

FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE CURRICULUM BUILDING GUIDE



First Nations Language Curriculum Building Guide

BRITISH COLUMBIA KINDERGARTEN – GR. 12



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ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document was developed at the request of the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC). Recognizing the diversity and wealth of First Nations languages and cultures in British Columbia (BC) and their critically endangered state, this paper is intended to assist First Nations language teachers, members of First Nations language communities, educational staff in First Nations and public schools, and policy makers as they consider First Nations language and culture frameworks at the K - 12 level, as informed by existing and emerging research and approaches. In addition, it is also meant to serve as a guide for designing language and culture K - 12 curriculum that will provide practical tools for First Nations language groups, curriculum developers and teachers.

This document builds on a prior draft document developed for FNESC, *The Breath of Our Ancestors* (2012), parts of which are included in Appendix Four of this document. The author and FNESC very much appreciate the work of the team that wrote that earlier paper.

This project also follows a series of FNESC-sponsored workshops led by Dr. Marianne Ignace in 2013. At those workshops, the topics included in this guide were presented for discussion, and the input and feedback from the workshop participants is gratefully acknowledged.

The help and support of Deborah Jeffrey, Jennifer White and Jan Haugen with the workshops is also much appreciated. In the final stages of writing and editing this document, comments and suggestions from the FNESC First Nations Languages Subcommittee, and especially from Jesse Fairley, FNESC Manager of Languages and Culture, provided great support towards its completion.

Yiri7 re skukwstsétselp, háw'aa, t'ooyaxsut 'nüüsm, maasi cho, maasi and my thanks also in the many other languages we have and are working to maintain.

Marianne Ignace, PhD



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INTRODUCTION

In this document, First Nations cultures and languages are viewed as inseparable and intertwined. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996) expressed the role and function of language in the transmission of culture as follows:

Language is the principal instrument by which culture is transmitted from one generation to another, by which members of a culture communicate meaning and make sense of their shared experience. Because language defines the world and experience in cultural terms, it literally shapes our way of perceiving – our worldview.

Knowledge systems and relations with the land, people and everything in nature are expressed through the language, which guides the way in which culture is experienced and should be understood. Given this importance, coupled with the precarious state of languages, it is vitally important that First Nations languages are (re)vitalized, used, practiced, and instilled in younger generations, thus breathing new life into First Nations' cultures and invaluable heritage.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is organized into four parts.

Part 1: This document begins with a discussion of the precarious state of First Nations languages in BC, the reasons for their declining state, and the value of maintaining and revitalizing First Nations languages based on the irreplaceable connections they have with cultural knowledge and learning and with First Nations' unique ways of perceiving the world. Knowing one's language is connected to one's sense of self, self-worth and identity, and beyond that helps to support cognitive and intellectual development. Recognizing that importance, this report describes the role that school language programs can play as a key component of the daunting task of

language revitalization. In particular, the pros and cons of different types of language programming at the K - 12 level are reviewed.

Part 2: The second part of this document describes some key concepts that provide the context for curriculum development, including what is needed for language proficiency, types of language programs, and fundamental aspects of language programming.

Part 3: Given the need for an effective framework that can enhance K-12 First Nations language education in this province, Part 3 of this document highlights existing language and culture curriculum, including the much neglected but very useful *Common Curriculum Framework – Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs – Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education*. The BC Languages Template is described, which – although not specifically designed for First Nations languages – for some time has guided Integrated Resource Package (IRP) development for languages in BC. Finally, the paper reviews curriculum frameworks that set standards and benchmarks across languages, which are now increasingly being used for language education in Canada.

Part 4: In the final part of this document, we review the issue of curriculum design and development for particular First Nations languages. This part is intended to provide practical tools for language curriculum developers, including outlining some general principles and challenges associated with language curriculum design – and with First Nations language design in particular.

ABOUT FNEC

FNEC is an independent society led by representatives of First Nations across the province. With a mandate to facilitate discussion about education matters affecting First Nations in BC by disseminating information and soliciting input from First Nations, FNEC has worked to promote the priorities of BC First Nations to the federal and provincial governments and to support First Nations communities in working together to advance education issues. Among its many activities, FNEC conducts research to support First Nations education initiatives (including First Nations language programs), and serves as a clearinghouse for resources and models for First Nations education activities.

