

PODCAST

Stories in/relation: A Podcast by Educators for Educators

JANEY LEW AND SAMANTHA NOCK,
WITH AYAKA YOSHIMIZU*

The accompanying podcast *Stories in/relation* Episode 2, “in/relation with Dr. Ayaka Yoshimizu” is available open access here:
<https://ojs.library.ubc.ca/index.php/bcstudies/article/view/199831>

WHAT IS THE *STORIES IN/RELATION* PODCAST,
AND WHY DID WE DEVELOP IT?

Stories in/relation is a podcast for educators who want to bring Indigenous topics and contexts into their curricula, and who are looking for support and ideas on where and how to begin. In each episode, hosts Janey Lew and Sam Nock sit down with University of British Columbia (UBC) faculty, staff, and students and ask how they navigate Indigenizing and decolonizing their teaching and learning practices. Our goals are to:

- celebrate the relationships *in/relation* has with teaching and learning community leaders and educators across UBC;
- share example stories as learning opportunities; and
- help educators apply the *in/relation* educational resource and other resources that support new learners and non-experts to engage with Indigenous topics in the classroom.

in/relation responds to a 2015 report, *Connecting Communities: Principles for Musqueam-UBC Collaboration*. Written in partnership by the Musqueam

* Created and hosted by Janey Lew, senior strategist, Indigenous Initiatives, Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT), and Samantha Nock, educational resources developer, Indigenous Initiatives, CTLT. Produced and edited by Samantha Nock with support from Janey Lew. Recorded on the unceded traditional and ancestral lands of the həŋqəmínəni-speaking x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) People on the University of British Columbia’s Vancouver campus in partnership with CEDaR Space.

First Nation and UBC sustainability scholar Aaron Lao, the report identifies a need to “continue educating people at UBC about Musqueam” and about “Canada’s relationship with Aboriginal peoples.”¹

The report goes on to emphasize that the “duty to inform and educate is the responsibility of all units at UBC, not just Musqueam.”² *in/relation* was created to support instructors, teaching assistants, staff, and student leaders at UBC who, while they are not experts in Indigenous studies, would like to responsibly join the call to continue educating ourselves about Indigenous histories and ongoing presence at UBC, how these relationships are relevant to our experiences as UBC students, staff, and faculty, and where our teaching and learning takes place.

UBC’s 2021 Indigenous Strategic Plan pledges to “make meaningful reconciliation a priority for all students, faculty, and staff.”³ *in/relation* responds to the call that reconciliation is everyone’s responsibility and provides a freely accessible educational resource for educators who want to take up that call with care, intention, and a sense of community. How do you do this responsibly when you are not an expert in Indigenous studies? *in/relation* provides a starting point, and the *Stories in/relation* podcast was created for educators accessing our digital resources to build a sense of community and learn from each other through sharing stories about the insights, challenges, vulnerabilities, shifts in perspective and practice, and moments of connection that are possible in taking up this call.

WHO IS THIS PODCAST FOR?

Stories in/relation is a podcast companion to the *in/relation* educational resource, which contains sample learning modules, a lesson design framework, and facilitation tools and support for UBC faculty, staff, and students who are interested in initiating learning conversations with new learners of Indigenous topics at UBC.⁴

People often ask: What do you mean by “new learners”? To identify as a new learner is to take on an orientation of curiosity and humility and to recognize that everyone brings different prior knowledge to the

¹ Aaron Lao in collaboration with the Musqueam Indian Band and UBC, *Connecting Communities: Principles for Musqueam-UBC Collaboration*, UBC Sustainability Scholars report (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2015), 25, https://sustain.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/2015-39_Principles%20for%20Musqueam-UBC%20Collaboration_Lao.pdf.

² Lao with the Musqueam Indian Band and UBC, *Connecting Communities*, 25.

³ University of British Columbia, “UBC’s Indigenous Strategic Plan Overview,” YouTube, uploaded by @UBC, 31 August 2021, 00:03:15, at 00:00:11, <https://youtu.be/DMiNd2D1s00>.

