



Welcome to the Fall 2017 newsletter! At this very important time in Canadian history we are witnessing the development of an Indigenous Languages Act for Canada. The Assembly of First Nations is currently consulting with people in all of the regions of the country and working with the federal government to co-construct what this act is and what it will do.

of the process. Goal setting and planning for the implementation is equally important. Each language community needs to assess the unique state of their language and determine what is needed in their context. **Now** is the time to let your leaders and the AFN know about your hopes for your language.

Several FEL Board members have been instrumental in the process of developing this legislation and our President Onowa McIvor has been a key speaker and advocate. Note that although this has been an ongoing process of lobbying by Indigenous leaders over 30 years and we acknowledge the hard and relentless work of so many, it is now time to look forward to the work ahead. Much lies ahead in

order for a policy to be implemented successfully. At FEL we intend to keep you apprised of initiatives and opportunities via this newsletter, the web site and FEL Canada's Facebook. Please visit regularly.

On Dec 6, 2016 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said “*Today I commit to you that our government will enact an Indigenous Languages Act, co-developed with Indigenous peoples with the goal of ensuring the preservation, protection and revitalization of FN, Metis and Inuit languages in this country*”. Let’s collaborate to keep him to his word.

Next event: <http://www.afn.ca/events/>

- *Renew your FEL Canada membership annually (visit our webpage to renew)*
- *Check out our list of interesting websites*
- *View our recent submitted photographs*
- *Meet our new board member—Susan Sinclair*
- *Find us on social media too!*

Facebook: [felcanada](#)
Website: www.felcanada.org
Email: felanguagescanada@gmail.com
Twitter: [@FFL_Canada](#)



The Glendon Truth and Reconciliation Declaration on Indigenous Languages	2
State and Diversity of Indigenous Languages	3
Teaching Cree Immersion in LaRonge	4-5
Upcoming Conferences	6
Canadian Scholars Book: Sivumut	6
University of Alberta Offers First Online CILLDI Course	7
A Pilot Atlas of the Inuit Language in Canada	7
A Cree teacher's reflection—nitēyihcikewin—My Personal Thoughts	8
CILLDI 2017	9
Young Indigenous Women's Circle of Leadership (YIWCL 2017)	9
CILLDI Photos 2017	10
Indigenous People in Vietnam	11
Websites and Media Coverage to Check Out	12
In other news	13
Contact Information and FEL Canada Board Members	14
Membership Application	15

The Glendon Truth and Reconciliation Declaration on Indigenous

Languages (From <http://www.glendon.yorku.ca/crlcc/wp-content/uploads/sites/106/Glendon-declaration-Final-Draft-Oct-2016-public.pdf>, page 4)

FEL Canada participated in The Glendon Truth and Reconciliation Declaration on Indigenous Languages on behalf of all our members

We declare that, to truly celebrate the 150th anniversary of Canada in 2017

The Crown and Her Federal Government must formally acknowledge, without the need for litigation, that section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 includes Indigenous Linguistic Rights. (See Appendix A for discussion)

The Crown and Her Federal government must enact an Indigenous Languages Act. In doing so, it can be guided by the Report of the 2005 Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures, which responds to each of the five principles required by the TRC Report. (See Appendix B for discussion)

The Crown and Her Federal Government in enacting an Indigenous Language Act must create an Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages, with three national Indigenous Language Commissioners, one for the First Nations, one for the Inuit, and one for the Metis, with an ancillary staff complement comparable to that of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, and a Commissioner's representative located in each Indigenous Nation and/or Territory to assist with the carrying out of the intent of the Indigenous Language Act. (See Appendix C for discussion)

All of the above recommendations are subject to consultation with the three Aboriginal groups, First Nations, Inuit and Metis as identified in the Constitution Act, 1982, in a manner which

respects the principle of free, prior and informed consent.

With respect to the Related Responsibilities of Post-Secondary Institutions, we further declare that:

1. Post-secondary Institutions must develop collaborative funding models to support Indigenous language initiatives open to research, pedagogy, and partnerships.
2. TRC Committees must be established in all post-secondary institutions
3. Post-secondary institutions must engage in Community building: both inside the university and between the institution and Indigenous communities and Indigenous community-based organizations
4. Varying qualifications and credentials of Indigenous people must be recognized and honoured
5. There must be cross-training and collaboration across university administrations, programs and faculty
6. Post-secondary institutions must develop programs in Indigenous language studies with a view to promoting full oral proficiency and literacy in Indigenous languages, with certification through college and university diplomas and degrees in Indigenous languages.

There must be Indigenous Cultural Competency Training for all post-secondary institutions which would include Governors/Regents, Administration, Faculty and Staff.