FNEC is guided by the belief that BC First Nations, for all their rich diversity, share some significant common experiences, priorities, and beliefs, as well as a characteristic First Nations approach to teaching and learning that can be expressed as a set of principles. Originally identified for the English 12 First Peoples curriculum,

the “First Peoples Principles of Learning” articulate the shared wisdom of Elders and educators within BC’s First Nations.

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one’s actions.
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one’s identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

More information about FNEESC can be found at www.fnesc.ca



THE CONTEXT

1.1 THE STATE OF FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES IN BC

British Columbia is home to about 32-34 First Nations languages, many with two or more dialects. All First Nations languages are in a precarious state, some hanging by a thread. The current state of First Nations languages is part of a global process of language shift and decline, reflecting the historical forces that have led to the death and decline of many Indigenous languages worldwide, as well as the current and future danger of losing those that remain. In fact, of the more than 6,000 languages on earth, 90% are endangered.

According to an assessment by the BC First Peoples Heritage, Language and Culture Council (FPHLCC (now First Peoples Cultural Council), 2010), in 2010 only 5.1 percent of the province's First Nations population was fluent in their language. "Semi-speakers," or "less-than-fluent" adults who acquired their First Nations language in early life, as well as second language learners of various ages, made up an additional 8.2 percent of the population. In addition, the vast majority of speakers were elderly.

A follow-up study (FPHLCC, 2014) showed that by 2014, the number of fluent speakers had declined to about 4 percent, although the number of "semi-speakers" had increased to 9.32 percent, which was considered a "promising trend" as "it indicates that revitalization efforts are paying off." First Nation language learners represented only 9.14 percent of the First Nations population in 2014 (FPHLCC, 2014). In other words, nine tenths of First Nations people in BC were not learning or re-learning their languages.

In general, although youth and children represent more than half of the First Nations population in BC, it seems that a large number of First Nations children and youth do not have access to education in their First Nations ancestral language. Additionally, there is an increased trend in migration off reserves and to urban areas, and First Nations children and youth who live away from their ancestral communities often are especially deprived of opportunities to learn their ancestral languages.

