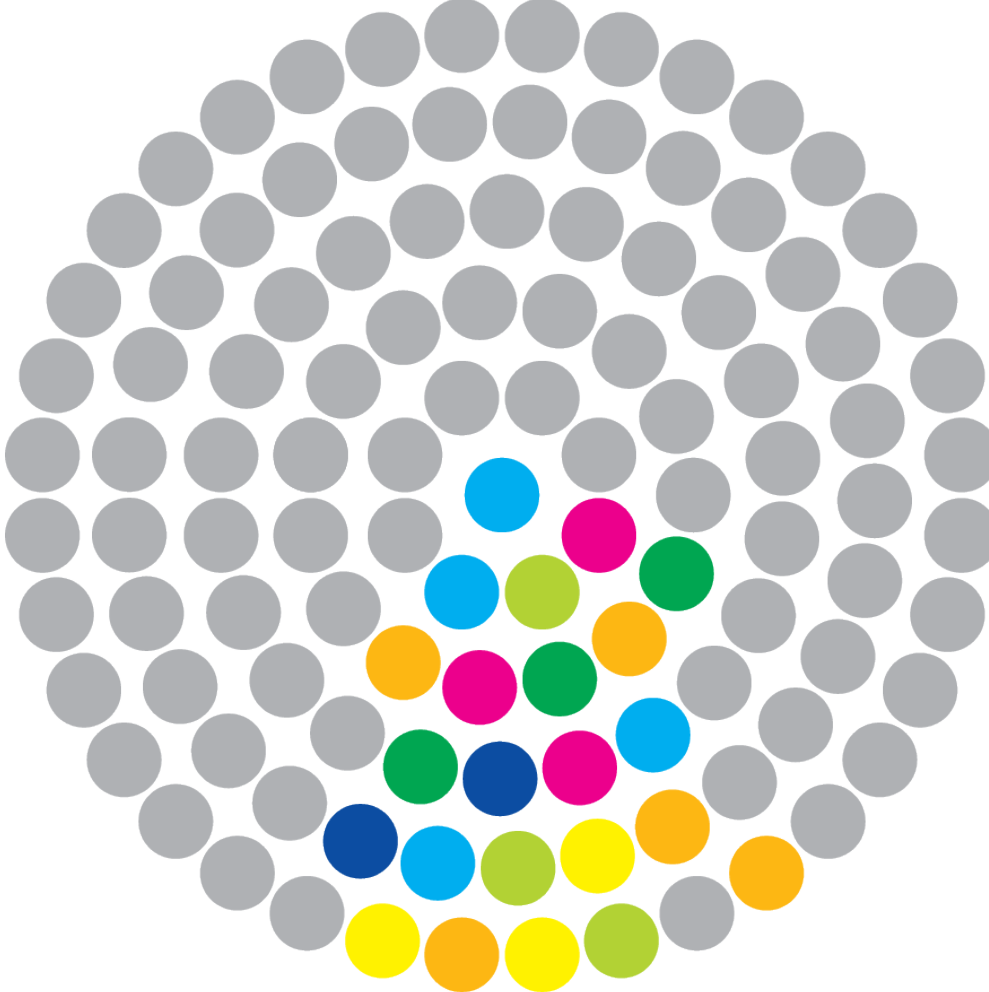
rape & murder women

separate people and language

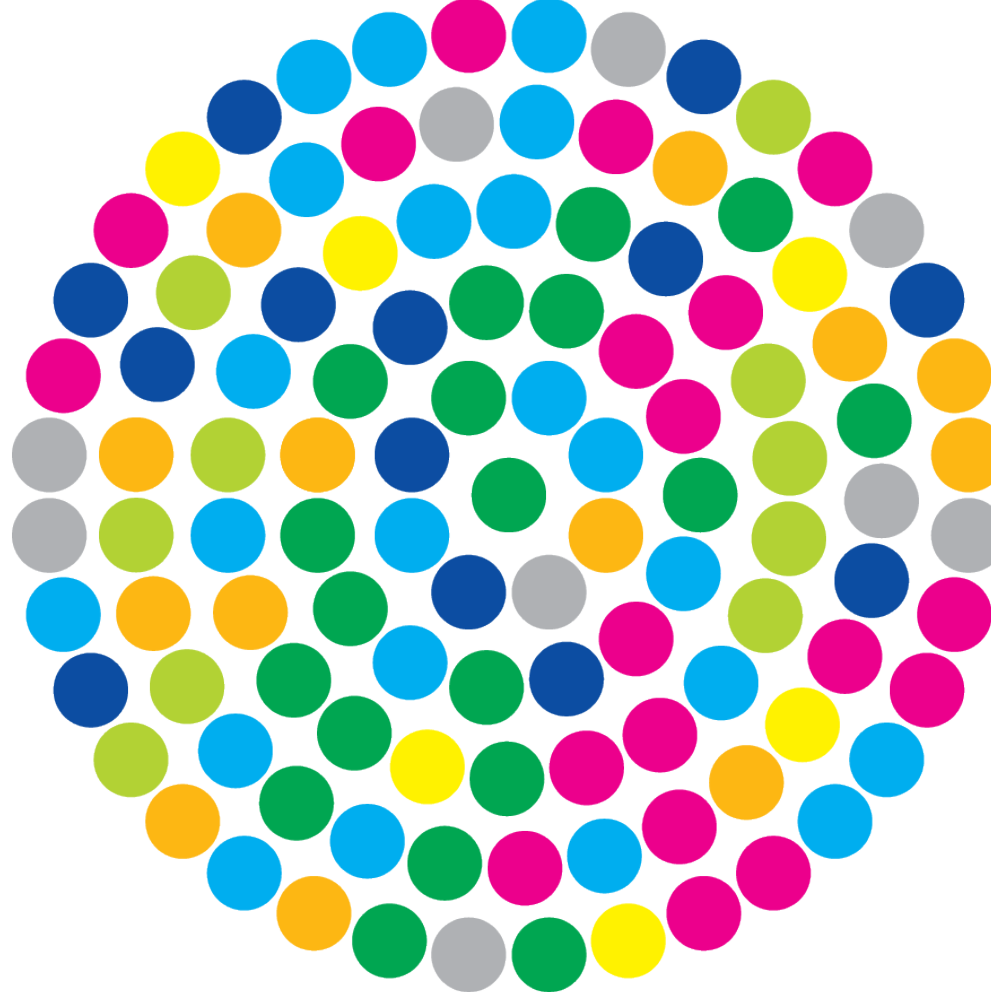
PEOPLE



EXCLUSION

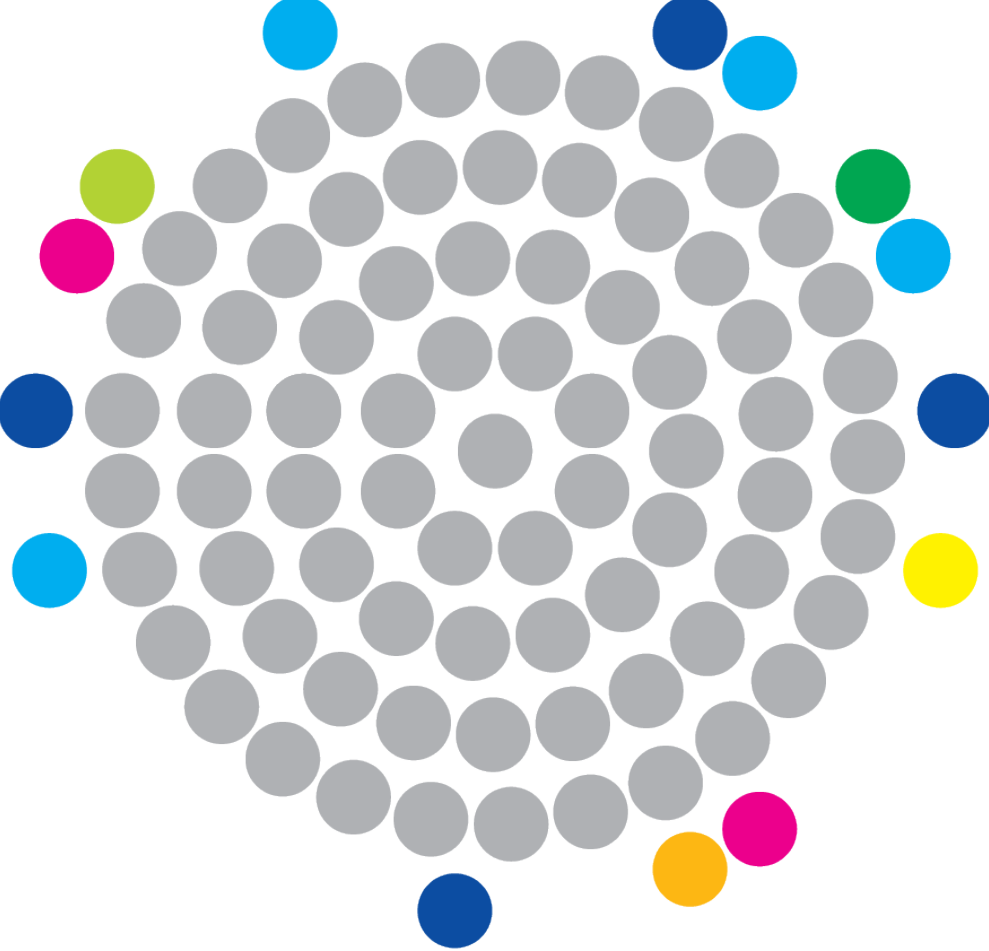


INTEGRATION

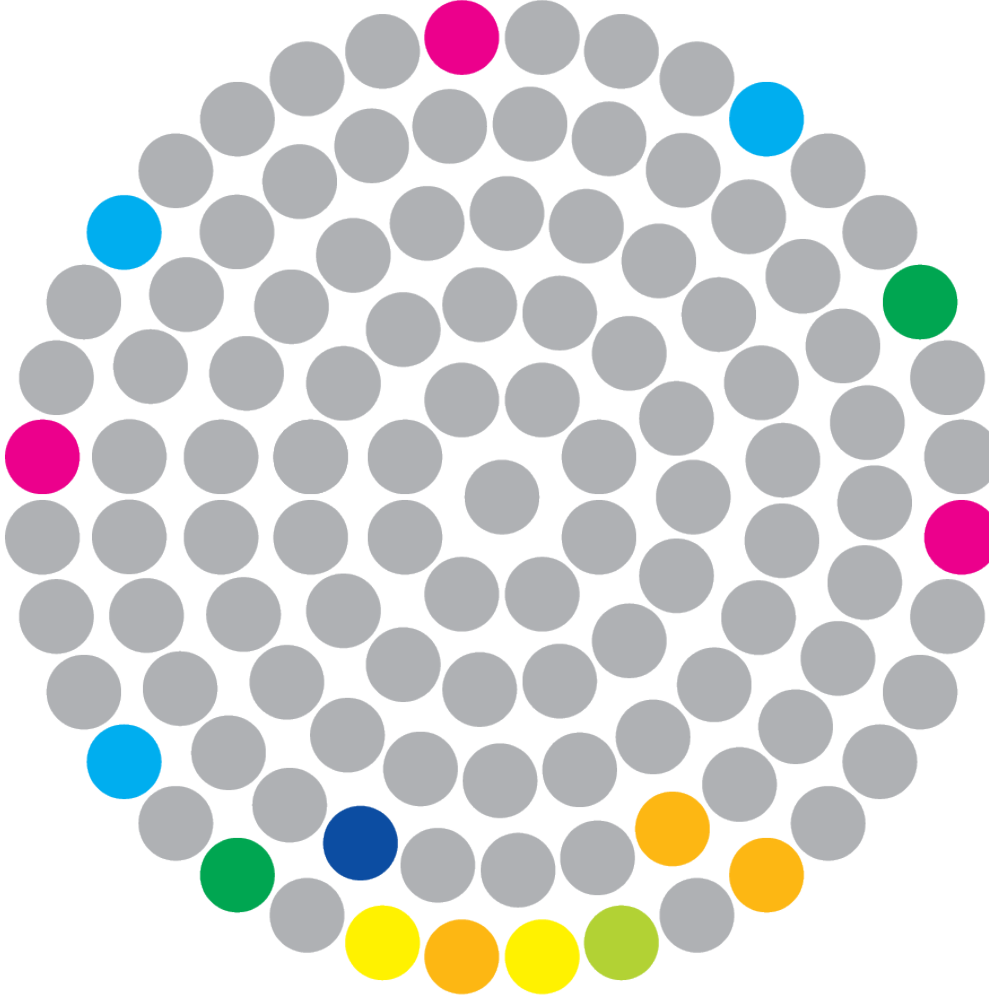


INCLUSION

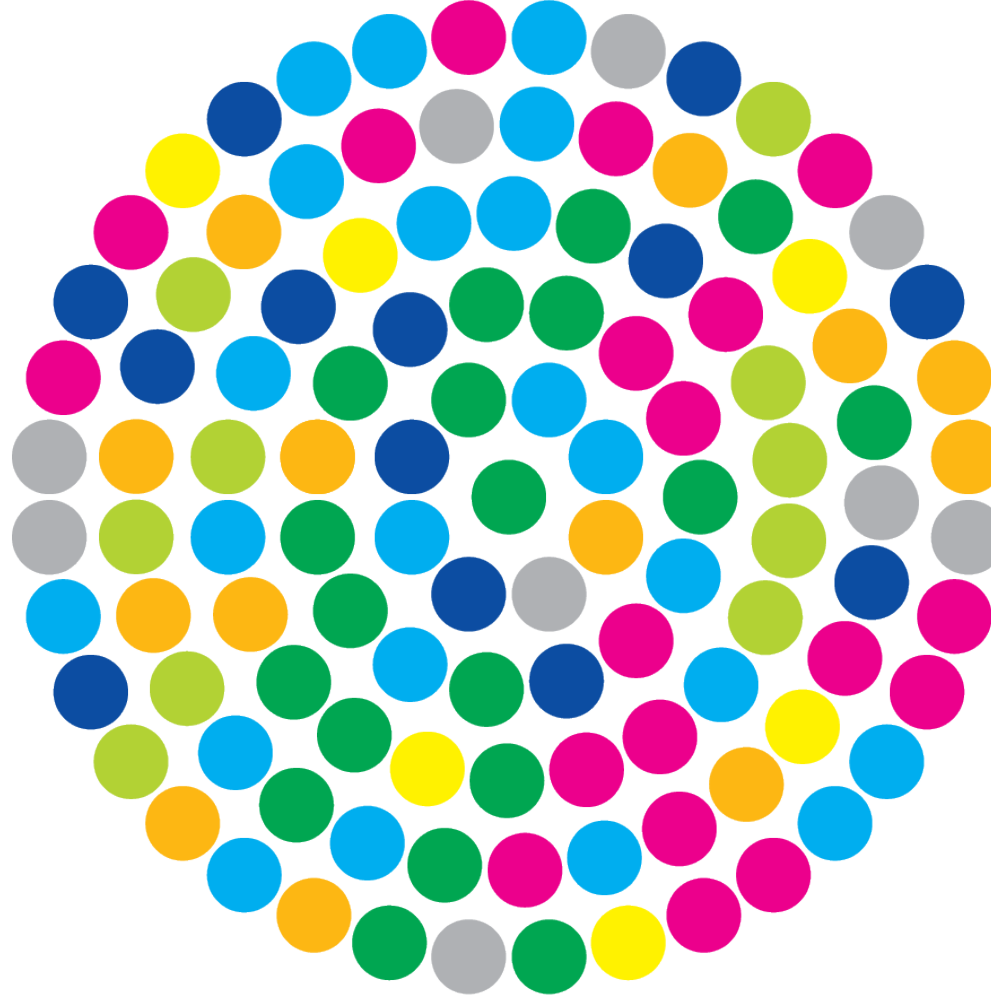
CONTENT



EXCLUDED



MARGINALIZED



INCLUDED

EQUITY & EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

➤ Equity

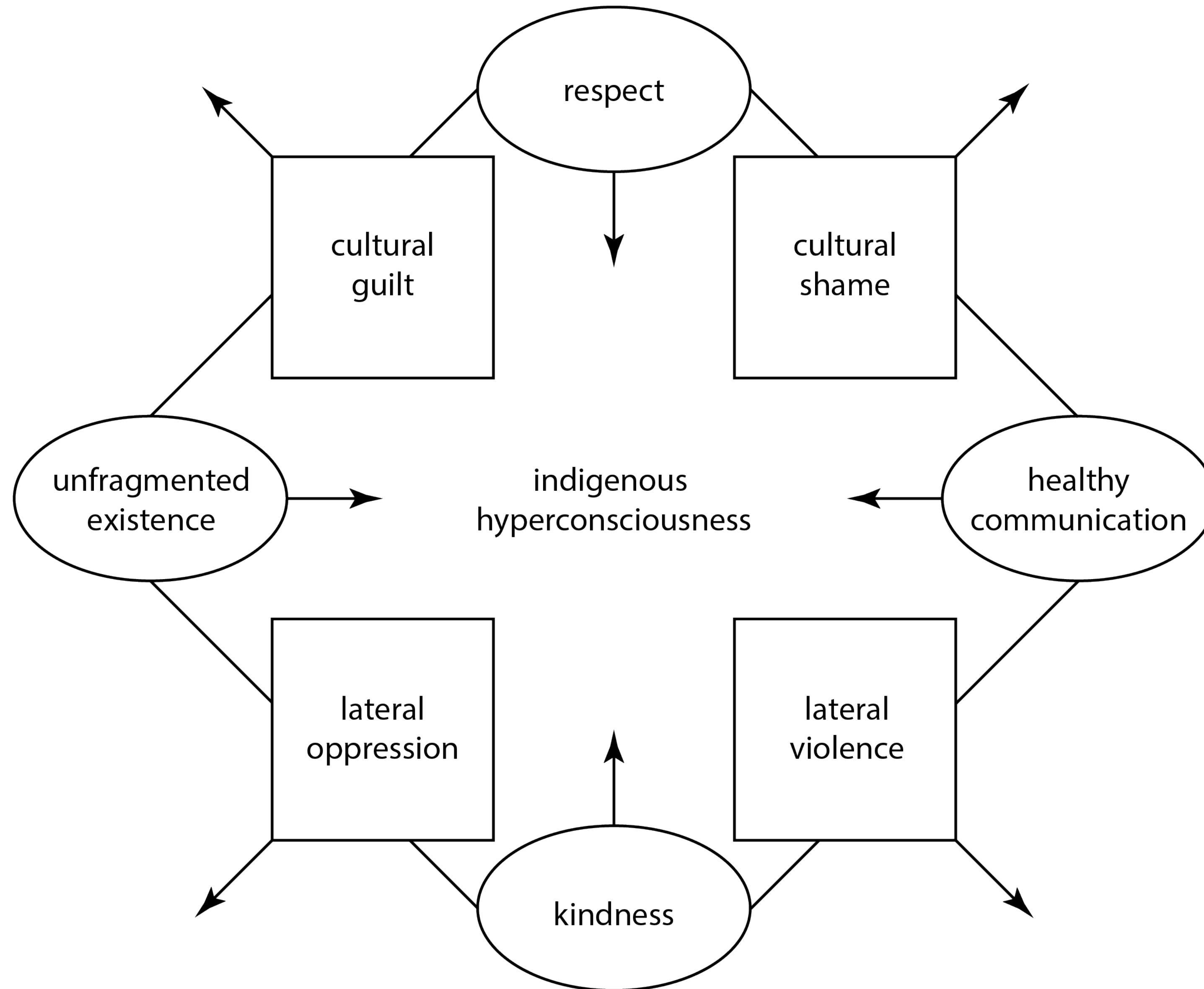
- People have what they need
- The absence of disparity

➤ Equality

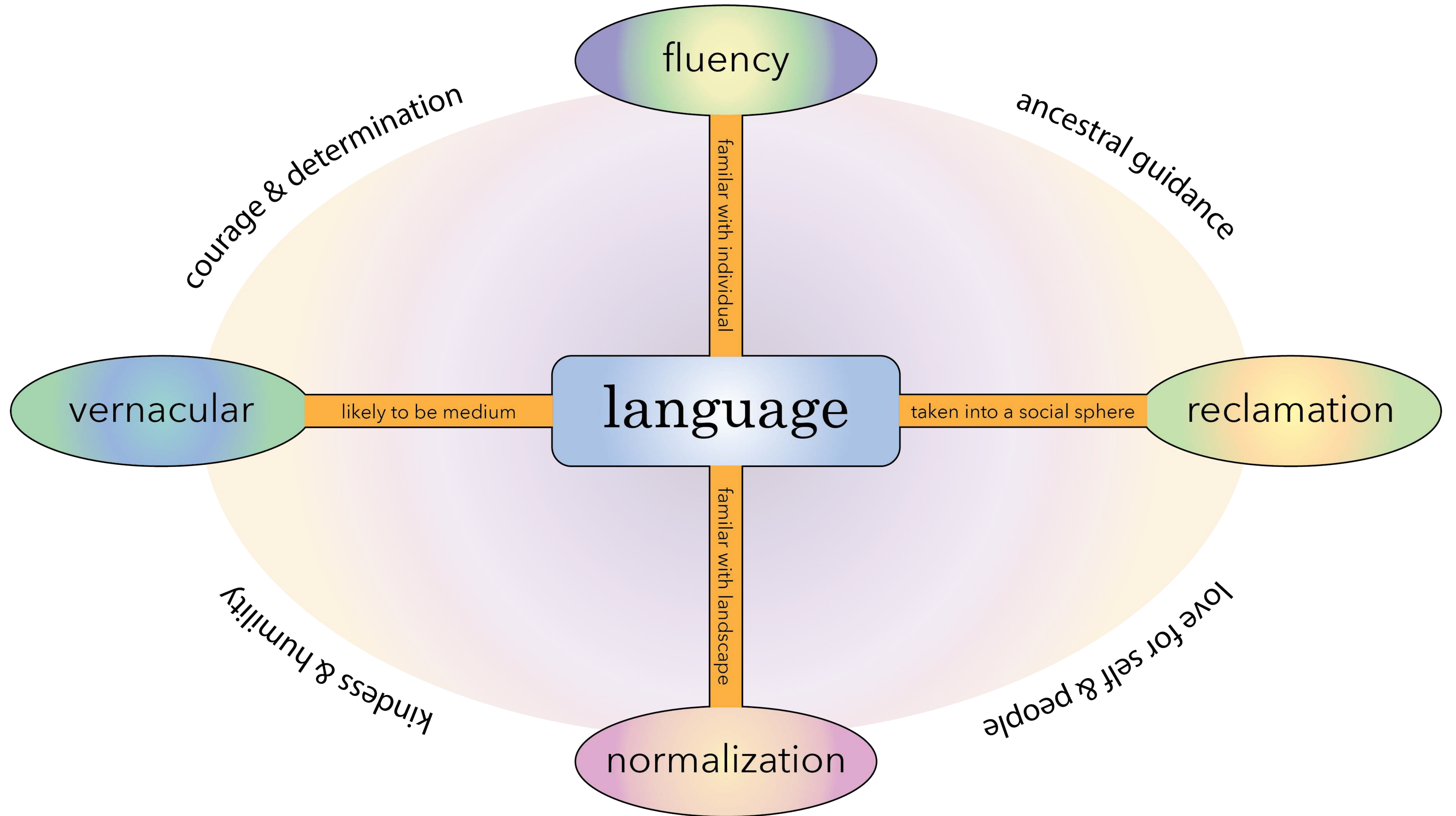
- People are treated the same
- Things are distributed equally



indigenous counterhegemonic transformation



X'unei Lance Twitchell,
Jeremy Tehota'kerá:tonh Green,
J. Tinakpáhng'e S. Teria,
and Scott Saft