Time to Renew Your Membership?

Memberships should be renewed on a yearly basis.

Check to see if now is the time to renew yours.

Visit <http://www.felcanada.org/get-involved> for the online membership and Paypal link or send your paper application and a cheque by mail to FEL Canada.

This is a reminder that donations to FEL Canada are now tax deductible. The FEL Canada Board has worked hard over the past two years to reach out to members and potential members and get connected with your events and needs. Your contribution ensures that we can undertake new initiatives and hopefully get ourselves into a position where we can support projects and awards. We very much appreciate your support and commitment!

State and Diversity of Indigenous Languages among Selected Cities and Aboriginal Communities across Canada

By Mary Jane Norris

The June 6th 2017 presentation “State and Diversity of Indigenous Languages among Selected Cities and Aboriginal Communities across Canada” can be found at http://norrisresearch.com/papers/sshrc_2017_06_06.pdf

It was given at a SSHRC-hosted meeting of a federal government “Network for Sharing Indigenous Information and Research” in Ottawa.

This “State and Diversity of Indigenous Languages across Canada” is discussed in two parts: the first concerns urban areas and selected cities; and the second is about Aboriginal communities – on reserves and in settlements and rural areas.

“Indigenous languages live everywhere”

An earlier version of the city-based presentation was given at FEL Canada’s May 2017 AGM. The two-part approach of this presentation reflects the underlying theme that “Indigenous languages live everywhere” in Canada, in urban areas and cities, as well as in rural areas, reserve communities and settlements.

The urban dimension draws on Census-based analyses and looks at aspects of diversity among Aboriginal peoples in urban areas, with a focus on the variations in the state and diversity of Indigenous languages in selected cities across Canada. It illustrates sharp contrasts among cities in their diversity of Indigenous languages, from a few to many, such as in the linguistically diverse city of Vancouver; and, also in their range of language states.

The state and diversity of the numerous Indigenous languages spoken in hundreds of Aboriginal communities, reserves and settlements across Canada are illustrated through the application of interactive online mapping for selected examples of languages and communities. Interactive online mapping of Indigenous languages in Canada reflects a detailed UNESCO hierarchical classification of some 90 different languages /dialects, incorporating census-based analyses of their levels of language endangerment, and the locations where they are spoken in the hundreds of Aboriginal communities across Canada. Findings demonstrate the considerable diversity of Indigenous languages, representing First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and the significant variation in their state and levels of endangerment across regions, Aboriginal communities and cities.



Download a copy of the presentation at

http://norrisresearch.com/papers/sshrc_2017_06_06.pdf

‘ka^ki^kiskinohama^ke^ya^ n ne^hiyawê^win LaRonge tasi - Teaching Cree Immersion In LaRonge’ By Dorothy Thunder

tân’si kahkiyaw kitatamiskâtinâwâw. Dorothy Thunder nitisiyihkâson, nêhiyawiskwêw Little Pine First Nation, Saskatchewan ohci. mêkwâc êhatoskeyân Faculty of Native Studies ôta University of Alberta êkiskinohamâkeyân nêhiyawêwin. ap’sis ênohtêhâcimoyân ispî kâkîkiskinohamâkêyân nêhiyawêwin nête LaRonge, Saskatchewan July 30 isko August 4, 2017 ehakimiht. êwako ôma Cree Language Immersion Camp Belinda Daniels kâpîmpayitât nîpinohk. nikîwîcôhkamâk Roxanne Tootoosis êkwa wiya ohci Poundmaker First Nation, Saskatchewan êkwa mêkwâc ôtê êkiskinohamâkosit University of Alberta.

Hello and greetings to all. My name is Dorothy Thunder, a Cree woman from Little Pine First Nation, Saskatchewan. Presently, I am working in the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta teaching nehiyawewin – Cree Language. I want to share my experience teaching nehiyawewin at LaRonge, Saskatchewan. The Cree Language Immersion camp has been running for thirteen years and was founded by Belinda Daniels from Sturgeon Lake First Nation. In total we had 11 Cree speakers and 16 participants during the camp. With four Cree language instructors, our role at the camp was to teach Cree immersion classes four hours per day. The participants were divided into four groups; each had an opportunity to learn from all the instructors. I also mentored a fluent Cree speaker as an intern - Roxanne Tootoosis is from Poundmaker First Nation, Saskatchewan and pursuing her grad studies at the University of Alberta.

The participants’ knowledge of Cree ‘nêhiyawêwin’ varied considerably - from no prior knowledge, very little knowledge, to more advanced knowledge. With this in mind, I needed to strategize a plan that involved all participants. My overall objective was to have the participants understand basic words/sentences and answer questions building into more complex discourse patterns. I will not go into great detail but will present an overview of the five-day plan of teaching nehiyawewin.