⁴ See “Our Story,” *in/relation*, CTLT Indigenous Initiatives, UBC, <https://inrelation.ubc.ca/about-in-relation-2/our-story/> to learn more about *in/relation*.

learning table. As new learners, we meet each other where we are at and try to find common grounds for learning together.

in/relation started as a project to build educational resources for international students learning Indigenous histories and contexts at UBC. The *Connecting Communities* report specifies newcomers to Canada as a key learning audience: “Especially with many people from abroad who may not be familiar with this history, it is important for UBC to continue to inform and educate people in partnership with Musqueam.”⁵ Very quickly, we discovered that *in/relation* met the learning needs not only of international learners but of many others as well. Much like international students, students arriving at UBC from elsewhere in Canada, and even those educated in the K-12 system in British Columbia, arrive with varying levels of knowledge about Indigenous history and contemporary contexts. *in/relation* aims to bridge these gaps by providing a common ground for learning and integrating questions and activities that anyone can participate in and respond to. The four sample learning modules encourage learners to reflect and respond by engaging their own positionalities, their unique relationships to place, and the routes they have taken to arrive here at UBC. *in/relation* also contains a Facilitator Toolbox⁶ for educators who will be initiating and leading these learning conversations and who are non-experts on Indigenous topics. We elaborate on a “co-learning”⁷ approach in the *in/relation* Facilitation Toolbox.

The *Stories in/relation* podcast was developed to build community amongst the users of this resource and to inspire more people to become new learners and co-learners. After interviewing faculty, staff, and student facilitators who had applied our resources in their learning contexts for the “Facilitating *in/relation*” video, the most impactful lessons came from reflexive learning, especially sharing stories and experiences.⁸ As we continue to develop *in/relation*, we hope the podcast will support both learners and educators to feel part of a community through sharing and listening to stories of each others’ learning journeys.

⁵ Lao with the Musqueam Indian Band and UBC, *Connecting Communities*, 25.

⁶ “Facilitator Toolbox,” *in/relation*, CTLT Indigenous Initiatives, UBC, <https://inrelation.ubc.ca/modules/pedagogical-orientations/>.

⁷ “Facilitator as Co-Learner,” Facilitator Toolbox, *in/relation*, CTLT Indigenous Initiatives, UBC, accessed 1 August 2024, <https://inrelation.ubc.ca/modules/pedagogical-orientations/co-learner/>.

⁸ “Facilitating *in/relation* Video,” Facilitation Toolbox, *in/relation*, CTLT Indigenous Initiatives, UBC, <https://inrelation.ubc.ca/modules/facilitator-video/>.

WHAT'S IN THE PODCAST FOR INDIGENOUS LISTENERS?

tân'si nitôtêmak, my name is Samantha Nock. I am an apihtaw'kos'an iskwew. My maternal community is Île-à-la-Crosse (Sakitawak) in Treaty 10 territory and the traditional homelands of the Métis Nation in Northwest Saskatchewan. My family names are Morin, Bouvier, LaFleur, and Aubichon. I am also of English, French, and Métis heritage on my father's side. As the producer, editor, and co-host of *Stories in/relation*, I want to welcome Indigenous listeners to our kitchen table and share about why I think this podcast is beneficial for Indigenous educators, both within and beyond the post-secondary teaching and learning community.

When Janey and I were in the dreaming stage of creating *Stories in/relation*, we both agreed that we shared the vision of wanting to just sit and visit with the people who are both actively engaging with the *in/relation* project and also embodying the hard work of unlearning coloniality in their teaching practice: a deeply vulnerable and humble process. Visiting, or *kiyokêwin* in my ancestral language of *nêhiyawêwin*, is as familiar to me as breathing; swapping stories over cups of tea or strong coffee is how cultural lessons are shared, governance is agreed upon, and kinship is sustained.

As Indigenous people we are often tokenized, expected to be experts on all things Indigenous for the benefit of non-Indigenous audiences. *Stories in/relation* provides the chance to visit and share stories with diverse members of the teaching and learning community. Through this I've developed a greater understanding and appreciation of the reciprocity and new perspectives many are bringing to this work.