fluency

familiar with individual

ancestral guidance

vernacular

likely to be medium

language

taken into a social sphere

reclamation

familiar with landscape

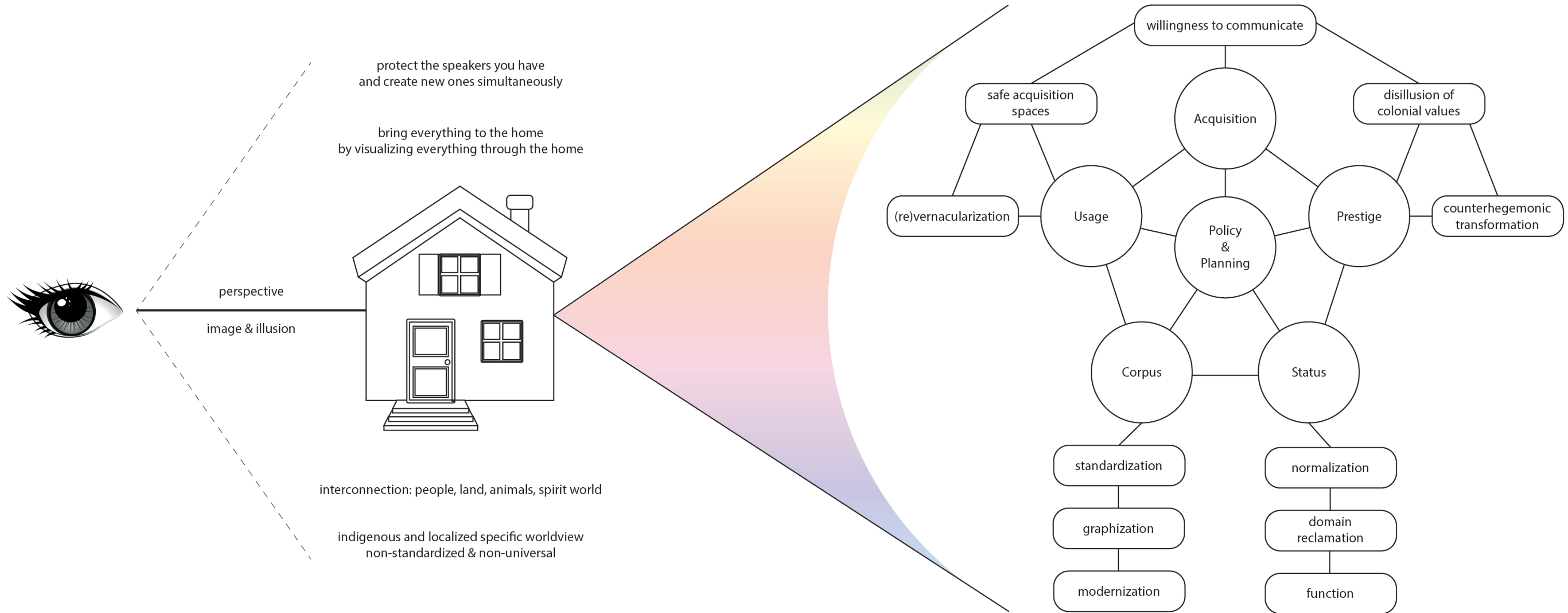
normalization

love for self & people

courage & determination

kindness & humility

domains and functions through indigenous metacognition

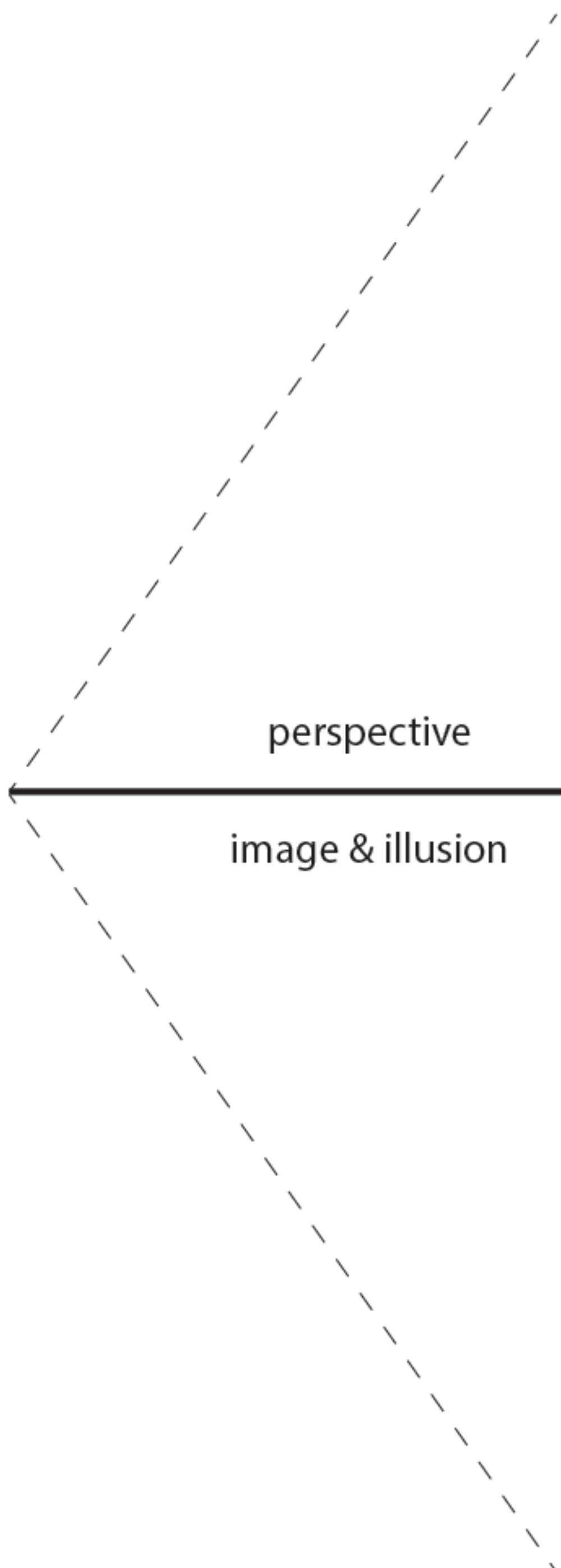


everything we have ever been

everything we are right now

everything we will ever be



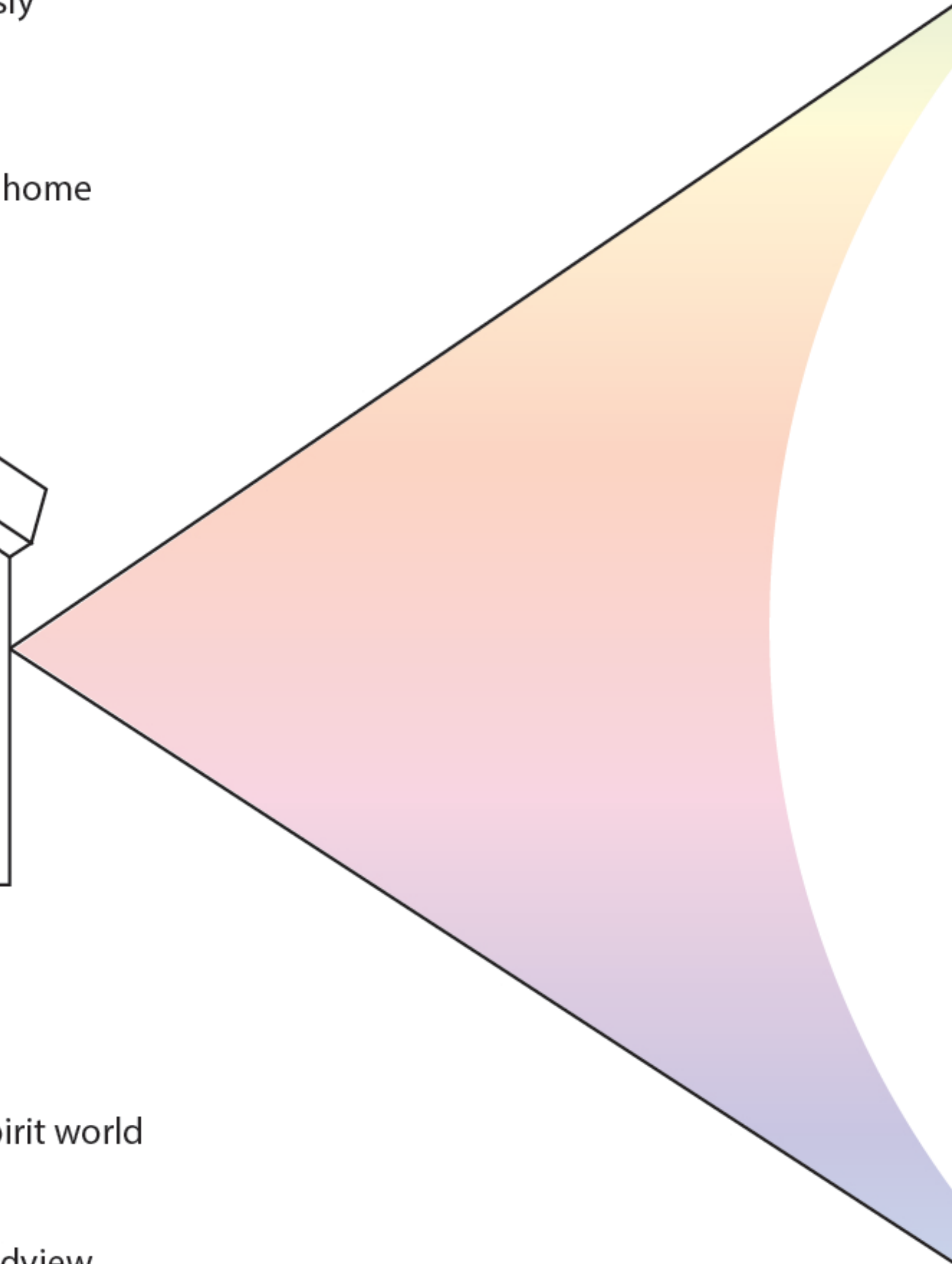


perspective

image & illusion

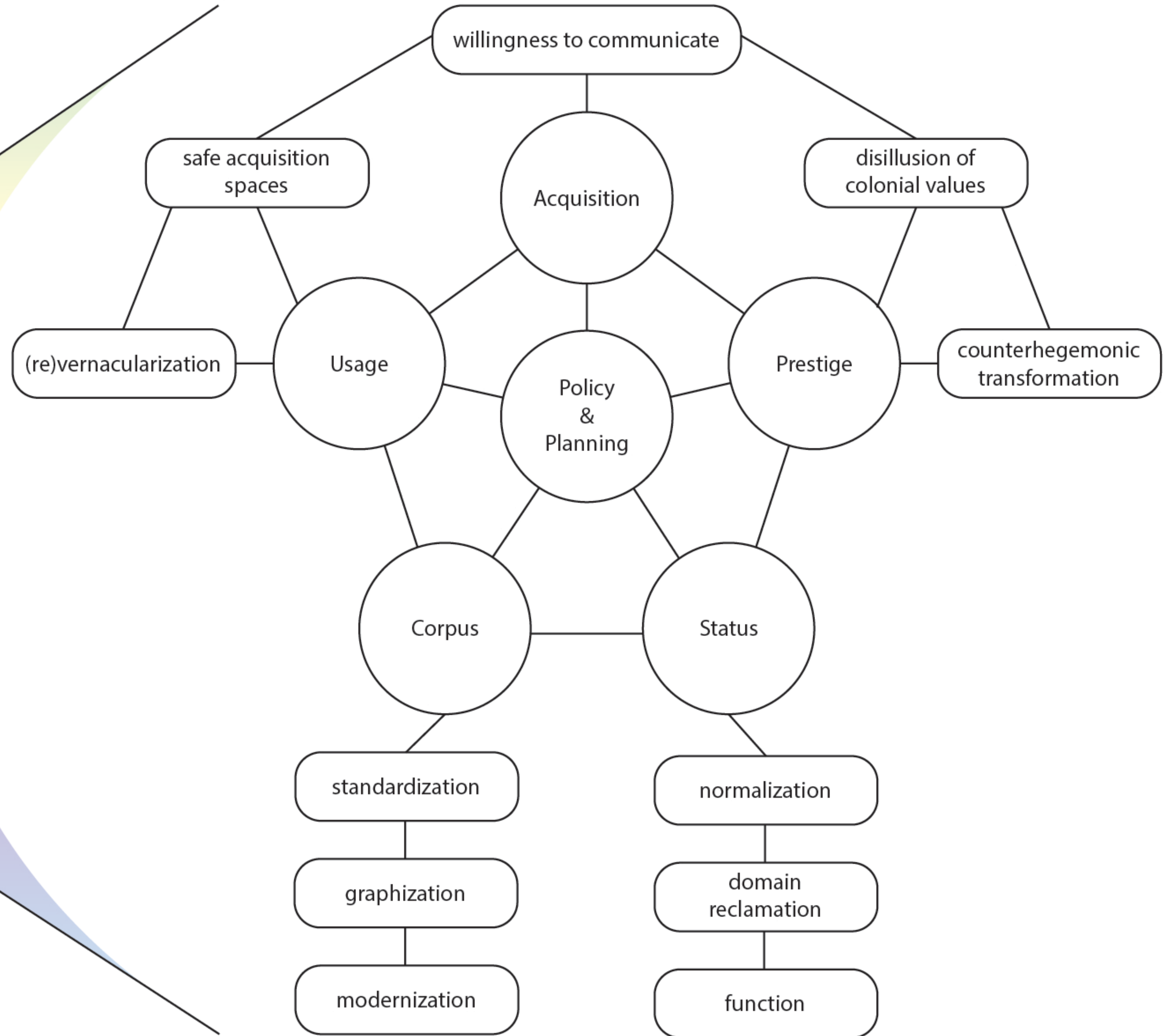
protect the speakers you have
and create new ones simultaneously