Being a Cree immersion class, I maintained the use of only nêhiyawêwin unless it was extremely necessary to have an explanation in English. I also ensured that the participants were respectful in learning and created a safe and enjoyable learning environment. I informed the students about the com-



plexities of learning nehiyawewin, and that it would be very challenging to learn. I also encouraged them to feel free to take risks and allowed all the students to finish sharing what they needed to. I reminded them often that we would be making mistakes and the idea was to learn from one another either individually and/or as a group. I repeated to them that we are only human and we will make mistakes - even computers have glitches. We will all learn from our mistakes – through a trial and error process.

In comparison with my regular Cree courses at the U of A I did not focus on teaching grammar and structure patterns. At the University I use more of a linguistic approach. In this immersion camp context the methodologies I used were Total Physical Response (TPR), second language acquisition strategies (SLA) and a Master-Apprentice approach. Everyday lessons included playing games, singing of songs, creating conversational dialogues and storytelling. I also use a lot of gestures, intonations, facial expressions, and all of this takes a great deal of patience.

**See the next page for an outline of
the instructions day by day**

'ka ^ki ^kiskinohama ^ke ^ya ^n ne ^hiyawewin LaRonge tasi - Teaching Cree Immersion In LaRonge' cont. By Dorothy Thunder

Day 1 – I introduced basic greetings, basic words using visuals and props, and interacting with students using TPR, SLA and Master/Apprentice methodologies. I focused on daily routines, repetition, introducing basic vocabulary and paying particular attention to listening skills. I started with an opening prayer and sharing circle. I began with introductions with very basic greetings such as: tân'si, tân'sêsiyihkâsoyan, tân'tê ohci kiya, with the assistance of my intern and then interacted with the students using these greetings. In a regular University class I usually ask the participants to focus on listening and not jot anything down immediately. Here at the end of the session, we took time to write down words that they felt they needed to remember and practice. As learners, some felt they had to write words down and others did better by just listening.

Day 2 – We start with the same daily routine consisting of prayer and circle. I encouraged students to share what they learned in Cree from class or from other instructors as well, and encouraged continuous repetition of prior knowledge from day one and recollection of words and phrases. I then introduced new words and phrases, interacted with students and added increasingly more information once their comprehension level of words and phrases was acceptable. Students are expected to use pronunciation and intonation accurately to convey meaningful sentence discourse patterns and have the ability to communicate easily. The students answered questions using vocabulary appropriately and effectively.

Day 3 – The daily routine remains each day and we do a great deal of repetition after my lead and to each other. In order to check their comprehension of what we were doing during Cree repetition, I check their comprehension of Cree by asking questions with 'yes' or 'no' responses and I increased the expectations of student production each day from words to phrases to more complete sentences. I would then have the students work in groups introducing each other by providing them with a scenario they needed to present. I would share a short dialogue with my intern Roxanne and have them build similar sentences. Students worked in groups creating basic dialogues and asking questions. I then said sentences or asked questions in Cree and had participants translate the sentences into English.

Day 4 – By this time they were familiar with the daily routine and the continuous repetition of prior knowledge. I continued to expand the terms and vocabulary with additional and more complex verbs. I continued to ask questions and expected the students to answer my questions with a complete idea in a sentence if they could. I had them practice nehiyawewin by expanding their usage of sentence patterns using what we saw around us to more complex sentences such as:

I see a girl sitting on a chair eating an apple and drinking milk. (niwâpamâw iskwêsis êhapit têhtapiwinihk êkwa emôwât picikwâsa êkwa êminihkwêt tohtôsâpoy.

Day 5 – We continued with the daily routine and the repetition of what they had been doing in days 1 – 4. I continued to interact with students using only Cree commands, ideas, and questions.

As I went through the five days of about four hours a day, I continuously assessed the progression of learning nehiyawewin to help me gauge if the students were ready to move forward. I also asked the students for their feedback and ideas about what would help them in the learning process. I was very impressed with how much the students learned in five days. They were also amazed at their progress and were very intrigued to learn more. mistahi ninanâskomon êwîcihakik êkakwênehiyawêcik ekwa iyikohk êhâhkameyimocik. This provided me the opportunity to ask the students questions about what their expectations were as a general outcome and then to work together learning nehiyawewin while remembering to have FUN!!!

Upcoming Conferences

2017 First Nations Language Keepers Conference (FNLKC)

Presented by The Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre

Conference Information

The Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre (SICC) reminds you that our 2017 First Nations Language Keepers Conference (FNLKC) will be held on Wednesday-Thursday, November 22-23, 2017 at the Saskatoon Inn & Conference Centre. Our theme this year is *Resurgence: Reclaiming Indigenous Knowledge Systems*.