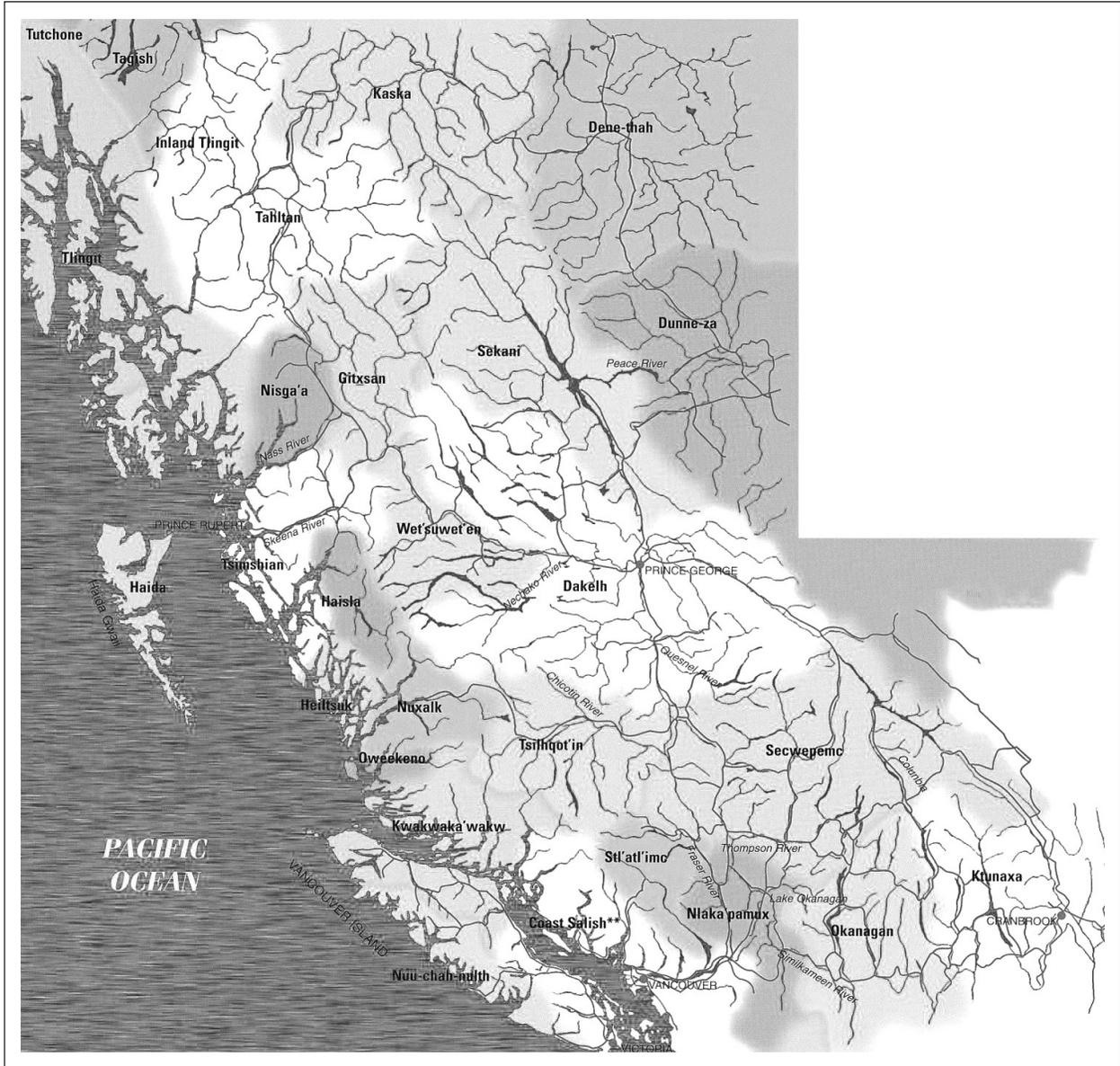


Figure 1: Source: Map of BC Aboriginal Languages.

1.2 REASONS FOR THE DECLINE

The decline of First Nations languages in BC and the rest of Canada is closely connected to this country's history of colonization and oppression. Between the late 1700s and the 1860s, traumatic population losses that resulted from smallpox epidemics and other diseases caused a devastating decline in the number of people of all generations who communicated and transmitted stories in their languages, and dramatically reduced the wealth of knowledge about the social, moral and physical world encoded in those languages. In BC, several languages died out during this time, including Nicola, Tsetsaut and Pentlatch.

The genocide precipitated by infectious diseases was followed by calculated policies of the Canadian State to “kill the Indian in the child,” including the establishment and compulsory attendance of First Nation children at Indian Residential Schools. For three generations or more, these schools disrupted and destroyed the intergenerational transmission of Aboriginal languages by removing children from their communities, relatives and Elders, while moreover inflicting physical punishment, shame and humiliation for the use of First Nations languages. In other words:

It was through language that children received their cultural heritage from parents and community. It was the vital connection that civilizers knew had to be cut if progress was to be made (RCAP, 1996).

Survivors of Residential Schools have given eloquent and heart-breaking testimony about the harm done to them personally, and to the social and cultural fabric of their families, communities and nations, when their language was taken from them in these schools (see, for example, Haig-Brown 1988, RCAP 1996, TRC 2015). What the recent report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Canada's Chief Supreme Court Justice Beverley MacLachlin have called *cultural genocide* at the hands of Residential Schools has substantially included *linguicide*: the calculated silencing and stigmatizing of Aboriginal languages within and across generations.¹

Further, the emotional burden of loss and grief now extends to individuals who were not raised with their home language as a result of Residential Schools, but were instead deprived of their language due to the experience of parents and

¹ Beyond life-long emotional stigma of having one's language silenced, the loss of language in individuals was uneven and to a good degree depended on the age at which children were taken away from indigenous language socialization in the home: there is a correlation between what linguists know as “language acquisition phases” and the degree to which present elders and adults retained their language after the Residential School experience: Those who were sent to school at a very young age (5-6 years old) had acquired their Aboriginal language to a lesser degree than those who had been sent at age 10-11, by which time a child's language acquisition of grammar and the sound system is nearly complete.

grandparents who had been subject to beatings and emotional abuses for speaking their language and who subsequently raised their children speaking English.

By the time most of the Residential Schools were closed in the 1970s, public schooling in BC emphasized English language education only, as opposed to bilingual education with First Nations languages. Other factors also contributed to the loss and decline of First Nations languages. For example, throughout the 1950s to 1970s, English increasingly became the language of the workplace for First Nations people working off reserve, and intergenerational language transmission continued to decline. In addition, according to the late Kwakwa'ka'wakw Judge Alfred Scow, outlawing the potlatch "prevented the passing down of our values, of oral histories, etc. all of which were in the Aboriginal language" (RCAP, 1996).