bring everything to the home
by visualizing everything through the home

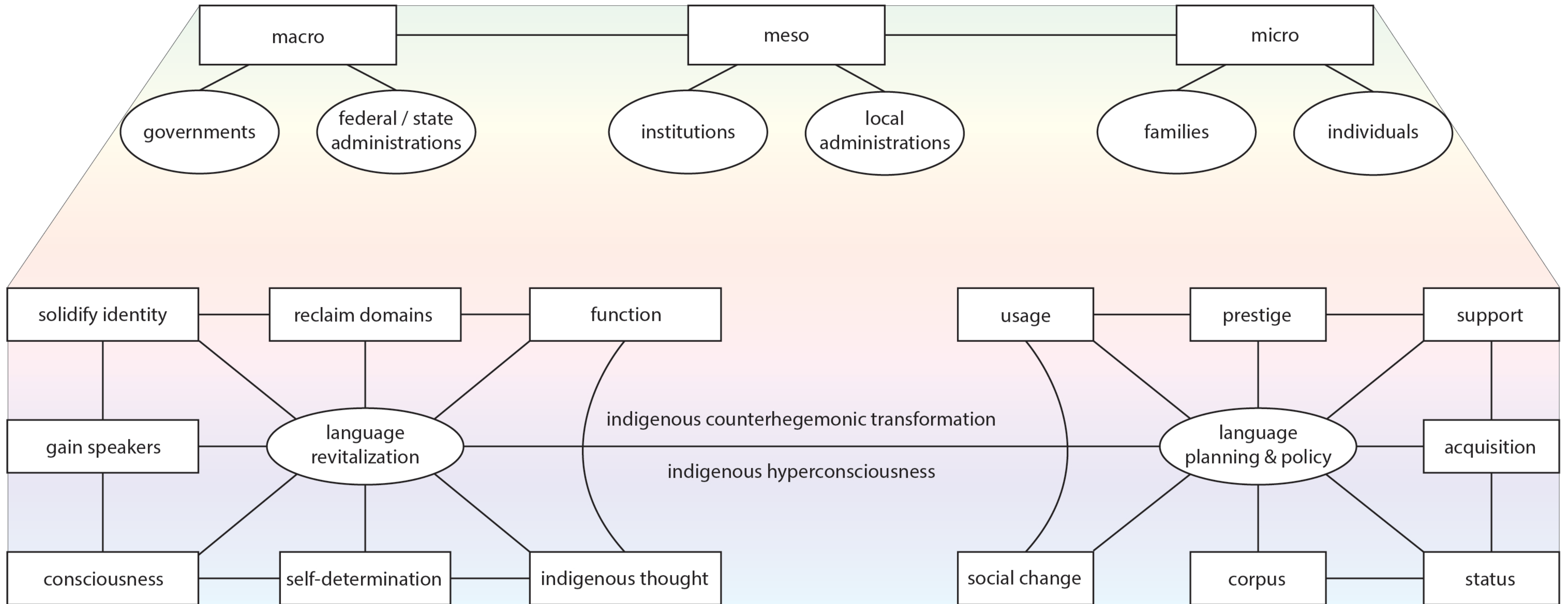


interconnection: people, land, animals, spirit world

indigenous and localized specific worldview
non-standardized & non-universal



unfragmented indigenous language movement building



everything we have ever been

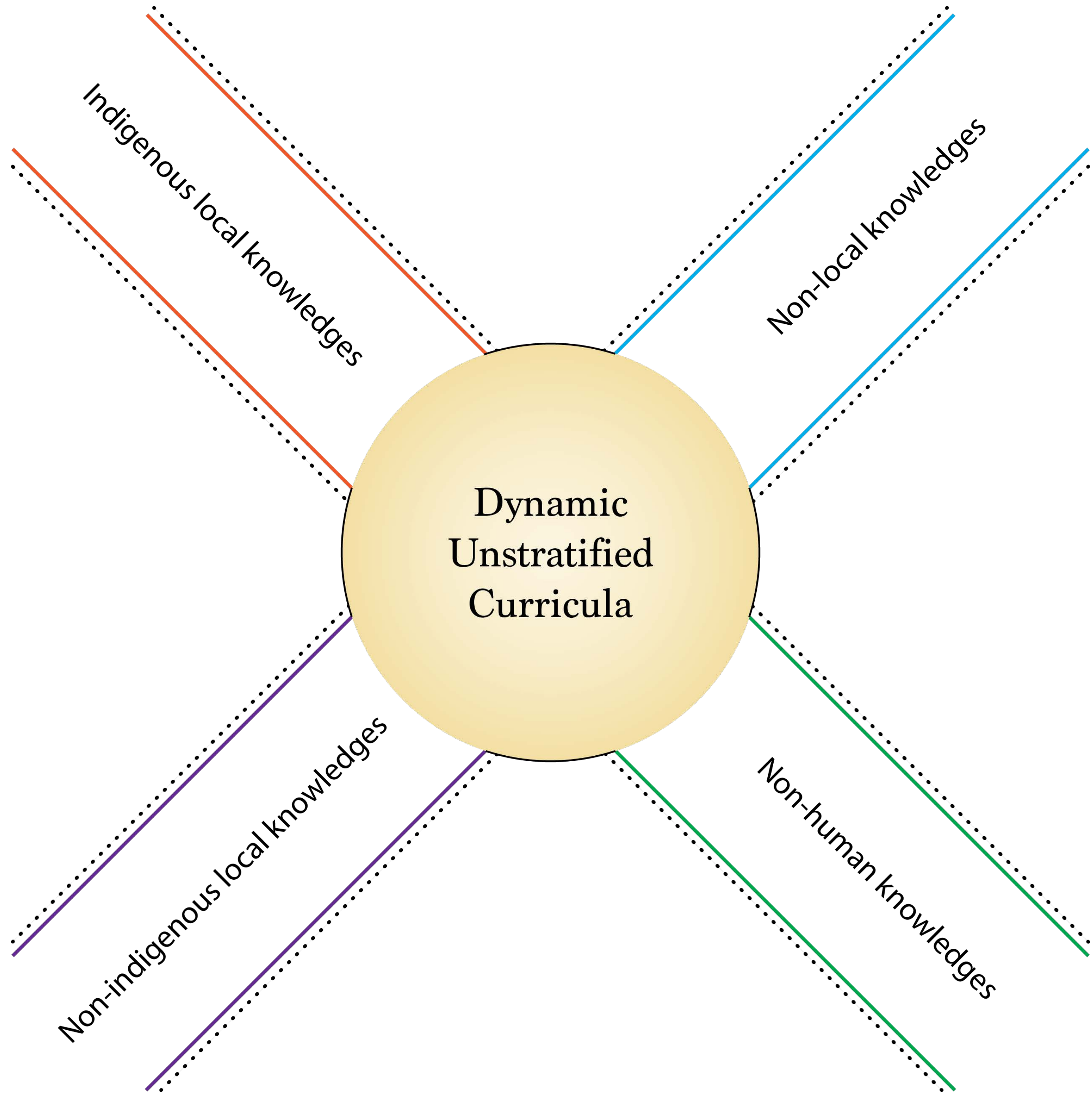
everything we are right now

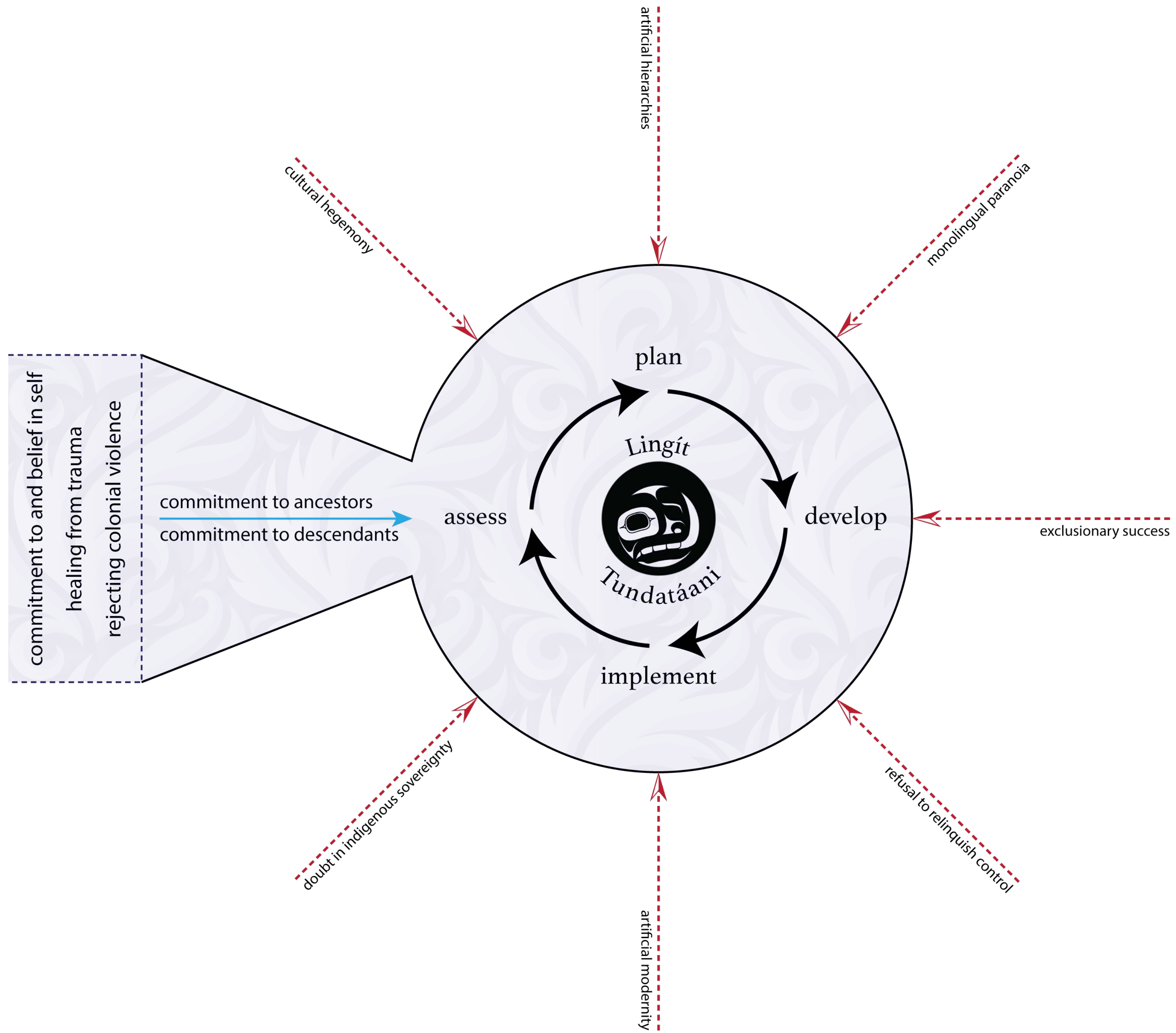
everything we will ever be



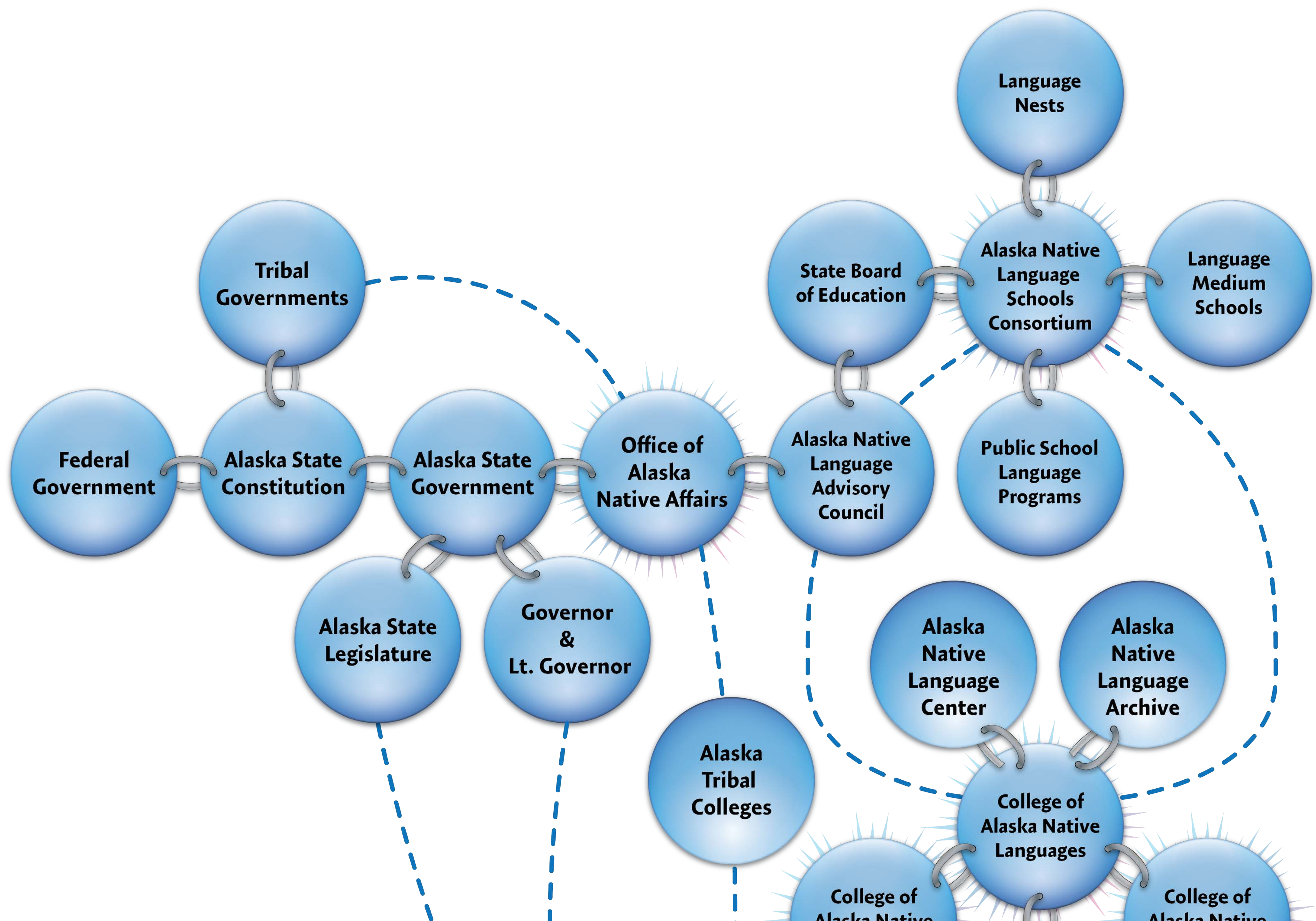
“To reverse this influence of English, families must retrieve their rightful position as the first teachers of our languages. They must talk our languages every day, everywhere, with everyone, anywhere.”

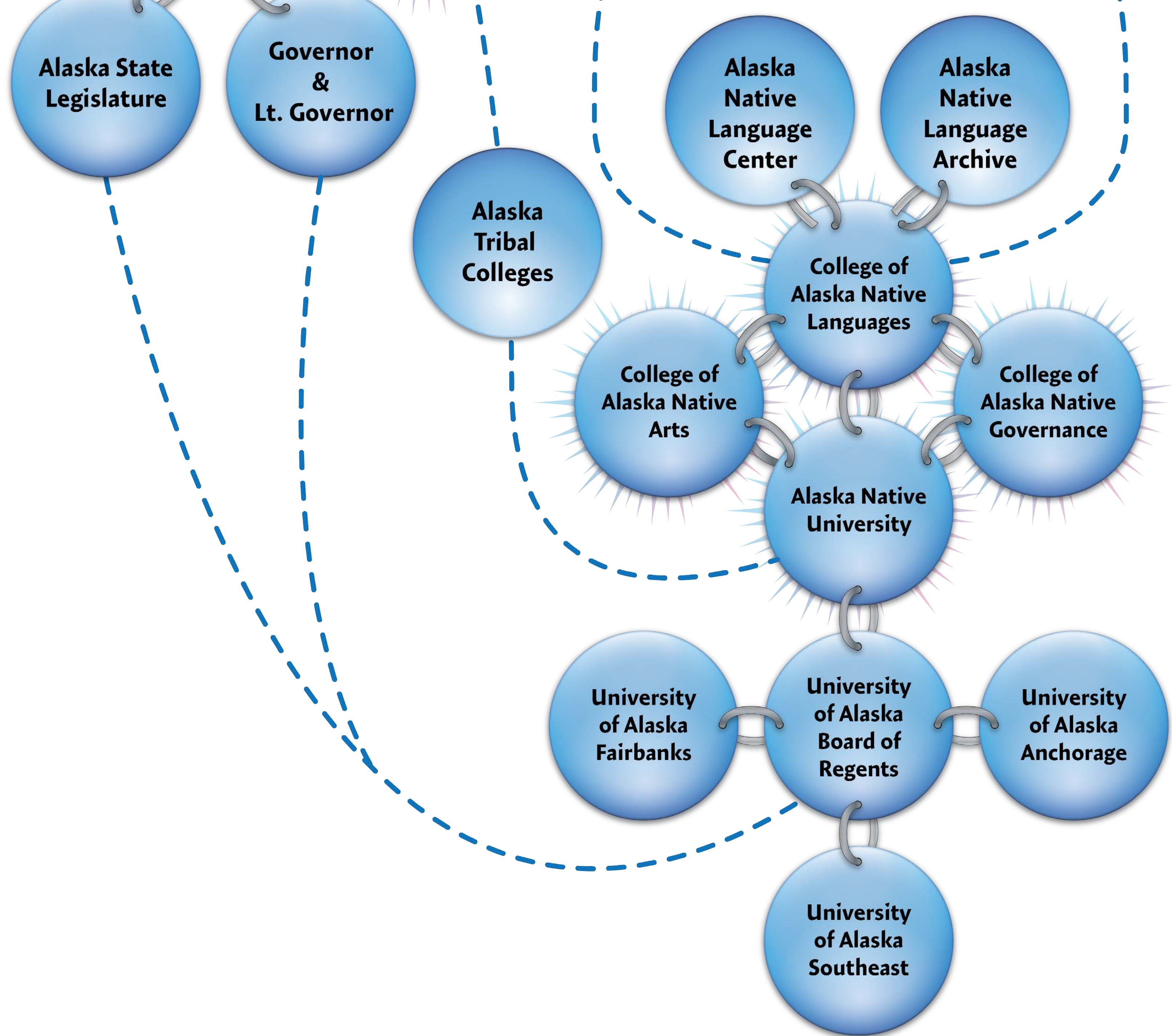
Richard E. Littlebear

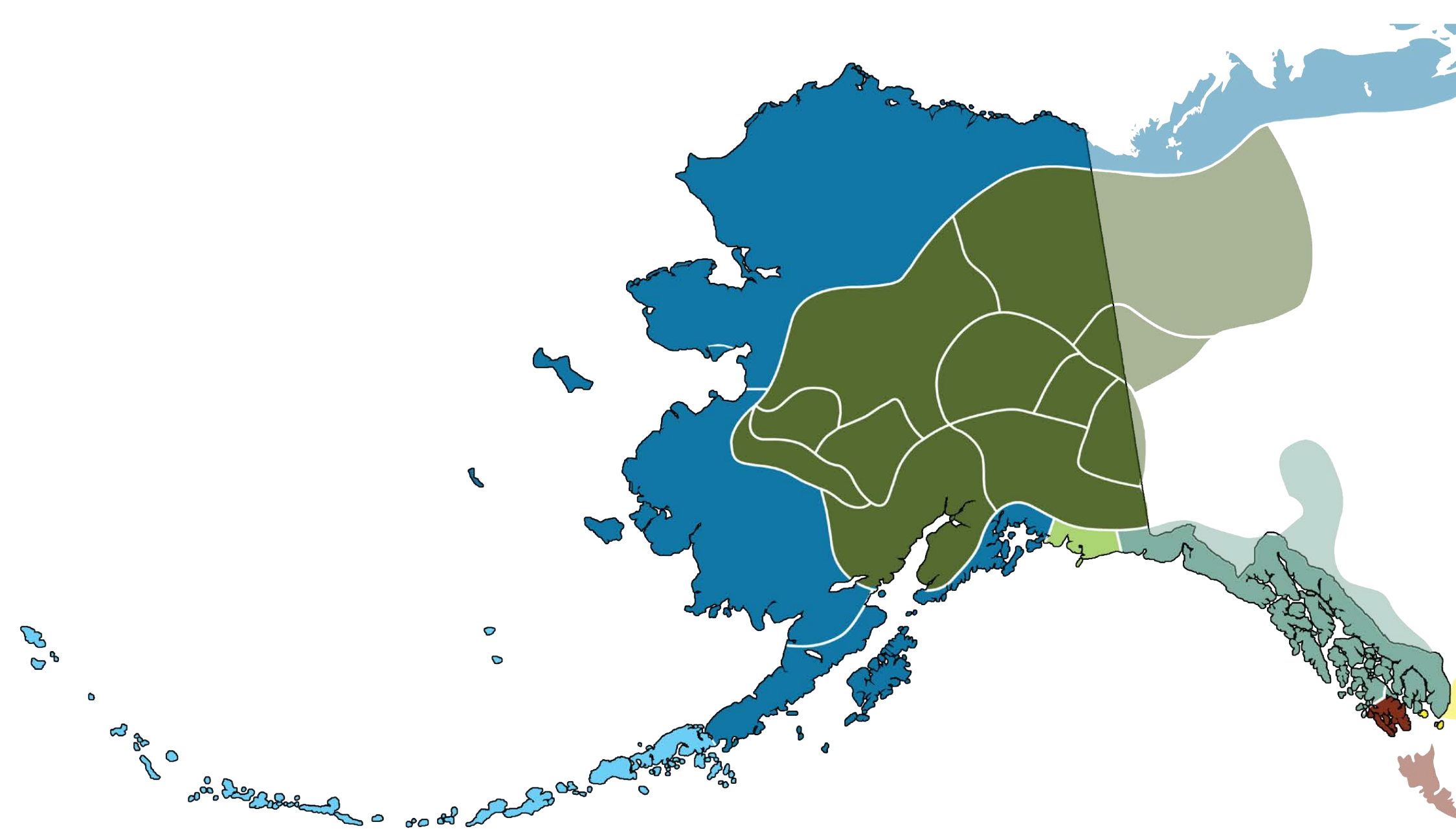












ALASKA NATIVE UNIVERSITY



horizontal change across systems

- Foster Alaska Native Language revitalization
- Enable multiple pathways to education
- Enhance the performance of the University of Alaska
- Contribute to the potential of Alaska Native communities
- Ensure that the University of Alaska has socioeconomic impact throughout Alaska
- Increase access, recruitment, retention, and success of Alaska Native peoples
- Create learning environments that house Alaska Native voices, languages, and ways of knowing

vertical development at the individual campuses

- Build a talent base and make ourselves more efficient at what we do
- Paint a picture of consolidation of the platform
- Create institutional change within the structures of education
- Create more Indigenous-first programs & meaningful space within the institution
- Shift spaces and curricula so they embrace Indigenous peoples instead of disorient them
- Identify and remove assimilation tactics and practices from our institutions
- More synergy and efficient non-duplicative efforts
- Embracing and encouraging plurality at all institutional levels

Cultural Hegemony

- “soft power” that is achieved by establishing and maintaining what is “normal”
- authority without the need for violent coercion
- the willingness of a population to tolerate dreadful living conditions
- the ideology that the colonial is “higher function” and the indigenous is “savage” and “incapable”
- genocidal cruise control

Based upon:

Buchanan, Ian. *A Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Oxford Paperback Reference). Oxford University Press, 2010.
Bullock, Alan and Stephen Trombley, Editors. *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*. 3rd Edition, 1999.