<http://www.sicc.sk.ca/2017-sicc-first-nations-039;-language-keepers-conference-.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1168723873244503>

Registration Fees:

\$350 Participant Registration

\$100 Elder Registration

\$100 Student Registration

2017 Keynote Speakers:



Canadian Scholars:

Sivumut — Towards the Future Together: Inuit Women Educational Leaders in Nunavut and Nunavik

Edited by Fiona Walton and Darlene O'Leary

Visit the following link for more information:

<https://zcl.campaign-view.com/ua/viewinbrowser?od=11287eca6b4fe5&rd=12ac2cabb59fa087&sd=12ac2cabb59f4793&n=11699e4c16e50f8&mrd=12ac2cabb59f4785&m=1>



University of Alberta Offers First Online CILLDI Course

CILLDI is excited to announce the delivery of its first online course at the University of Alberta. EDEL 306 **Introduction to Indigenous Language and Literacy Development** will be offered this term with Belinda Daniels as the instructor and Jacqueline Filipek as the teaching assistant. **Belinda Daniels** is the founder of *nēhiyawak Summer Language Experience* (13 years), and teaches others how to teach nehiyawewin/Cree as a second language on various First Nations Reserves. Belinda won the Outstanding Canadian Aboriginal Educator Award in 2015 for work in language development, and was the only Canadian selected as a finalist for the 2016 Global Teacher Prize. Belinda is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Saskatchewan and volunteers on several boards such as the United Way, the Dr. Sterling McDowell Foundation, Sturgeon Lake First Nation Education and Inspire. Belinda works full time with the Saskatoon Public School Division and as a sessional with the University of Alberta. She can be reached at danielsf@ualberta.ca. Jacqueline Filipek is a doctoral candidate in Languages and Literacy education at the University of Alberta.

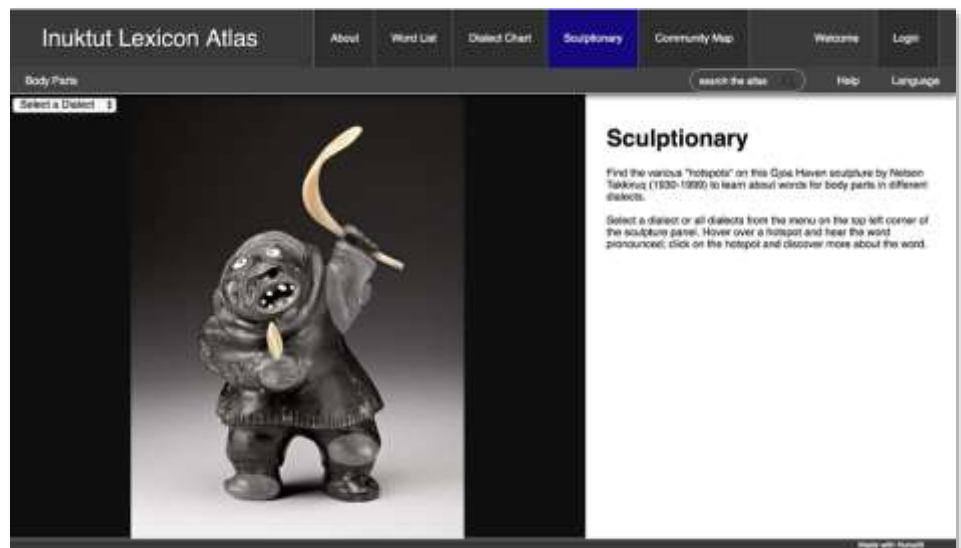


In the winter term we will be delivering a second online class called **Leadership for Teaching First Nations, Métis & Inuit classroom, school and communities** with Linda Pelly and Heather Blair as instructors.

A Pilot Atlas of the Inuit Language in Canada

By Kumiko Murasugi

A cybercartographic atlas of the Inuit language in Canada is being developed by Carleton University, the University of Toronto and Canadian Inuit partner organizations. The goal of the Atlas is to help protect and promote the vitality of Inuit dialects by documenting their words in a multidialectal database of written and spoken words. The information in the database is similar to that found in traditional bilingual dictionaries, but the online, interactive and multimedia format of cybercartography allows the addition of videos and photographs showing the words in context. The words are organized into categories such as body parts, animals, numbers and seasons, with many more to be added. Different modules present the information in unique ways, e.g. as a list of words, as a table for facilitating cross-dialectal comparisons, and as “hotspots” on a photographic image linked to words in the database. The partner organizations include Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit (Inuit Language Authority, Nunavut), Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre, Nunvut Arctic College, and the governments of Nunavut and Nunatsiavut.