1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF STEMMING THE TIDE OF LANGUAGE LOSS

First Nations Elders, language educators and activists, supported by academic studies undertaken by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, have pointed out the important reasons for revitalizing and maintaining First Nations languages. Aside from being a human right and an Aboriginal right (see Section 1.7 below), language revitalization and maintenance are connected to cultural survival, cultural resilience, and access to intellectual worlds and knowledge that are uniquely embedded in languages.

Contemporary research in linguistics and cognitive psychology has resulted in new understandings about the ways in which languages shape the way we think, perceive and organize the world in culturally meaningful ways, and BC First Nations languages provide irreplaceable ways of organizing the social and natural world, based on the ancient, cumulative human experience of First Peoples.

In fact, as the world is facing environmental change and loss of biodiversity, there has been a growing research focus on the connection, or at least the parallels, between biodiversity and linguistic diversity. Preserving Indigenous languages means preserving the valuable local ecological knowledge encoded in them, which in combination with traditional resource stewardship practices can contribute greatly to the sustainable management of lands and resources (Maffi, 2001).

In recent years, numerous studies have identified a strong connection between First Nations language maintenance and several factors that affect personal and collective health and well-being. Researchers Chandler and Lalonde, for example, found that youth suicide rates were significantly lower where institutions that enabled cultural continuity existed. Hallett et. al. (2007) also determined that rates of suicide were significantly lower in First Nations communities with higher levels of language

knowledge and use, and the authors concluded that the continued existence and use of a First Nations language “is a strong predictor of health and wellbeing in Canada’s Aboriginal communities.” Cree language educator Mclvor, along with A. Napoleon and K. Dickie (2009), also point to the positive impact on health – in a comprehensive, holistic sense – of First Nations language use and revitalization.

Research from the early decades of the twentieth century, based on poor empirical data and research methods, made the point that early bilingualism and multilingualism (learning two or more languages early in life) were detrimental to children’s cognitive development, noting the “handicapping influence of bilingualism” and pointing out that bilinguals performed worse on IQ tests, although the administration of these tests was skewed. Unfortunately the common perception about bilingualism that came out of such misguided studies, combined with the Canadian government’s intent to assimilate Aboriginal children away from their languages and cultures, led to educators telling Aboriginal parents that their children would be kept back if they were raised in their Aboriginal language.

Since the 1960s, studies have increasingly pointed to the positive impacts of bilingualism. [Ellen Bialystok and her research team (1991, 2004), have carried out convincing empirical research for more than twenty years that points to the positive connection between bilingualism – (including bilingualism that involves indigenous language(s)) – cognitive development and cognitive abilities.] Bialystok’s research has shown several ways in which bilinguals outperform monolinguals in verbal and non-verbal cognitive tasks:

- Bilingual children develop metalinguistic awareness earlier and to a higher degree than monolinguals. Metalinguistic awareness, in turn, supports reflection on language and on the function of language, as well as earlier and higher sensitivity to language structure and language processing;
- Given the heightened metalinguistic awareness of bilinguals, they are more creative in problem solving than monolingual children
- Bilinguals outperform monolinguals in reading ability. Better reading skills in their L1 (e.g. English) were demonstrated with as little as one hour a week of L2 (other language) learning (Bialystok and Luk).
- Bilinguals develop advantages in executive functions of the brain, such as problem solving, mental flexibility, attention control, inhibitory control, task switching – i.e. staying focused on tasks. These advantages are not only verbal functions, but involve non-verbal functions: Bilinguals outperform monolinguals in such tasks as providing higher selective attention (filtering out distractions), higher working memory, ability to shift attention quickly, and the coordination

of all of these tasks. Although more research needs to be done to clarify these, Bialystok concludes that bilinguals could possibly be better at multi-tasking than monolinguals.

- Recent research (Bialystok, Moreno, Hermanto 2011) has also shown that children who participate in immersion programs, to varying degrees, showed the same tendencies towards developing executive brain functions and metalinguistic abilities that had been reported for children who were raised bilingually in the home. Moreover, their research, using experimental tests and MRI imaging, showed that cognitive advantages of early bilingualism persist into young adulthood.
- Finally, their research showed (2010) that aging bilinguals “outperform monolinguals on non-verbal executive control tasks,” and that, indeed, bilingualism can slow the onset of dementia in Alzheimer’s patients for as long as five years, constituting a “cognitive reserve” that delays the onset of signs of dementia in Alzheimer patients.