Indigenous Counter-Hegemonic Transformation

- A theory that identifies social hegemony as an illusion that can be replaced with concepts of equity and co-existence in colonial spaces, given that agency is claimed and utilized by Indigenous voices of particular places. The process of counter-hegemony relies on Indigenous Hyperconsciousness to actively identify and dismantle social structures, norms, and laws that inhibit equity through processes of othering, ignorance, and perceived social diminishment. In order to initiate and maintain the re-establishment of the Indigenous voice, social planning and engineering are seen through a lens that refuses to fragment and rejects colonial problem identification and solving methodologies.

Indigenous Hyperconsciousness

- A theory of Indigenous awareness that operates simultaneously in multiple times and spaces, superseding individualism and fragmented viewpoints of reality, and is based in the thought world of Indigenous languages of particular places. This critical lens can be used in analyses of colonial forces that continually attempt to reshape Indigenous consciousness in relation to the Euroamerican ways of knowing, and operates in continuous hyper-awareness of those invasive consciousnesses.

Indigenous Metacognition

- An awareness of all social macro, meso, and micro policies governing people, places, and expected social activities, including how these policies influence individual and collective thought processes, particularly within oppressive systems. Individuals and groups decide which policies they internalize and which ones they externalize in their own realms of morality and desire, allowing them to determine which policies will be followed and which will be violated, either overtly or covertly. This must occur in continuous time while deconstructing cultural hegemonic value systems and methodologies in order to engineer the recovery of Indigenous spaces of thought and existence.

Dynamic Unstratified Hybrid Coexistence

- An active resistance to all notions of superiority in social and mental spheres that relies on Indigenous Hyperconsciousness to create safety zones for Indigenous and non-Indigenous consciousnesses to occupy the same spaces and times without the need to stratify into higher and lower structures. By accepting the limitlessness of time and space, and rejecting the limited perspective of a binary "one thing or the other" existence, then times and spaces can be seen as limitless and accepting of multiple and simultaneous consciousnesses without the need to rank them or determine which ones are superior for given uses and places. This resistance must be continuous and steadfast in order to render powerless deeply rooted notions of white superiority that are foundational in many colonial spaces and structures.

Indigenous Language Ecosystems

- The totality of a language and everything it is connected to through time and space, including the physical landscapes upon which the language was born through, people who speak it, domains where it is spoken, various social structures through which the language may theoretically move, and animate, inanimate, and spiritual beings that have co-existed with the language.

Indigeneity

antithesis

Antihegemony

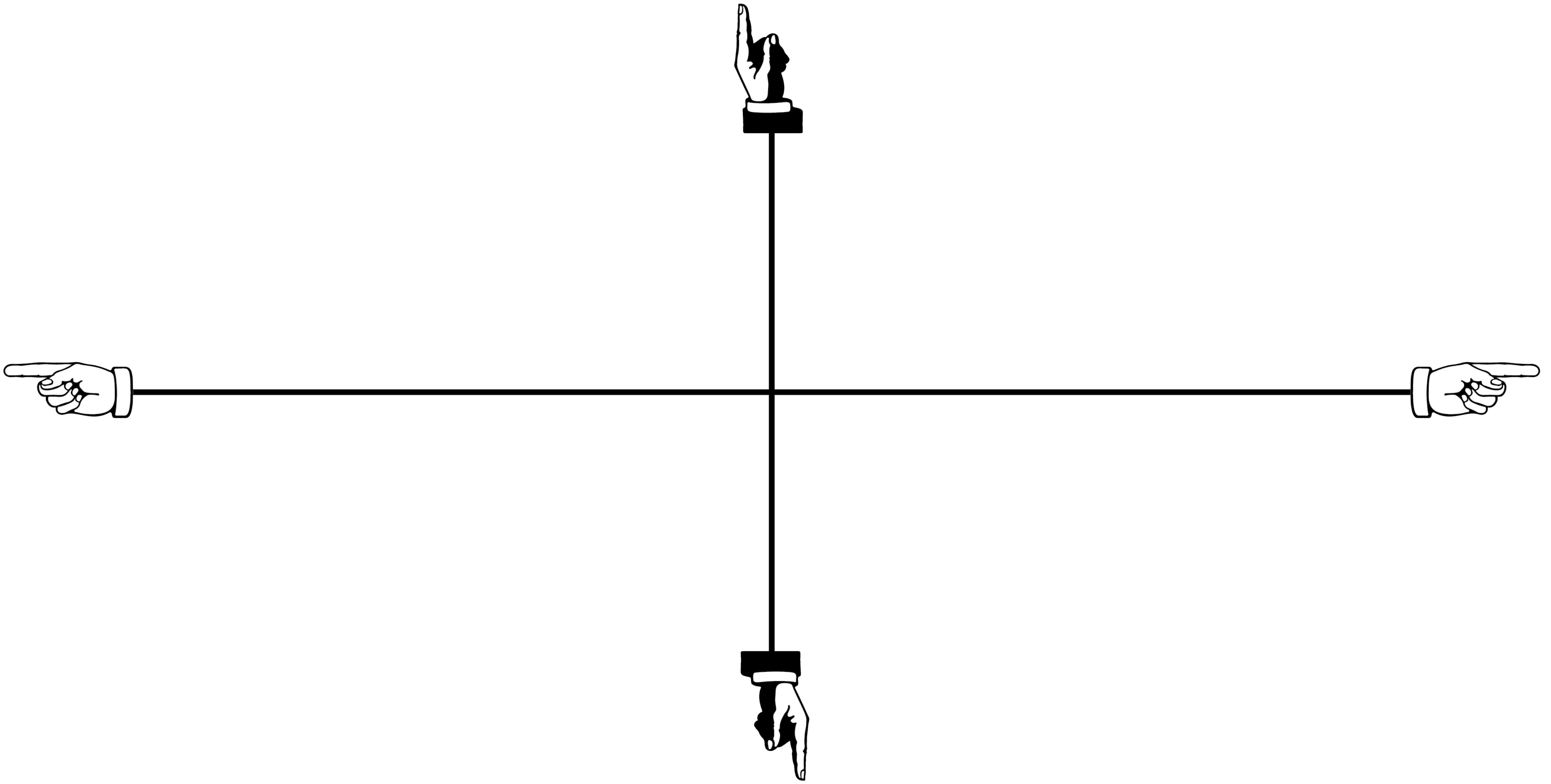
Cultural Hegemony

mimesis

Counterhegemony

accept without question

reject or alter through Indigenous Hyperconsciousness



domains

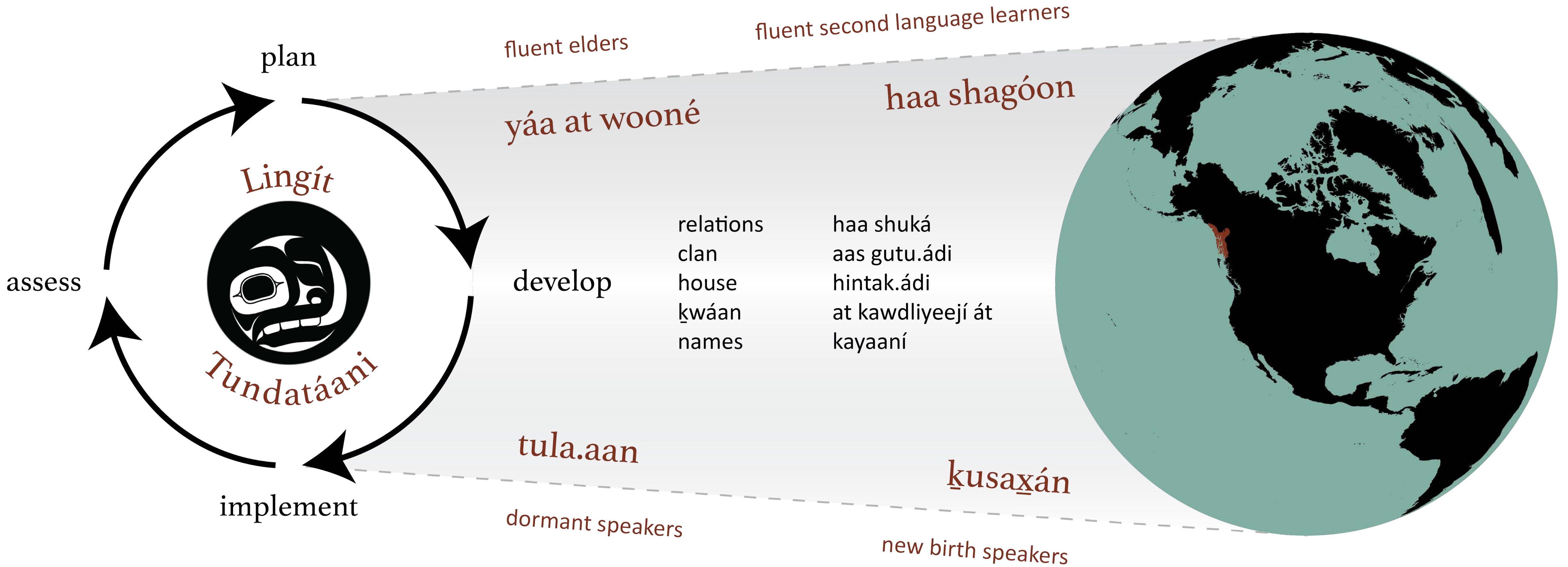
**institutions of society
where language may be used:**
family, work sphere, education,
religion, entertainment, media,
politics, commerce, sports,
food & medicinal harvesting,
etc.

registers

**vocabulary and syntax needed
for communication in domains:**
nouns, verbs, other words, syntax,
culturally appropriate phrases,
humor, compassion, tone,
content, inappropriateness,
etc.

role relations

**the social relations and hierarchies
that exist within domains:**
parents, siblings, children, clan members
employees, employers, congregants,
students, teachers, administrators,
customers, service providers,
etc.

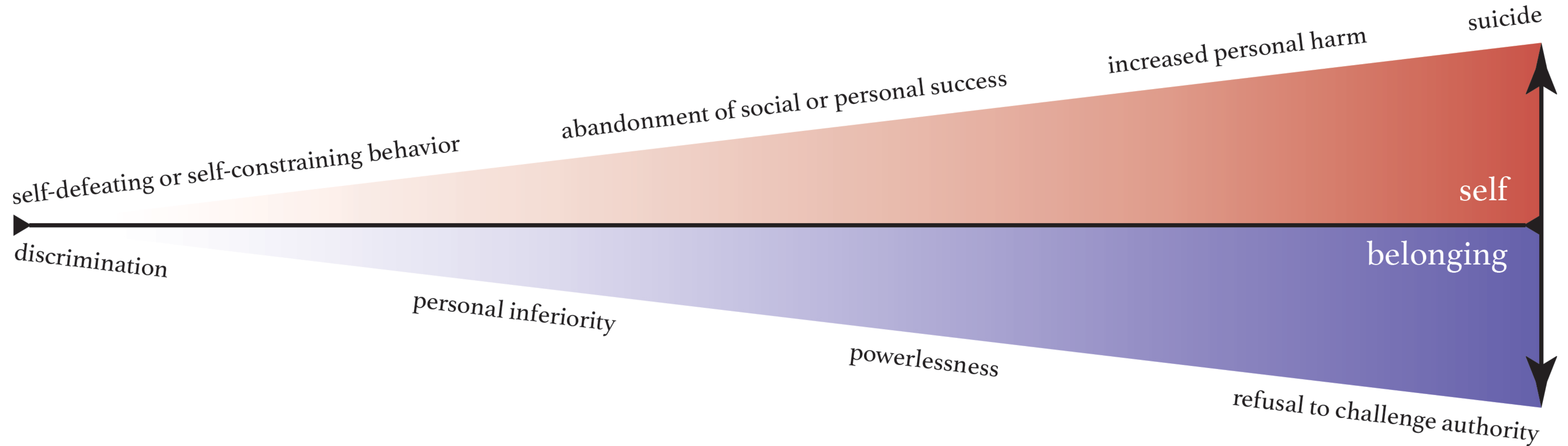




intrapersonal oppression: continuum of personal harm

perceived value of self: useless, inferior, incapable, lazy, unlovable, stupid

perceived absence of: love, care, nurturing, friendships, support, compassion, ability to communicate, ability to leave



minor acts
of identification
with oppressor

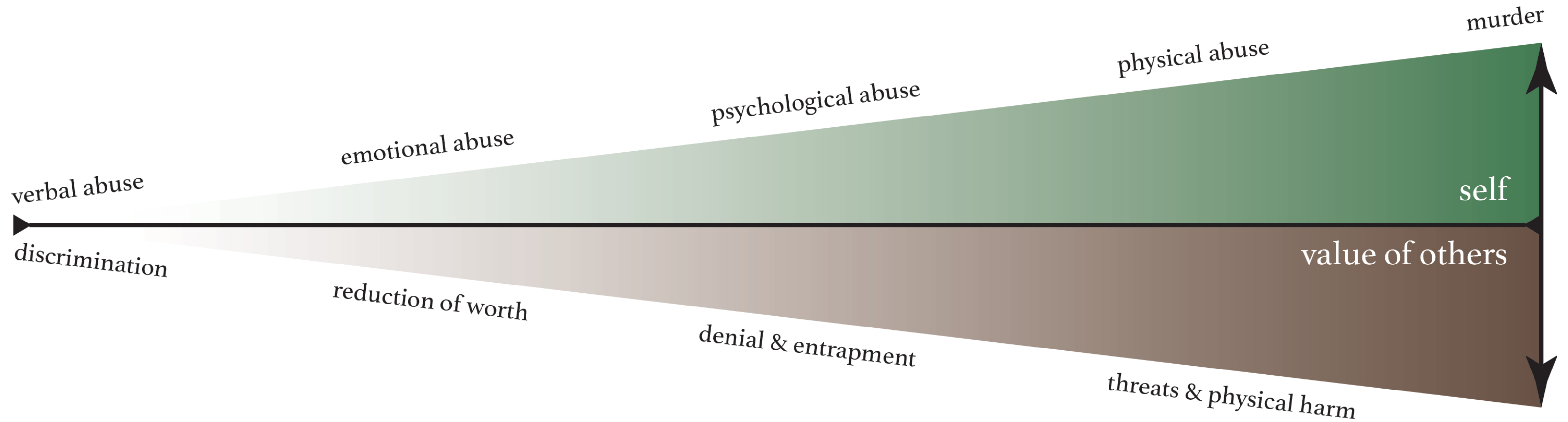
Based on concepts in Prilleltensky, Isaac and Wilfrid Laurier. "Politics Change, Oppression Remains: on the Psychology and Politics of Oppression." *Political Psychology*, 17, No. 1 (1996): 127 – 148.

complete loss
of value and self
to oppressor

interpersonal oppression: continuum of harm in close relationships

assigned value of the other: useless, inferior, incapable, lazy, unlovable, stupid

denial of: love, caring, nurturing, friendships, support, compassion, ability to communicate, ability to leave



minor acts
of identification
with oppressor

Based on concepts in Prilleltensky, Isaac and Wilfrid Laurier. "Politics Change, Oppression Remains:
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complete loss
of value and self
to oppressor

Battered People Syndrome

- These self-oppressive factors are symptomatic of what scholar Paul Berg refers to as battered people syndrome, which is defined as:
 - The medical and psychological condition of a person who has suffered (usually persistent) emotional, physical, or sexual abuse from another person. Also called battered child syndrome or battered woman syndrome depending on the circumstances. In the case of a woman, her husband or partner inflicts the injuries.
-

Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.