A Cree teacher's reflection - niteyihcikewin – My Personal Thoughts

By Dorothy Thunder

This article is a personal narrative that shares my personal feelings as a *nehiyaw-iskwew* (Cree woman) in academia. In December 2016, I was completing my Master of Science (M.Sc. in Cree Linguistics), which was very challenging for me as I had had very little exposure to linguistics and I was caring for my mother. I wrote what follows three months after my mother, Florida Thunder, had passed away. It is a reflection on my mother's words, which came to me in a dream. In this article I share my thoughts of being a *nehiyawiskwew* - completing my studies - and the frustration I felt at that time completing my studies in my second language.

nîkân nikahitwân, “kahkiyaw kitata-miskâtînâwâw – anohc ewîmâmiskohtamân nipawâtamowin.” Firstly, I would like to say, “I greet you all – today I am going to share my dream and its gentle message.” I had a dream last night that really had me thinking about who I am, where I come from and where I am heading? I often think about this as a *nêhiyawiskwêw*, “awîna ôma niya – Who am I?” I often think about what the elders always said over and over again, “kikiskêyîhtênaw ôta ôma kâkî-pakitinâhkosiyaik ministik âsay awa mâ-mawi-wiyotâwîmâw ekî-wiyasitamâkoyaik kipimâtisiwininaw.” In English, “We already know that when we were placed here on Mother Earth, the Creator already had our journey planned out for us.” When I dreamt of this last night I felt that this was a gentle reminder from the Creator to always remember who I am as I move forward on my personal journey.

pâmayer awa mônîyâw takohtet ôta kitâskinaw ekîhayâyahk ôma kipikiskwewinaw, kikiskêyîhtamowininaw, kitisihcikewininawa kapim-itisahamahk. ekîmaskawâtisiyaik, kinwes ekî-pimatisiyaik âskaw kitayisîniminawak ayiwâk kihcimitâhtomitinaw kî-pewâphtamwak. pikokîkway ôma ekî-itôtamâsoyakh iyikohk ekî-waskawîstamâsoyakh. anohc ekwa atina-matew kitâskinaw – ehatimisiwanahcihtâhk. kayâs êkiskisiyân êhiskwêsiwîyân ekîpêwîtokwêmikoyaik kîhtê-aya êwako anima kiyânaw kikiskinohamâkosiwinaw. nikiskisin tân'si mâna kâkîhitwecik ewî-panacihtâhk ôma kitâskinaw. êkiskisiyan tân'si kâkîhitwêcîk, “wâwâc nipîy kîkahatâwânâwâw ayisk êwi-misiwanâcihtâhk, pisiskiwak mîna ewî-misiwanâcihihcik, (tâpiskoc ôki kinosêwak, pisiskiwak, êkwa ôma iyinito mîciwin piyisk namoya

kâkîmicinâwâw ayiwâk. maskihkiya ewîpiscipotahk, ekwa mîna ôma kipikiskwewinaw ewînamatek tasi piko kawanihtânâwâw ayisk ewi-isihciket awa moniyaw metoni kakwe-âpacihtâyek opikiskwewiniwâw – maka eh-isi-kaskihoyek akonamâsok anima kohtawinaw kâkî-miyikoyaik ota kâkî-pakitinakosiyaik.

Before the whites arrived here on our land we had our own language, our own knowledge systems, and our culture to follow. We were strong and we lived to see a hundred years of age. We did everything

I can hear my mother's voice clearly, “Just remember where you came from, our history, our knowledge systems as a nehiyaw because that is who you are nîtanis my daughter”

for ourselves, physically we did everything for ourselves. Today, our lands are not the way they used to be. Our land is being destroyed. The elders I could see in my dream brought back the memories of how life used to be. I remember being that little girl when the elders used to come and stay with us. They were our *nehiyaw* educational system. I remember what they used to say about our lands being destroyed. I remember what they said, “You're going to be paying for water because it will be polluted. Animals will be destroyed, fish, and the natural foods, too. Medicines are going to be poisoned and also our language is going to die or you will just lose it because you will be forced to use the English language. But as much as you can, *aya-konamâsok* ‘hold it close to your hearts’. That is what the Creator gave us to use in our Cree ways. It was a very powerful dream.