Colonialism is a global experience. Liberation for all of us comes from connecting and organizing beyond colonial borders, but the first step has always been one of the most important: gathering and sharing stories over a cup of coffee or tea. We listen to podcasts on the go and often in isolation: in the car, on the bus, at the gym. But while you're listening to *Stories in/relation*, we are inviting you with open arms and hearts to our shared kitchen table. Janey and I may not be able to pour you a warm drink ourselves, but we believe that you're an integral part of the storytelling relationship: witness, listener, learner.

WHO IS BEHIND *IN/RELATION* AND *STORIES IN/RELATION*?

Janey Lew and Sam Nock are the current team behind *in/relation*. We co-produce and co-host the *Stories in/relation* podcast. Janey and Sam are part of the Indigenous Initiatives team at UBC's Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT).⁹

Janey is *in/relation*'s lead developer – basically, she is the “vault” for *in/relation*'s project history and the connective tissue through the project's different iterations. Janey works with Sam on story ideas and scripts, co-hosts the podcast, and helps out during the editing process. Janey has been with the CTLT Indigenous Initiatives team since 2015 and is currently senior strategist. In her own words:

I am a second-generation Chinese Canadian settler. I was born and raised on the lands of the Coast Salish Peoples, specifically the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh, in what is now known as East Vancouver. My family is from the Four Counties area of the Pearl River delta in Southern Guangdong, China. I hold a PhD in Ethnic Studies, specializing in intersectional women of colour feminist writing and cultural activism, particularly relational cultural activism between Indigenous and Asian Canadian women writers.

I remember when I was hired to teach a First Nations Studies course for the first time as an advanced doctoral candidate. I felt like such an impostor and would stare at the ceiling asking myself, “Am I qualified to do this?” I was fortunate to have supportive and caring colleagues and students who encouraged me and held me accountable in equal measure – and I learned to keep showing up through uncomfortable feelings in the teaching and learning process. My big takeaway is that if it's uncomfortable, it's probably working, and that building community is necessary to keep moving forward in unlearning settler colonialism. I love the intimacy of podcasts – that feeling of having another person's story in your ear – and I hope that *Stories in/relation* will provide listeners with a sense of comfort through the discomfort of un-learning.

Sam is the producer, editor, and co-host of *Stories in/relation* and a part of the *in/relation* project. She helps create the containers for our stories, enact our shared values in our recording and editing processes, and co-create learning material with Janey and our community partners.

⁹ To learn more about the *in/relation* team and contributors, see “Acknowledgements,” *in/relation*, CTLT Indigenous Initiatives, UBC, accessed 1 August 2024, <https://inrelation.ubc.ca/about-in-relation-2/acknowledgements/>.

Sam has been with CTLT Indigenous Initiatives since December 2021, as both the educational resources developer and as the educational consultant on campus and classroom climate. Sam has been an uninvited visitor on unceded Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh lands since 2010 when she moved to the coast from rural northeastern British Columbia to attend UBC, where she graduated from the First Nations and Indigenous Studies program with a minor in political science. Since she moved to Vancouver, Sam has held several peer support and educator roles through grassroots community organizing, Indigenous youth arts programming, and K-12 educational programming. In her own words, Sam says that her most important lessons have come from some of her biggest mistakes:

I have made many missteps as a visitor to these lands, trying to do this work in a good way. With strong relationships built on humility, vulnerability, and trust, I have been held with care from not only my communities but the communities I serve to learn, do better, and plant seeds for our collective future. I echo Janey in saying that if you're feeling uncomfortable, that's a good thing. Some of our best lessons come when we step outside our comfort zone, and it's essential that we don't mistake discomfort with feeling unsafe.