"i love myself.
the quietest.
simplest. most
powerful.
revolution. ever."
— Nayyirah
Waheed

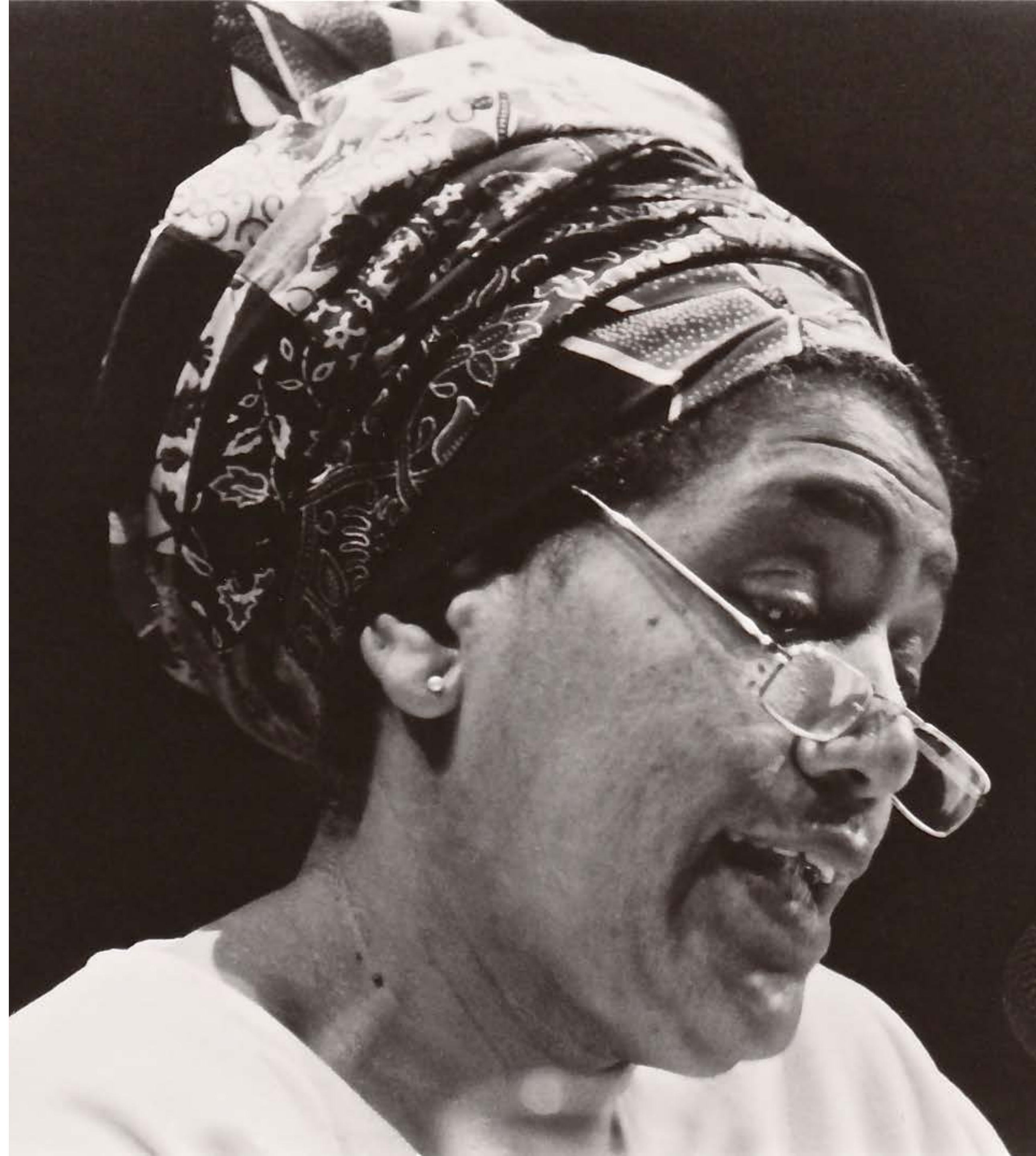
Lateral Oppression

- Occurs within marginalized groups where members strike out at each other as a result of being oppressed. The oppressed become the oppressors of themselves and each other. Common behaviours that prevent positive change from occurring include gossiping, bullying, finger-pointing, backstabbing and shunning

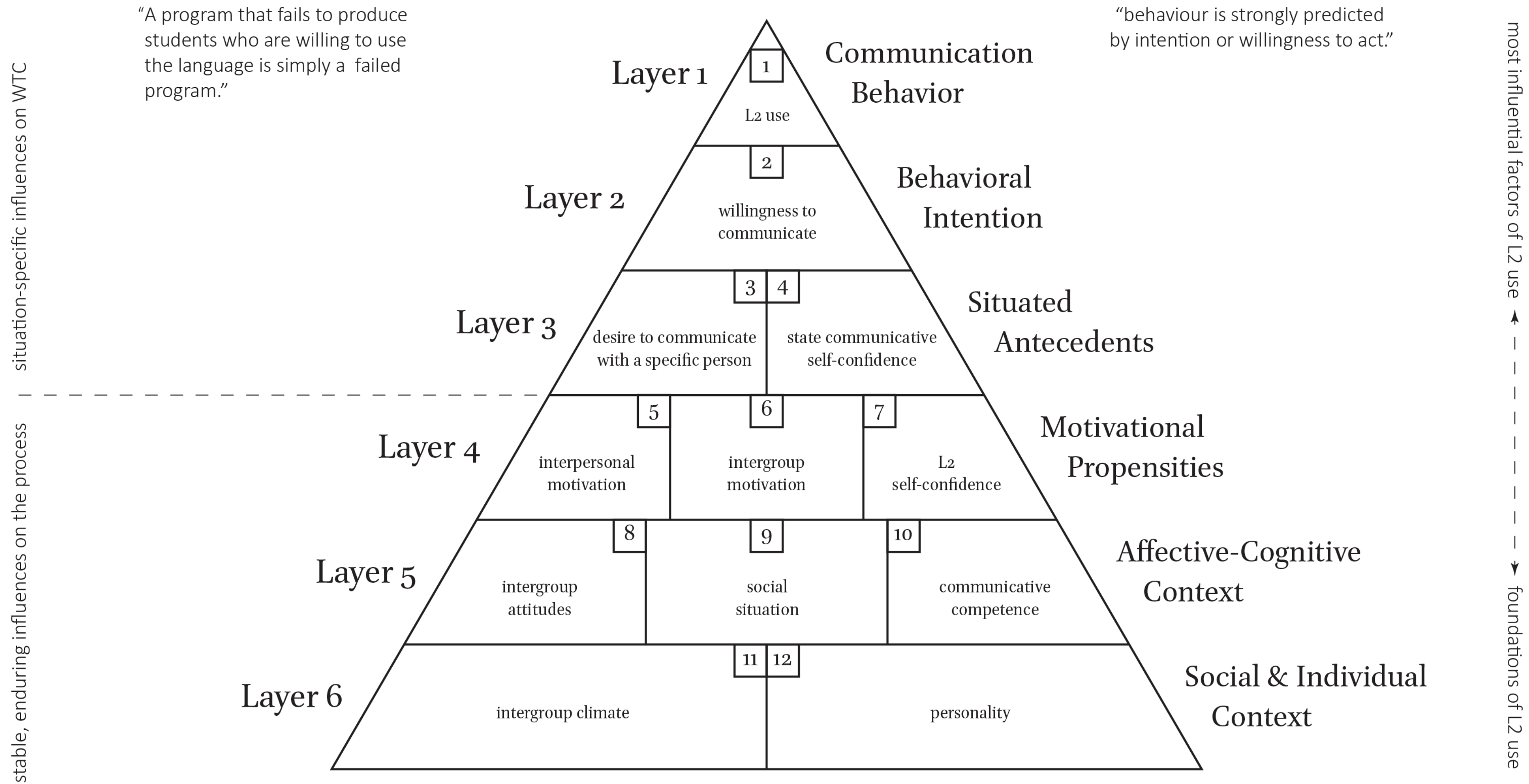
"Lateral Violence in First Nations Communities." Kweykway Consulting

What woman here is so enamored of her own oppression that she cannot see her heel print upon another woman's face?

Audre Lorde



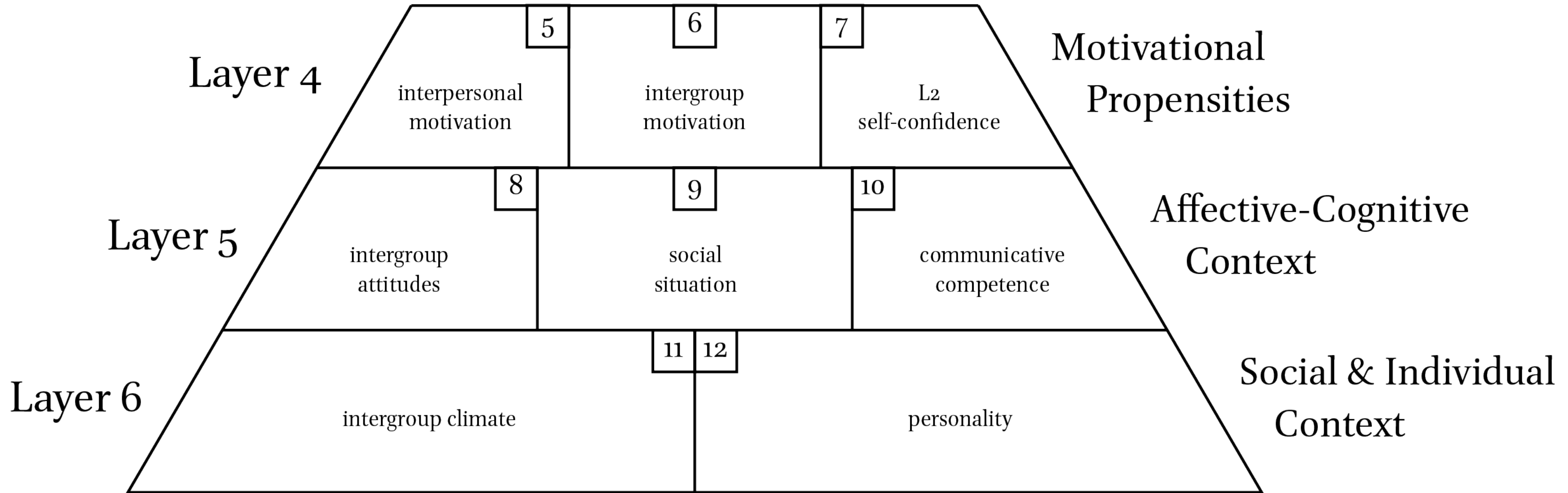
Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing Willingness To Communicate (WTC)

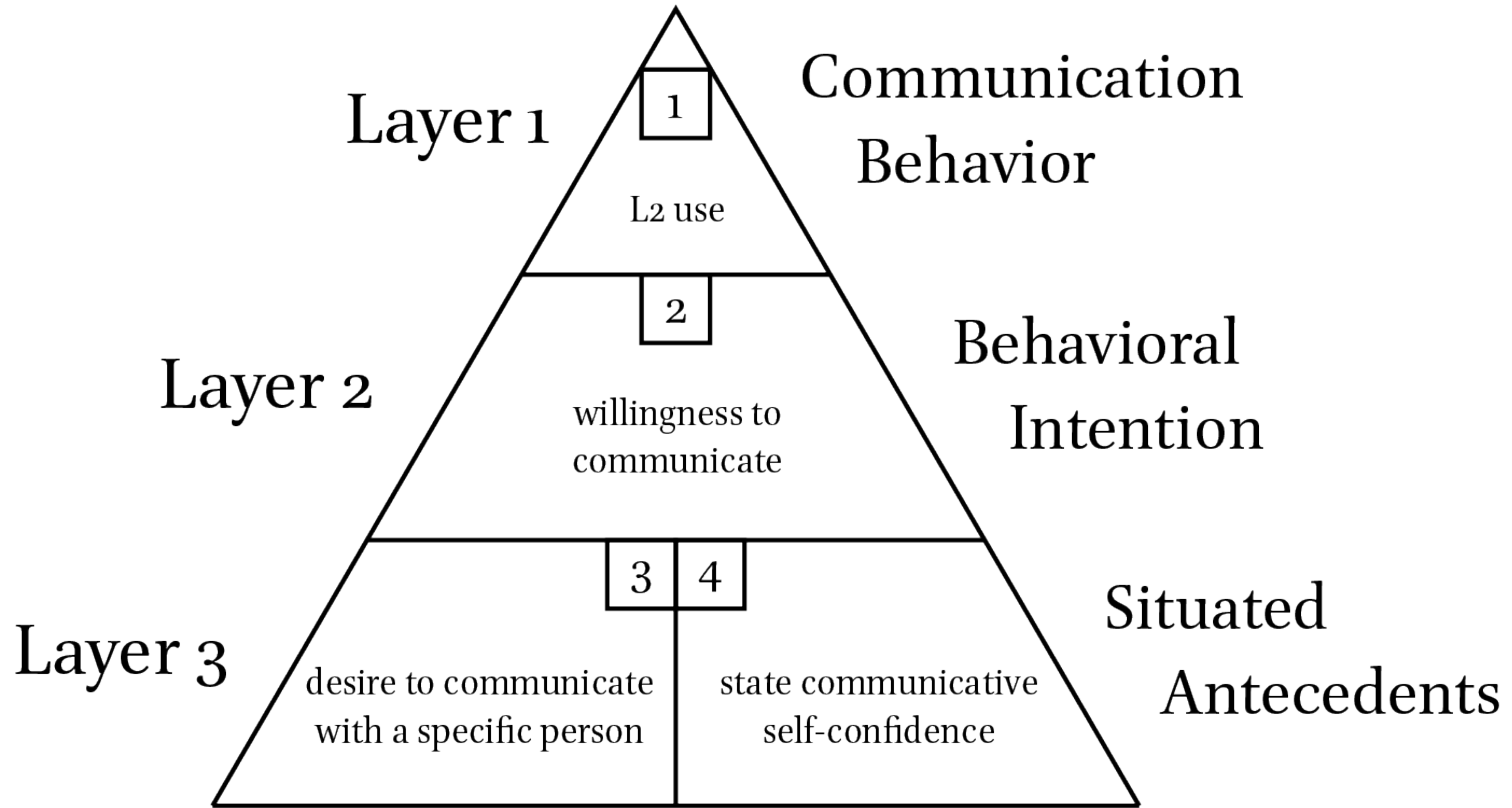


“A program that fails to produce students who are willing to use the language is simply a failed program.”

“behaviour is strongly predicted by intention or willingness to act.”

These six layers further represent the two more basic structures:
 (a) the first three layers (I, II, & III), which represent situation-specific influences on WTC at a given moment in time.
 (b) the latter three layers (IV, V, & VI), which represent stable, enduring influences on the process.