WE had our own language and our own knowledge systems to follow. This is basically how my parents raised me. That is what we followed. When I think of what I have accomplished in my life – along came with it a broken spirit and my heart was truly hurt. I realized that I did my studies to satisfy mainstream society because I needed the credentials, and deep inside me I felt like I was aiming for a little bit of prominence, in their worldview. What seriously hurt my spirit was the fact that my studies took place in a borrowed language – the one

which I had to learn throughout my life just to satisfy mainstream society – their rules, their policies, it is always their WAYS!!! And my language was not as highly regarded as this language that I borrowed. Excuse me? *tânehki mâka ôma piko ekosi kespayik* – why does it have to be that way?? (I take back the excuse me, of course!!!) I tell myself, well that's not right. I have my own language, I have my own ways to follow – why is it that theirs comes first? êkiskêyîhtamân ôma tân'si kehcinâ ênohte-isihciyân – êkwa mîna wêhtinâ ênohtêhatoskâtamân âyisk kwayask ênohte-itôtamân namoya wiya mâmâsîs.

I knew what I wanted to do – and I want to work on it thoughtfully and carefully. I can hear my mother's voice clearly, “Just remember where you came from, our history, our knowledge systems as a *nehiyaw* because that is who you are *nîtanis* ‘my daughter’. I understand in today's world that you are forced to learn both ways *nîtanis* and I encourage you to learn both ways. But first and foremost don't forget who you are as a *nehiyaw iskwew* – don't ever leave behind what I and others that believe in who we are as *nehiyawak* taught you as a *nehiyawiskwew*. I commend you for learning and taking advantage of what you are learning at the university living in this world and finding the balance of both views – *mônîyâw kiskeyihtamowin ekwa nehiyaw kiskeyihtamowin*. I understand that you need this to satisfy the ‘*mônîyâw*’ ways but always remember who you really are as a ‘*nêhiyaw*’. I encourage you to go ahead and learn their ways – but remember to find the balance and not allow anyone to control who you really are and what you believe in. I listened to her words, “You know, follow your heart! It is something that you will always carry and they can only take it away if you let them.” Those were her words that I heard in my dream. She repeated them many times to me before she left to the spirit world. So, as I do my work here I do my work passionately because this is not only for me but I am doing it for my people as well. I understand that our language is at a critical stage of language loss and feel the importance of keeping it alive. I am proud that both my parents and other elders worked hard to maintain our language, our ways, and taught us *nehiyaw pimâtisiwin* (Cree way of life) in my upbringing – that is something I will always carry because it belongs to ME!!!

The Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) at the University of Alberta hosted its 18th annual Language Revitalization Summer School in Edmonton from July 10-28. This was the largest summer school in CILLDI history, with a total of 91 students speaking 14 different Indigenous languages, including our first overseas student from the Philippines.

Students choose from among 13 different courses, covering a wide range of topics related to language revitalization, including language structure and analysis, language immersion teaching methods, assessment of language learning, incorporating Indigenous culture into the languages classroom, community language planning, using drama in language teaching, curriculum and materials and best practices in audio and video recording for language documentation, as well as an intensive Plains Cree immersion for adult beginners.



Our instructors this summer came from Alberta, Saskatchewan and one from the United States who has taught with the American Indian Languages Development Institute (AILDI), our sister organization at the University of Arizona. The students and instructors were supported by a dozen CILLDI Summer Interns from across Canada and the US,

who volunteered their time to make the program run smoothly.

CILLDI is proud to recognize a total of 11 students who completed their Community Linguist Certificates (CLC) this year, bringing the total number of CLC graduates to more than 115 over the past 10 years. These individuals are working in their communities on languages documentation and restoration. We are also in the process of developing an Indigenous Languages Education Certificate for individuals who want to teach in the schools.

More than two dozen students at this year's Summer School were supported with bursaries from Alberta Education as part of the University of Alberta's new Indigenous Language Teacher Development Program, with the goal of creating a new generation of certified Indigenous languages instructors and teachers across the province.

Planning is already underway for CILLDI's 2018 Summer School, which will take place in Edmonton from July 9-27. We have two routes for contacting us for information. For more information about the Community Linguists Certificate contact CILLDI at cilldi@ualberta.ca, or call us at 780-247-1179. If you are interested in taking courses for teaching your language and working toward an instructors' certificate look at our Education website <https://ile.ualberta.ca/>. You can contact us regarding this certificate and bursaries at cilles@ualberta.ca or call 780-492-4188. We look forward to having you joining us at CILLDI 2018.

Young Indigenous Women's Circle of Leadership (YIWCL) 2017

By Rochelle Starr, PhD

The Cree language plays an essential role in our ability to learn and transmit knowledge, Indigenous knowledge, or as some call it, original instructions. What happens to those of us who aren't Cree speakers? How are we able to access the knowledge we need that provides instructions on how to live, how to love, how to take care? The Young Indigenous Women's Circle of Leadership is a program that is taking up these questions.