In episode 2, you will also hear from Ayaka Yoshimizu, associate professor of teaching in the Department of Asian Studies at UBC. Dr. Yoshimizu also teaches and coordinates arts courses for the UBC-Ritsumeikan Exchange Program. Currently, she teaches Introduction to Canada to exchange students and Indigeneities in Asia and Asian Diaspora in Asian Studies. She is interested in developing decolonial and antiracist approaches to teaching, curriculum development, and international education, and in exploring ways to incorporate Indigenous-Asian relationality and trans-Indigenous methodology into her pedagogy.

HOW DOES THIS PODCAST RELATE TO THE THEME OF RELATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES, AND WHY DID WE CHOOSE TO FEATURE EPISODE 2 WITH DR. AYAKA YOSHIMIZU?

Dr. Yoshimizu generously shared her experiences with us in episode 2, “in/ relation with Dr. Ayaka Yoshimizu.” The episode provides a practical illustration of the ways in which relational technologies can be integrated into educational settings to foster more meaningful engagement with Indigenous knowledge and perspectives for learners who are new to

these topics. The episode explores and is an example of how technology can bridge cultural gaps, promote inclusive education, and support community-led knowledge dissemination in digital territories. The podcast episode aligns with the broader themes of the Special Issue through its examination of the role of technology in facilitating the integration of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in teaching and learning settings for new learners.

In the episode, Yoshimizu elaborates on her experiences introducing *in/relation* learning resources to Japanese exchange students in the UBC-Ritsumeikan Exchange Program. She discusses her own learning journey that led to implementing *in/relation* in her Introduction to Canada course. Through the experience of visiting together, Lew and Yoshimizu share some of their individual and resonant experiences as Asian racialized settlers in British Columbia. Yoshimizu also reflects on her students' responses to *in/relation* and how this learning shifts their perspectives on UBC, British Columbia, and Canada.

At the core of *Stories in/relation*, we are committed to ensuring that our communities and our guests' communities are held in the highest regard. As a podcasting team, we want to ensure that the stories shared through our conversations continue to serve well beyond the life cycle of our active podcast production through continued learning, active listener self-reflection, and shared educating. Though the podcast exists in the digital realm as a place for knowledge keeping and dissemination, the heart of *Stories in/relation* lives in the relationships that continue to be built, not only for us as a team but also for our guests and listeners. Each step, from pre- to post-production, is guided by our core values, our communities' core values, and the values shared by our guests and their relations. We see this podcast as an act of reciprocity and act of refusal against institutional gatekeeping of knowledge production and sharing.

Each episode is shared with thorough show notes that not only summarize key resources and takeaways, but also offer reflective questions for listeners. Listeners are encouraged to hold onto the stories shared in each episode and then personalize and embody their understandings through a self-reflective process. Episode 2 show notes are included in the appendix.

WHAT IS OUR PROCESS FOR PRODUCING, RECORDING, AND EDITING?

Ongoing, living consent, combined with a deep respect for guests' autonomy and sovereignty over their words and stories, are our grounding values through the podcast creation process. Our episode creation process does take considerable time, but as a podcast team we believe that good work takes the time it takes, and we actively resist urgency created through the pressures of white supremacy, capitalism, and colonialism. Each podcast session is its own living relationship and has its own life cycle that lived before and continues after we record. Because of this, we approach each session differently and are led by our interview guests and their needs. We can break down this process into six parts. It is beneficial to view this not as a linear timeline, but instead as a continuous relational cycle. To illustrate this, we use the metaphor of growing a plant (see Table 1).

WHAT'S NEXT FOR *STORIES IN/RELATION*?

Upcoming episodes include a deep-dive on the research behind *in/relation*,¹⁰ interviews with the developers of the *What I Learned in Class Today* renewed project,¹¹ and an interview with staff at UBC's Go Global who developed a pre-arrival module for Indigenous student leaders from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia.¹²

We learned a lot this past year recording and editing the first two episodes. This podcast is one of many projects that we each hold in our roles at CTLT Indigenous Initiatives. After recording and editing the first two episodes, we are learning much more about how to organize our production schedule, and we now understand why the credits on so many of our favourite podcasts are so long!