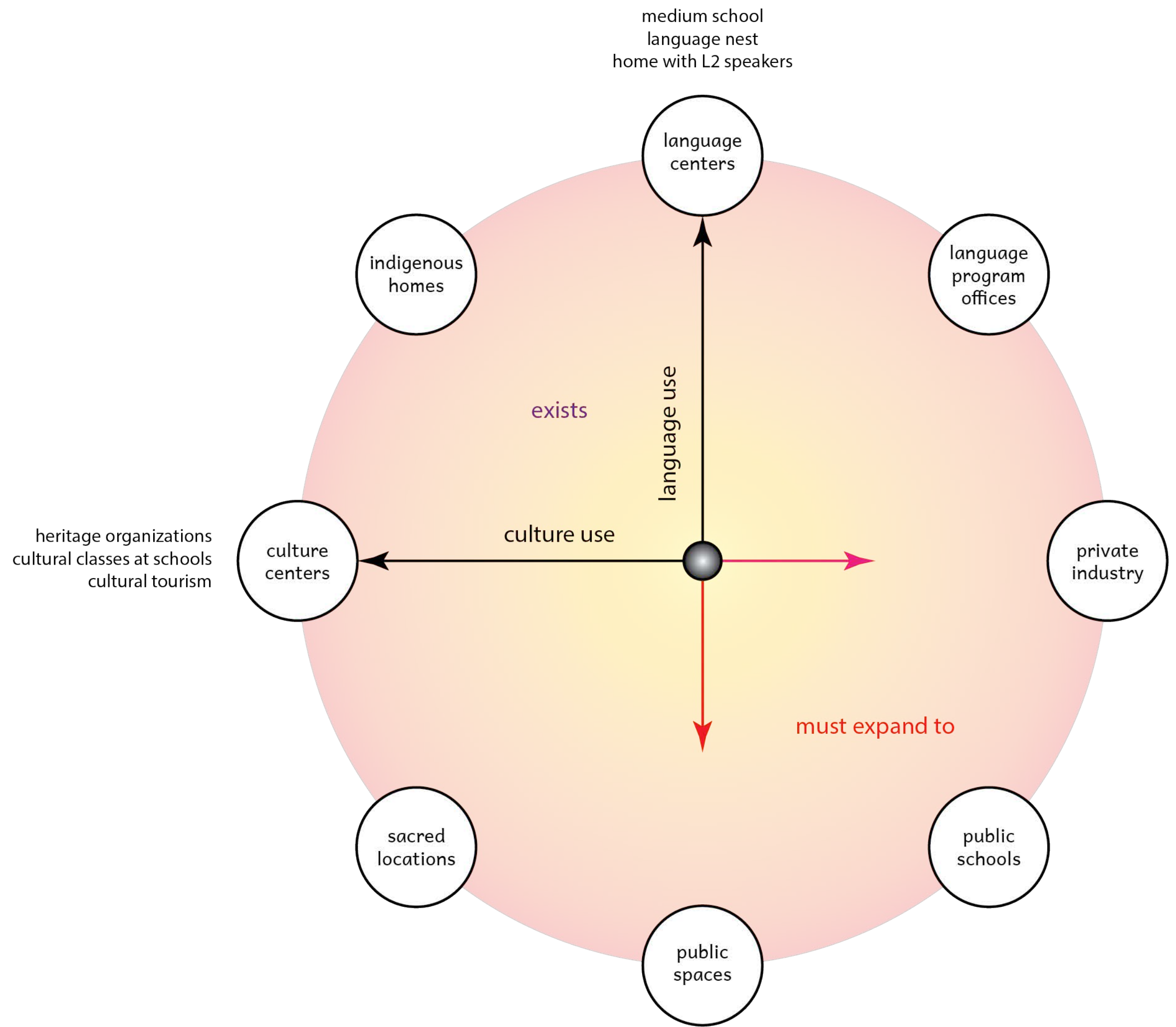




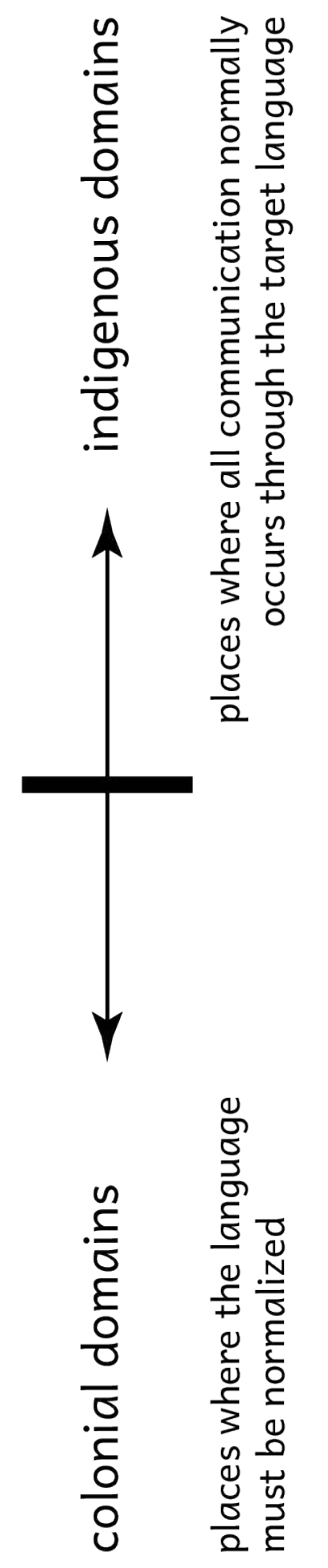
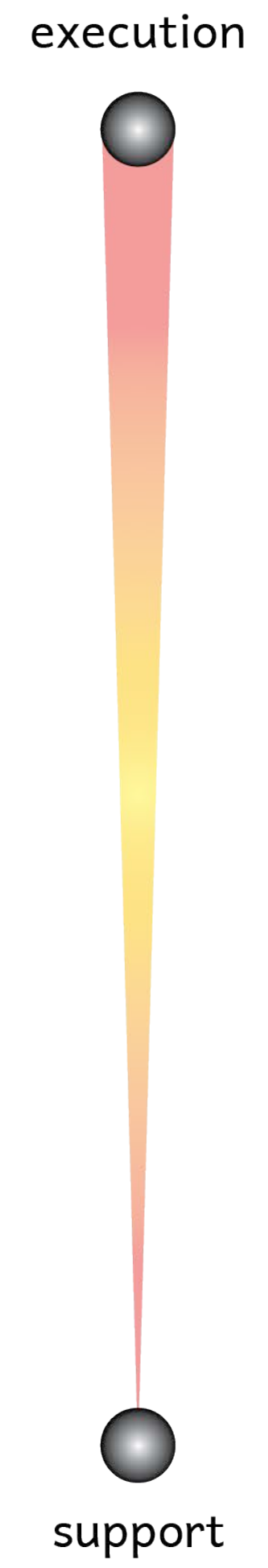
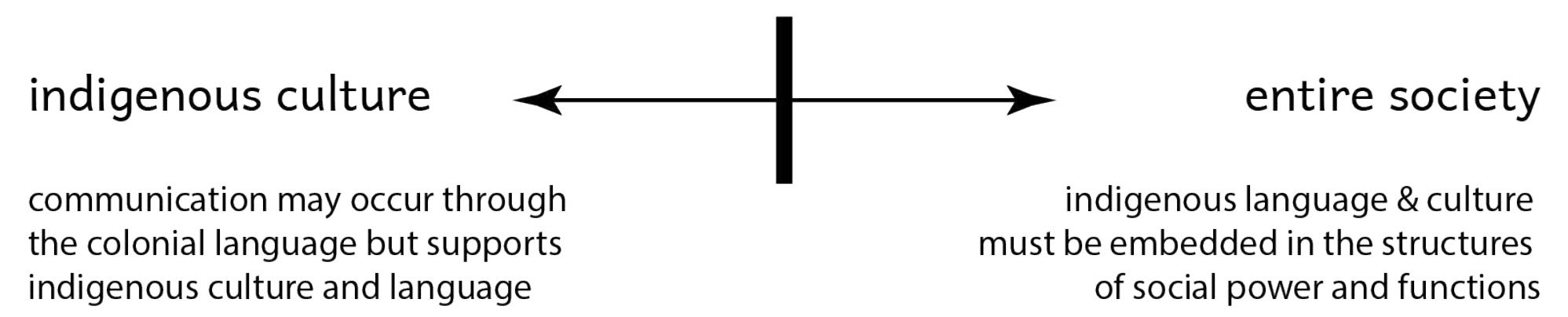
the indigenous realm must privilege the indigenous language

INDIGENOUS DOMAINS & USE

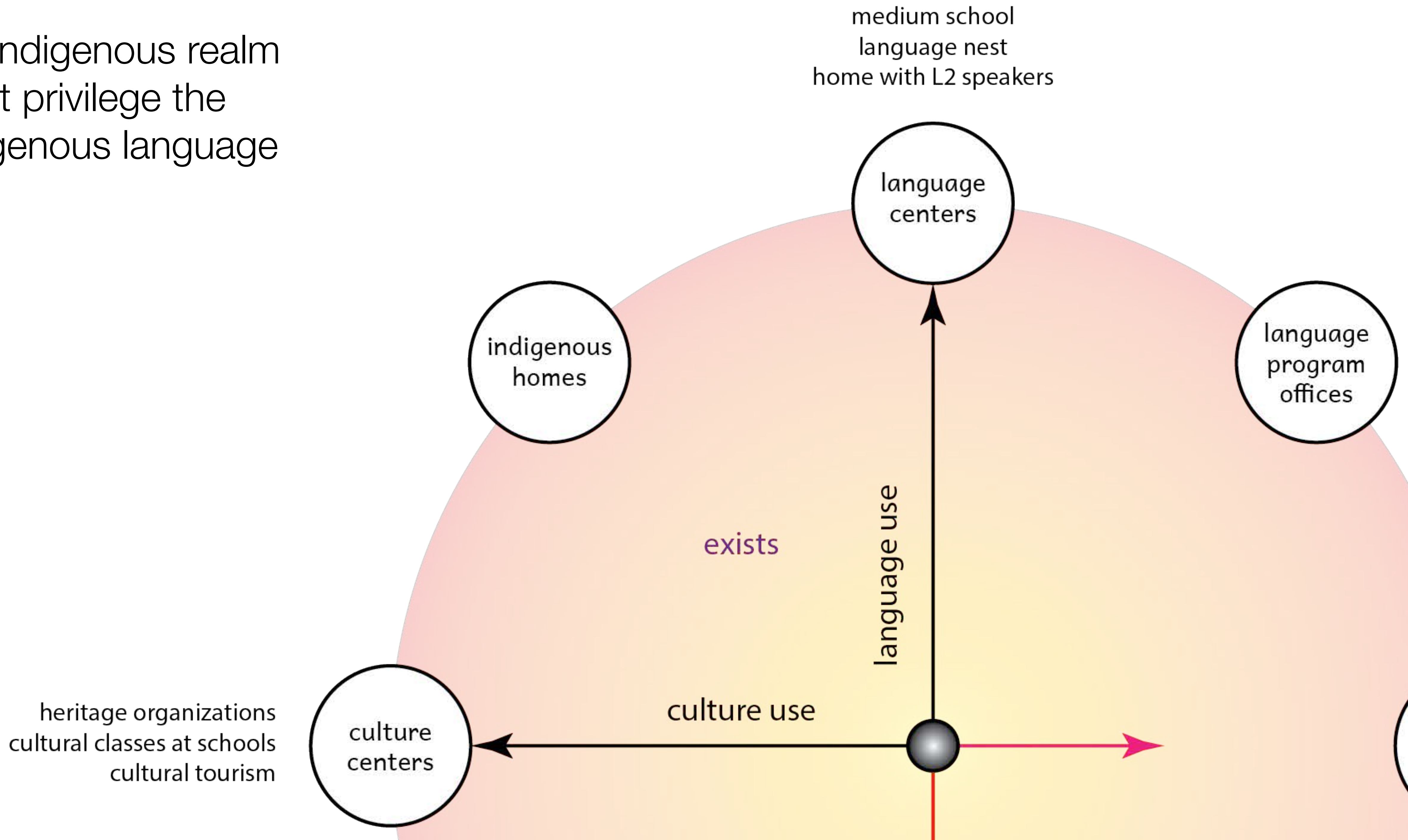
language revitalization is:
1) using the language,
2) creation of spaces where the indigenous language is the language of power & use



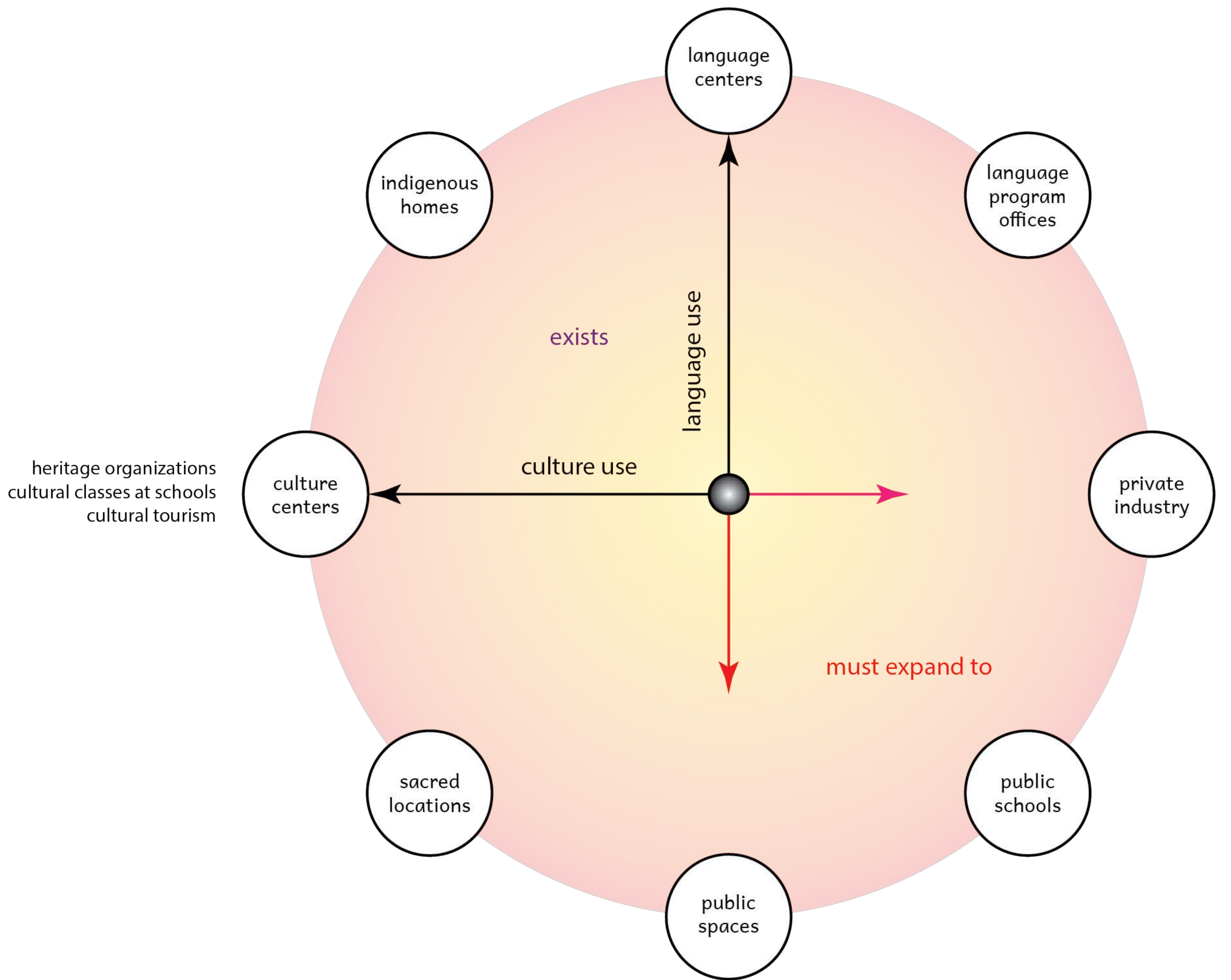
sometimes the colonial language sphere seems more cultural than the area that exclusively uses the target language



the indigenous realm
must privilege the
indigenous language



sometimes
the colonial
language sphere
seems more cultural
than the area that
exclusively uses
the target language



A call for RLS must, therefore, also be seen and explained as a call for cultural reconstruction and for greater cultural-self-regulation. If this is not understood then RLS-efforts must, inevitably, fail, as all ethnocultural planning that lacks a central and crucial integrative component must fail. RLS is an indication of dissatisfaction with ethnocultural (and, often, also with ethnopolitical and ethno-economic) life as it currently is, and of a resolve to undertake planned ethnocultural reconstruction. This change does not need to be backward-looking in its thrust, regardless of the historical metaphors that it may utilize (because of their recognized symbolic and emotional significance). Indeed, most RLS-efforts are actually syncretistic and modernistic with respect to their cultural implications and goals.