The Young Indigenous Women's Circle of Leadership (YIWCL) is an educational program that is open to Indigenous young women, ages 10-16. YIWCL is focused on the Cree language and provides a foundation in Cree knowledge and spirituality. Additional aspects of the program are mentoring the young women in leadership and identity development; essentially this program seeks to reconnect the young women with the strength and knowledge of their ancestors, as well as to provide them with the tools necessary to live in a good way in contemporary times.

A program like this is answering some of the TRC's Calls to Action. The results of Indian residential schools (IRS), and genocidal policies have proven effective in their attempts at disconnecting Indigenous peoples with their traditional and ancient knowledge, as well as their ability to transfer this knowledge from one generation to the next. Indigenous knowledge is critical to Indigenous people's ability to take care of themselves in many different ways. For example, there are many ceremonies of renewal within the Cree tradition that support a relationship of strength, interdependence, and accessing knowledge. YIWCL provides access to these ceremonies to the young women, thus connecting them with the ability to access their knowledge and strength. Although language reclamation is a critical element of the TRC's Calls to Action, it is also necessary for those who aren't fluent Cree speakers at the moment to be able to access the knowledge and ways of knowing and being held within our language and ceremonies. As I was told by my father, Cree is a spiritual language and it is from a spiritual base that we can access the knowledge, teachings, and language – this is the focus at YIWCL. Furthermore, YIWCL is a model that can be taken up by many communities and Indigenous language speakers.



Maureen Belanger teaching creative theatre

For more information, please contact: Rochelle Starr, YIWCL Director

780-492-4188 cilles@ualberta.ca

CILLDI & YIWCL Photos 2017



Indigenous peoples in Vietnam: Socio-cultural and Ecological Factors Influencing the Acquisition of English of Khmer Students

By Tai Vo, EdD

Vietnam, like all countries in the world, has indigenous peoples/languages and takes seriously the Declaration of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities of the United Nations. Vietnam strives to maintain its national language while preserving its 53 minority languages such as Khmer, Tay, Thai, and Nung and promoting endangered minority languages such as the Khang language, the Khang ethnic minority, living in several provinces of Northwest Vietnam. As Vietnam has opened its doors and economy to the world English has emerged as an essential medium for international communication. Proficiency in English is a requirement for entrance to post-secondary institutions, many jobs and promotion in all workplaces. It is hoped that English does not replace Khmer. The context in Vietnam has many layers of language policies over time and this study offers some insight into how policy impacts all languages in a country. At a time in Canada where a new Indigenous languages policy is under development it may be helpful to understand the context of other Indigenous languages in other parts of the world.

The following is from my dissertation study and it is a qualitative inquiry exploring socio-cultural and ecological factors influencing the acquisition of English by Khmer students in Vietnam. Its objective is to better understand the learning context of the Khmer ethnic minority in learning English, thus helping teachers of English, Khmer students and their parents, and other stakeholders to better understand and improve the learning situation for Khmer students in particular and other ethnic minority students in general.

Fifteen Khmer students and four teachers of English at a secondary boarding school in Vietnam constituted the target population. The data collection methods included focus group interviews with teachers and students, classroom observations, and field-notes. Content analysis was used to analyze the transcripts of the interviews, and the data were collected, interpreted, and analyzed by applying a sociocultural constructivist framework through four theoretical-interpretive lenses: Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of human development, Hornberger's frameworks and models in language policy and planning, Norton's identity theorizing, and Janks' critical literacy.

The findings in this study produced two chronosystems according to Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory – 2000 and 2015 – and revealed a number of new factors. At the microlevel, the findings revealed a change. Khmer parents and families could now be seen as models of multilingualism and were able to offer financial and spiritual support in learning English while continuing to hold a strong sense of Khmer minority identity, traditional values of culture and language. Moreover, the research found that in the more recent chronosystem, Khmer parents seemed to place more value on schooling and had higher

hopes for their children to be more successful in their schooling.

At the mesolevel, as compared to the first chronosystem, the results of this study indicated that the participants placed more value on education and now consider English as playing an important role in Vietnam's participation in the global economy. Furthermore, the study revealed that the student participants, but not their teachers, recognized the absence of the official minority group home culture in the textbook for learning English in Vietnam. The Khmer were absent in school materials. The study results also indicated that Khmer students seemed to have few opportunities to gain access to using Vietnamese or English outside the school due to the boarding school structure and regulations. Further, this study found that all the study participants expressed an awareness of the economic value of English for both communication and economic growth in Vietnam.