¹⁰ To learn more, visit "Research," *in/relation*, CTLT Indigenous Initiatives, UBC, <https://inrelation.ubc.ca/about-in-relation-2/research/>.

¹¹ *What I Learned in Class Today: Aboriginal Issues in the Classroom* was a video resource developed by Karrmen Crey and Amy Perreault in 2008. In 2017, the CTLT Indigenous Initiatives team began a project to renew the resource by interviewing UBC faculty and students about institutional changes and classroom experiences since the initial video. To learn more, see "Renewed Project," *What I Learned in Class Today*, First Nations and Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Arts, UBC, accessed 1 August 2024, <https://inthearts.arts.ubc.ca/renewed-project/>.

¹² UBC's Go Global program offers study abroad programs and opportunities for UBC and visiting students through partnerships and exchanges. Through an ongoing relationship with Monash University in Australia, Indigenous student leaders from both universities have had opportunities for reciprocal exchange and learning. See "Indigenous Global Connections," Go Global, Office of Global Engagement, UBC, accessed 1 August 2024, <https://global.ubc.ca/go-global/indigenous-global-connections>.

TABLE 1
Life Cycle of a Podcast

PODCAST GARDEN	WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE	THEORY IN ACTION
Tending the garden soil	Creating a strong foundation for holding the stories of others built on our collective shared values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with the CEDaR New Media Space to record each episode. • Approaching guest invitation as an opportunity to connect not only for the podcast but to celebrate and deepen our own relationship with them. • Introducing with full transparency our consent process with each guest, and answering all questions they have to the best of our abilities. • Understanding that each recording relationship is its own living entity with its own unique needs.
Planting seeds with intention	Working as a team to build a schedule and “season arc” of episodes. Collaborating with guests on episode themes and questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular team meetings and work blocks where we focus on specific tasks and questions, and zoom out to discuss new ideas and long-term plans. • Balancing timelines with flexibility. • Working with interview guests to identify what they most want to share, and communicating transparently about our processes and intentions. • Recognizing and honouring our human needs and boundaries when we are working; checking-in, creating spacious timelines, and prioritizing connection.
Nurturing and caring for the sprouted plant	Cultivating a thorough, ongoing, and living consent process that is based in guest and community autonomy and sovereignty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We approach consent as something that is ongoing and ensure each guest knows that they are empowered to withdraw their consent at any time, with no questions asked. This means that if they want to edit, withdraw, or rework their episode, we will do what is within our power to meet their needs. • Guests are provided with questions prior to our recording time and are welcome to change or rework questions so they work best for them. They are also welcome to bring any notes they wish to their recording session. • Recording is treated as a conversation. Each step of recording is communicated to the guest through a trauma-informed framework. The recording space is small, dark, and enclosed. All movements, e.g., mic adjustments, are done with full consent of the guest. If the space is not comfortable for the guest, we are ready to pivot to create a recording space that meets their needs. • Lots of laughter and breaks.

Celebrating and tending the bloom	Post-production includes two rounds of edits and approval from each guest before anything is shared publicly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first cut of the episode is shared with guests for their approval. They are asked to reflect on whether they feel as though their stories are being represented to their standards and their community's standards. • The final cut faces no content changes, and before publishing, full approval from the guest needs to be obtained, with the caveat that they are free to ask us to change anything at any time in their episode. • A key value for the editing process is keeping the conversational aspect of the interview intact. This looks like keeping most of the "ums" and vocal quirks we all have, and most importantly, keeping in the laughter. • Intentional choices are made when English is not a guest's primary language. We want to ensure we are not editing from coloniality and unconscious racism.
Harvesting and filling out collective baskets	Final cuts are approved, and the episode is shared publicly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While this could be considered the final stage of the process, we view this step as just one of many in the cyclical relationship process. • This step is deeply held in reciprocity and accountability: as the podcast hosts, we understand that we are now a part of the collective public conversation, and our priority is ensuring that we hold care and complexity for our guests and all community conversations that occur from sharing their story. • Harvest is a time for gathering. It is a time of hard work but also beautiful celebration and feasting. When the episodes are ready to be shared publicly, this is our collective harvest. • Each podcast is shared with thorough podcast notes that provide suggestions for continued learning, and listener reflection questions that are curated to encourage listeners to personalize the lessons generously shared by our guests.
Re-seeding the garden	Learning beyond the publication of each episode and planting seeds for the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many new relationships have been created through the guesting process and are now creating gardens of their own. • We are creating a teaching, learning, and facilitation guide to go with <i>Stories in/relation</i> to help plant more seeds and share the work of not only our wonderful guests but also the <i>in/relation</i> project. • We hold ongoing and sustained relationships with our guests outside of the podcast relationship. • We welcome all feedback to help us build a stronger garden that can provide for our communities well into the future.