Joshua Fishman

Reversing Language Shift, 19

A third Yian mainstream ploy is to bemoan the purported ‘conflictual nature’ of RLS. It is not the majority Yians who are conflictual (even though they punitively control and implement by far the major reins of power and of the purse) but the unequal efforts of Xians that are responsible for all trouble-making. Even the much vaunted ‘no language policy’ of many democracies is, in reality, an anti-minority-languages policy, because it delegitimises such languages by studiously ignoring them and, thereby, not allowing them to be placed on the agenda of supportable general values. Certainly most RLS efforts (those referred to throughout this volume as constituting Stages 8–5) are quite the opposite of confrontational in any real sense; they are inherently based upon efforts to win over public opinion by seeking support, approval and recognition, both in the Yian camp and in the Xian camp as well.

Joshua Fishman

I commend you all on the work that you do. But there is a danger sometimes that we can turn something as potentially personally destructive as colonization into an abstraction, into a historical artifact which diminishes or invisibilizes the violence, the destructive harm, that it does. Because colonization is not some abstract theory. It is a belief assumed by most of the states in Europe that they had the right to dispossess Indigenous peoples who had done them no harm and posed no threat, and that presumption in itself is an act of violence. The racism which underpinned and continues to underpin colonization is an act of violence, and I think as we gather the knowledge so that we can perceive the Mana that we have it is important not to diminish the reality of that violence, because if we do then we diminish the suffering of our people who endured through its terrible hurt and agony ever since 1840. And we owe those people—we owe our mokopuna—together our strength and together our knowledge to we do not diminish the pain which they have endured.

Moana Jackson

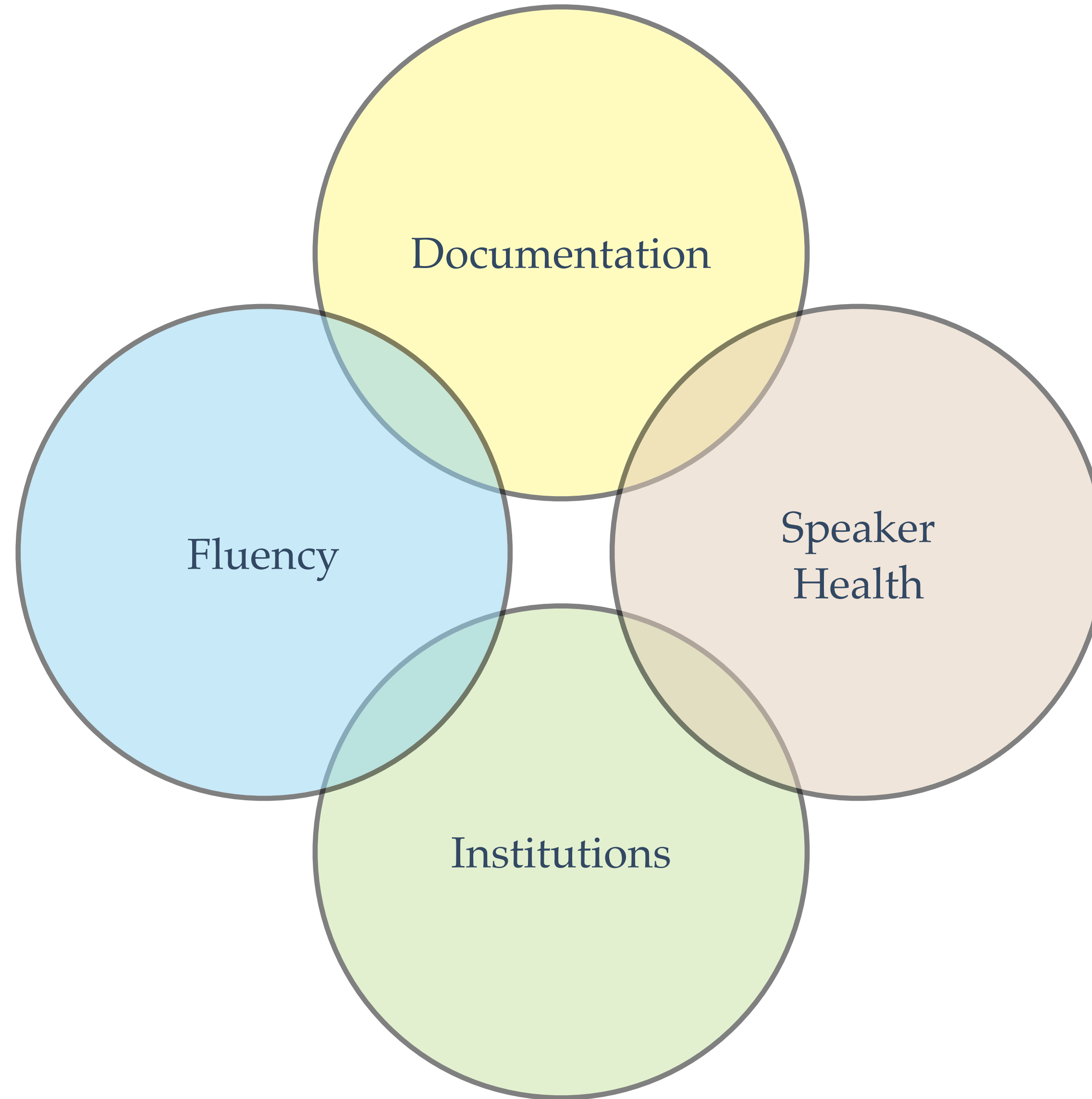
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Joshua Fishman

Reversing Language Shift, 19

diagnosis

orthography • audio • video • distribution • access



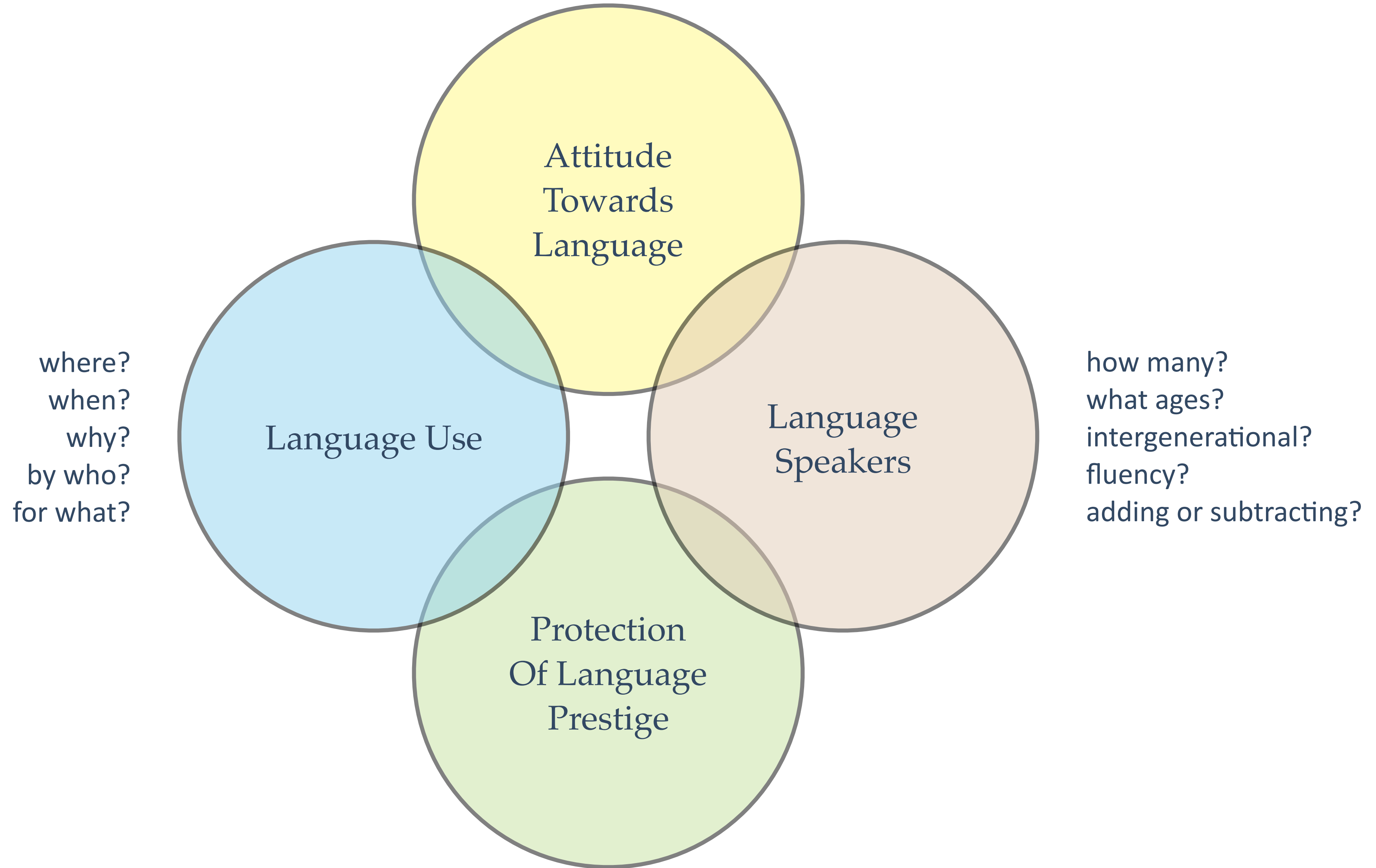
how well can people speak?
what are your fluency goals?

mass media
diet
excercise
mental health
addictions

allies • neutral • agents of coloniality

evaluation

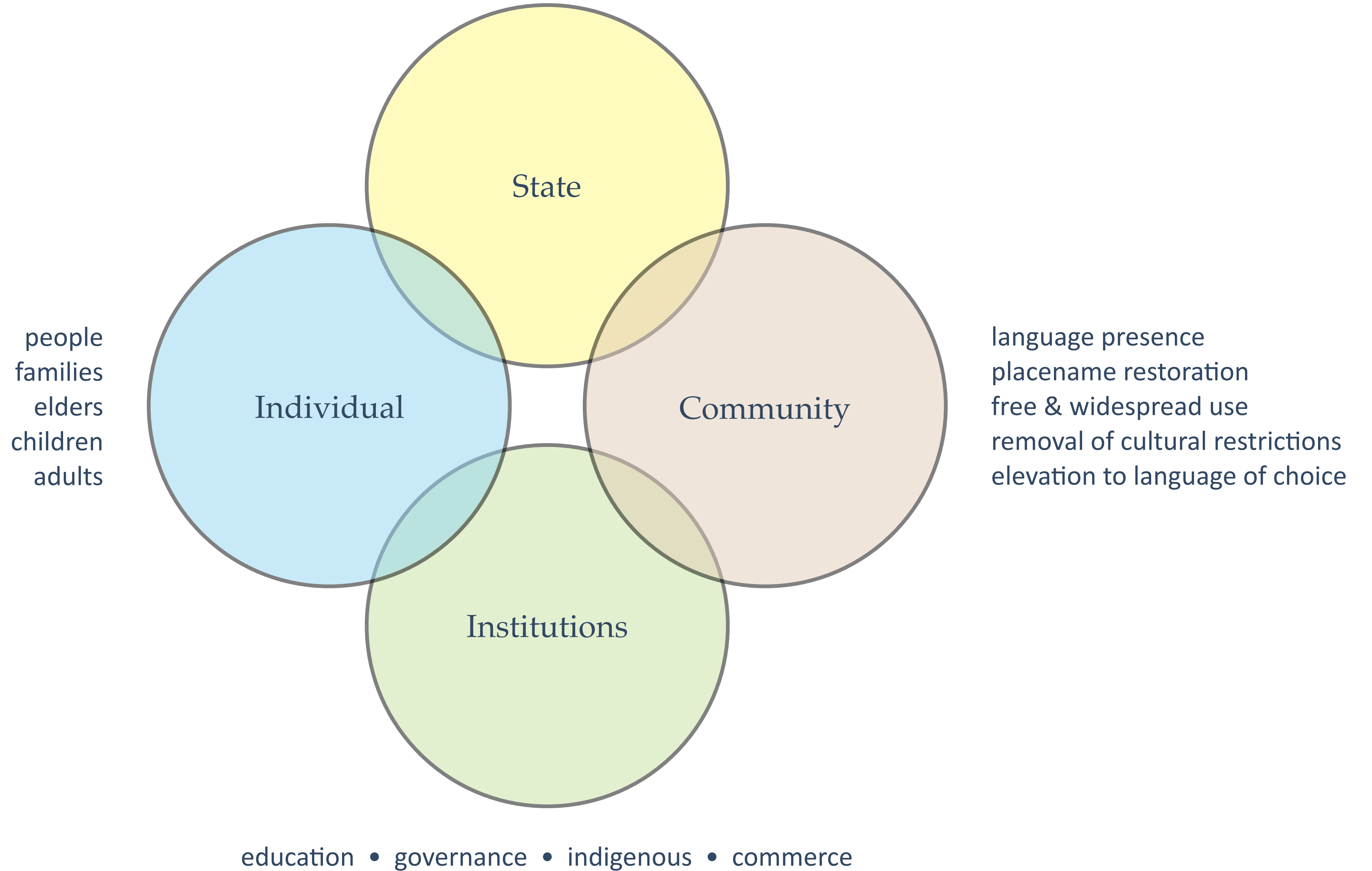
personal value • economic value • social value • cultural value



rejection of hierarchy • rejection of hegemony • expectation of knowledge

social change

official language status • language mandates



Building a Language Program

- Resources
 - Financial (what do you have? what do you need? how do you get it?)
 - Language Resources
 - Human / Emotional
- Assess Language Vitality
 - Speakers
 - Numbers
 - Fluency
 - Age
- Language Variation
 - Dialects, Regional Variation
- Assess Needs, Goals, Attitudes
 - Towards Language
 - Ownership
 - Who Can & Should Speak / Teach
- Towards Surrounding Language

Building a Language Program

- Surveys
- Goals & Needs
 - Target Population
 - Target Fluency Rates
 - Methods of Achieving Goals
- Problems
 - Internal
 - Authenticity
 - External
 - Ideology Conflict
 - Lateral Violence
 - Poverty
 - Assimilation
- Updating the Lexicon
 - Loan words
 - Calques

The weight of the world is not upon your shoulders.

The strength of your ancestors is behind you.

The path they have made is before you.

You are holding hands with everyone committed to this journey.

gunalchéesh

háw'aa

quayana

mahalo