In the exosystem, the findings indicated that English had a powerful influence on the imagined future careers of participants; they believed that English will create greater further education opportunities for them both personally and professionally and is essential for improving the socioeconomic status of Vietnam. More importantly, however, the research findings suggest that Khmer living in urban areas had more access to language learning resources than their counterparts in rural areas.

At the macrolevel, the research findings reveal indirect effects of global trends on the students and government decision-making. Revisions to language policies in Vietnam brings students, teachers, schools, and the whole society both opportunities and challenges. However, despite the fact that current education policies and laws in Vietnam have brought some benefits to minority groups like the Khmer, much work remains to be done in order to maximize the distribution of benefits resulting from the legislative policies and practices in order to be of advantage to both English language learning and minority language use and maintenance.

The full study, its theoretical framework and interpretive lenses may be of interest to researchers of indigenous languages, particularly as the comparison of chronosystems offers a tool for identifying change and improvement, and can be found at https://era.library.ualberta.ca/files/cxw42n813w/Vo_Tai_V_201703_EdD.pdf My study and program were supervised by Dr. Olenka Bilash.

The Declaration in the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities was adopted by the UN Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1992/16, 21 February 1992 and by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/135 on 18 December 1992. (<http://www.unesco.org/most/lnlaw7.htm>)

Websites & Media Coverage to Check Out!

<p>Megan and Carrie interview Dr. Peter Jacobs, Assistant Professor of Linguistics. They talk about Rez English(es) (the varieties of English spoken on reserves/reservations), indigenous languages of the United States and Canada, and language revitalization. https://vocalfriespod.fireside.fm/5</p>	
<p>Saskatoon school at capacity as Cree language program grows http://www.ckom.com/2017/09/26/147918/</p>	
<p>https://calendar.powwows.com/events/categories/pow-wows/pow-wows-in-alberta/</p>	
<p>Indigenous languages need more funding: Toronto advocate http://www.metronews.ca/news/toronto/2017/08/13/indigenous-languages-need-more-funding-toronto-advocate.html</p>	
<p>Learn 4 words in 4 Indigenous languages in 4 videos http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/lost-found-and-shared-indigenous-language-speakers-on-the-rise-1.3410203/learn-4-words-in-4-indigenous-languages-in-4-videos-1.3420514</p>	
<p>Elementary school's Ojibway language program so popular it needs more teachers http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/can-education-start-us-on-a-path-toward-reconciliation-1.4310361/elementary-school-s-ojibway-language-program-so-popular-it-needs-more-teachers-1.4310399</p>	
<p>Stoney Nakoda Language App By Stoney Education Authority http://www.stoneyeducation.ca/view.php?action=object&id=1303&stream=Homepage%20News</p>	
<p>Cree lessons with a bit of a Kung Fu kick http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/can-education-start-us-on-a-path-toward-reconciliation-1.4310361/cree-lessons-with-a-bit-of-a-kung-fu-kick-1.4312263</p>	

Assembly of First Nations



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Feel free to register online at: <http://www.afn.ca/policy-sectors/languages/>

Should you have any questions, please contact Ms. Miranda Huron, Director at mhuron@afn.ca or 613-241-6789 ext. 331.

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[613-241-6789 x331](tel:613-241-6789)

*Note that travel and accommodations will be at the participants' expense.

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Meet Susan Sinclair!



tānisi nitsihkason Susan Sinclair ohci akwahkopiw sakahikanihk mekwac oma e wīkiyan amiskwaci waskahikanihk ekwa e okiskinomakeyan nehiyawewin ekwa nehiyaw pimatisowin ota Prince Charles School. ka onocihtowipīsimohk e wi okiskinomakeyan nistomitanaw nīsosap askiy misiwe eki okiskinohamakeyan kayas awa nohkom kedo e ki wihtamowit kiya ka wanikiskisiyin tanite ka ki ohpikiyin mīna ka mamisiyan nehiyawewin ekwa nehiyaw pimatisowin mistahi nimiyiwihten e okisinohamakeyan nehiyawewin mina nehiyaw pimatisowin hiy hiy

Hello, my name is Susan Sinclair. I am from Green Lake, Saskatchewan. I live in Edmonton, Alberta right now and I teach Cree Language and Culture at Prince Charles School. In September I will be going into my 32nd year of teaching. I have taught in Saskatchewan and Alberta. My grandmother Kedo always told me to never forget where I grew up and to always depend on my Cree language and Culture. I like teaching Cree Language and Culture a lot. As well as teaching during the year I am a Cree immersion instructor with the Young Women's Circle of Leadership YIWCL) at the University of Alberta in the summer.

Thank you,
 Susan Sinclair



Strengthening First Nation, Inuit and Métis languages of Canada

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