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APPENDIX

Show Notes: *Stories in/relation* Episode 2, “in/relation with Dr. Ayaka Yoshimizu”*In This Episode*

How do students who are new to Canada respond to learning about Indigenous histories and contemporary realities? What happens when you start an Introduction to Canada course for exchange students with a module on where our teaching and learning takes place?

Dr. Ayaka Yoshimizu, faculty member in the Department of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC) shares insights from her experiences unpacking land acknowledgements and UBC’s relationship to residential school legacies with students from the UBC-Ritsumeikan Exchange Program.

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How can we bridge cultural gaps and support learners who are new to Canada to engage with Indigenous histories and contemporary realities? *in/relation* lead developer Janey Lew and Dr. Ayaka Yoshimizu have a conversation about what motivated Dr. Yoshimizu to integrate Indigenous content into her Introduction to Canada course, what some of the challenges were in presenting these materials to the UBC-Ritsumeikan exchange students, and how the students responded. Dr. Yoshimizu also shares her perspectives on readiness to introduce Indigenous content in courses, “teaching prep” as an ongoing process of learning and unlearning, and the importance of building a community or practice in engaging with Indigenous perspectives and knowledges in their courses.

Hosted by Janey Lew, senior strategist, CTLT Indigenous Initiatives, and Samantha Nock, educational consultant, Campus and Classroom Climate, CTLT Indigenous Initiatives

Guest: Dr. Ayaka Yoshimizu, assistant professor of teaching in the UBC Department of Asian Studies

Introducing podcast guest, Ayaka Yoshimizu (0:00–07:42)

We learn about Dr. Yoshimizu’s background, including the complex colonial histories intersecting in the places where she was born and grew up. Dr. Yoshimizu reflects on her learning journey as an international post-secondary student coming from the suburbs of Tokyo, Japan, and relates how she became conscious of her positionality as a settler and visitor on Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh lands.

Influential mentors and peers supported Dr. Yoshimizu's learning and inspired her interest in supporting others' learning about decolonization and Indigenization when she began to teach her own post-secondary courses. By sharing her story, Dr. Yoshimizu models engaging with positionality through reflexive teaching and learning practices. Her story also illustrates a continuous cycle of learning, sharing, and mentorship.

Getting started with *in/relation* and Dr. Yoshimizu's Introduction to Canada course (7:43–12:23)

Dr. Yoshimizu's goal was to centre Indigenous contexts in her course. To do this, she had to work through not being an expert in Indigenous studies, and she found support through *in/relation*'s facilitation approach of "co-learning."

What students take away and how they learn depend on classroom climate and context. The Ritsumeikan exchange students in Dr. Yoshimizu's Introduction to Canada course came from diverse disciplinary backgrounds and typically arrived with limited knowledge of Canada. While some students may have recognized Canada for its multiculturalism, they generally knew little about Canada's Indigenous Peoples and their lands.

***in/relation* modules spark "a paradigm shift" (12:24–18:44)**

Dr. Yoshimizu discusses the complex geopolitical contexts bringing the Ritsumeikan students to her classroom and shaping their learning expectations. She describes applying *in/relation* modules in course tutorials to get students to reflect on their own histories and homelands in relation to the Indigenous lands where UBC is situated.

Dr. Yoshimizu reflects on how it was new to her students to connect their backgrounds and everyday lives to academic course content. *in/relation* modules are unique because they invite students to reflect on their positionalities and responsibilities as visitors studying at UBC.

While students sometimes struggled to connect where they came from to where they are now, Yoshimizu describes this as a significant "paradigm shift" in their learning, which has the potential to continue beyond the learning in the course.

Learning that carries beyond the course (18:45–23:40)

Dr. Yoshimizu designed two assignments that encourage students to develop and apply new perspectives gained in the course back in their home country.

The first involves researching colonialism and Indigenous Peoples in their home country or where their ancestors originated from. The second assignment is a personal land acknowledgement, applying student reflections on positionality and how they benefit from being on this land. The assignments were designed to come at the end of the *in/relation* modules, to supplement the “Walk the Talk” portion of the lesson.

The *in/relation* modules provide students with a new lens and language to consider the ongoing legacies of colonialism across the globe, while also making it relevant in the here and now.

Seeing challenges as opportunities and supporting students (23:41–30:17)

Dr. Yoshimizu reflects on how the challenges she experienced implementing *in/relation* also presented gratifying learning opportunities.

The majority of the teaching assistants (TAs) who led Dr. Yoshimizu’s tutorials were themselves international graduate students with a steep learning curve about Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Dr. Yoshimizu notes that while they needed support to implement the modules, the TAs were adept at making transnational linkages and benefited from adopting a “co-learner” approach.

Another challenge is teaching to diverse student backgrounds and amounts of prior knowledge. By inviting students to relate to course content more personally and not just academically, you tap into students’ life experiences as part of their learning. This can be powerful, but may also highlight differences in how students relate to different topics like colonialism.

Dr. Yoshimizu also describes a “temperature gap” when some topics are “hotter” for some students who relate more closely and “cooler” for others who relate more distantly. Nevertheless, teaching the *in/relation* modules opened up opportunities when students and TAs drew the instructor’s attention to nuanced dynamics that came up in the classroom and their own reflections on how course content was impacting different students in different ways.

Dr. Yoshimizu highlights the importance of responding as soon as possible when students bring forward challenges. She emphasizes allyship and building community in the classroom to help each other learn. She also identifies moments when stepping in and providing more information and context may better support students to speak up around uncomfortable topics.

Advice for instructors: Do or do not, there is no “ready” (30:18–end)

Dr. Yoshimizu acknowledges there was never a time when she felt “ready” to start. “The question is not whether I’m ready or not,” she explains, “but whether I do it or not; and when you decide to do it, of course then there’s homework to do.” To prepare is not a matter of acquiring specific knowledge per se, but rather attuning to and accepting continuous learning and unlearning.

The activities and resources that most support Dr. Yoshimizu’s ongoing learning and unlearning share a common theme of finding community in place. She cites workshops as opportunities to increase her knowledge and awareness, connect with like-minded colleagues and neighbours, and participate in hands-on learning centred around Indigenous topics. She also seeks out recommendations by Indigenous-owned bookstores like Vancouver’s Iron Dog Books and by the librarians at UBC’s X̱wi7̱wa Library for stories set in British Columbia by Indigenous authors.

Dr. Yoshimizu closes by urging instructors to “embrace surprises and opportunities for learning.” *in/relation* provides accessible resources for instructors, students, and teaching assistants to co-learn. There is an opportunity to decentre power in the classroom when instructors are prepared to navigate the unexpected with humility and responsibility. To close, Dr. Yoshimizu remarks on the power of connections to support continuous learning: “You can’t do this work individually.”

Post-Listening Reflection

This is an invitation for you to take a moment to connect and reflect with a couple of guiding prompts. This can be personal, just for you, or something you share with colleagues, loved ones, or a learning buddy. You’re welcome to share your reflections with us, too, via the *Stories in/relation* page.

1. In what ways are you a new learner to Indigenous topics?
2. What are some of the preconceptions you hold about “Canada” and where do these come from?
3. What is the relationship between learning and unlearning?