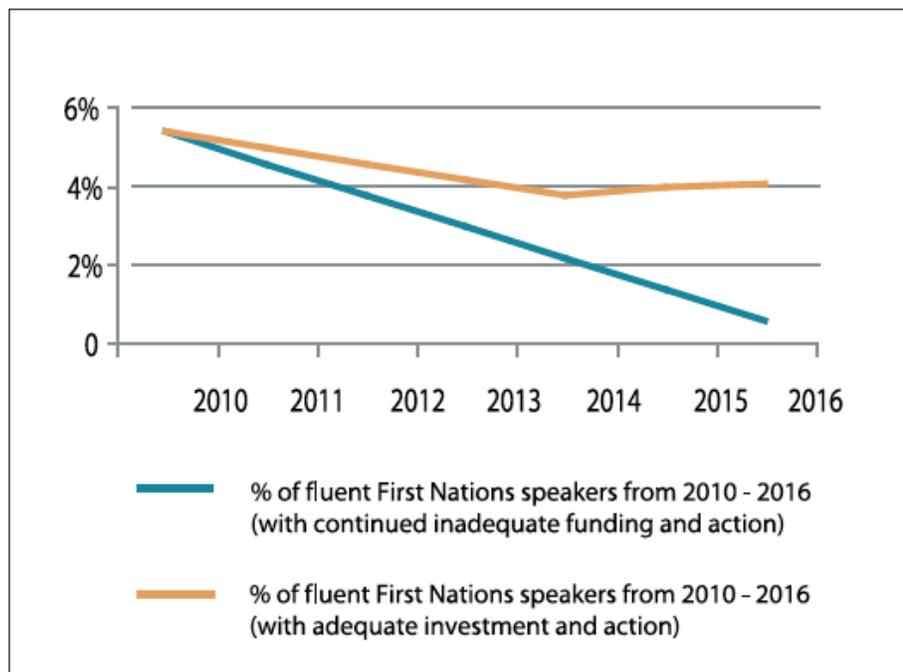
Thus, research has provided convincing evidence of the positive connection between bilingualism and cognitive development and abilities. Studies of an Inuit immersion program in the Kativik School District in Nunavik/Quebec (Wright, Taylor and Ruggiero, 1996) further support the cognitive and psychological advantages of language education in a child’s mother tongue, while also demonstrating positive self-esteem benefits for children. Other anecdotal evidence and achievement tests administered to students in long-term language immersion programs verify that students who receive intensive language exposure and instruction tend to fare better academically and socially than peers who are not exposed to their language (Greymorning 1997, Brandt and Ayoungman 1993).

1.4 A CRITICAL TIME

As described above, in spite of their importance, most First Nations languages are hanging by a thread and are facing continuous decline, as Elders age and inevitably pass on. The graph below from the *Report on the Status of BC First Nations Languages* (FPHLCC, 2010) – produced in 2010 but predicting information for 2010-15 – shows the sobering and sad continuing loss of languages.²

² As the graph shows, the 2010 data predict around 2% remaining fluent speakers in 2014, although the 2014 edition shows 4% fluent speakers remaining. However, as the report authors indicate, the 2014 edition includes data from 15 speech communities not represented in the 2010 report. Hence, the two data sets are not fully comparable.

Figure 2:
Most First Nations languages are hanging by a thread and are facing continuous decline, as Elders age and inevitably pass on.



Yet the graph above, sobering as it is, also provides hope. With an adequate investment of funds and hard work, **the fate of First Nations languages can be turned around by creating new generations of adult and young proficient speakers.** Throughout BC, vibrant efforts and initiatives exist that have contributed to stemming the tide of language loss. These include a growing number of Language Nests modeled on the Maori Te Koanga Reo and Hawaiian Punana Leo movements, sponsored in large part with funds from the First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). In fact, the FPCC estimates that approximately 15-20 language nests are currently in operation in this province. Language educators and activists Mclvor (2005), Michel (2005, 2012) and Chambers (2014) have reported on these initiatives and give us optimism for the future of First Nations languages.

In addition, arising from, or in combination with, local language nests, a small number of primary and elementary level immersion schools have shown the successes and potential of First Nations language immersion education, even in the face of limited funding and human resources (Mclvor 2005; Chambers 2014; Michel, 2005 and 2012). Additional recent studies by a growing and important number of Indigenous language educators, including Mclvor (2013), Johnson (2013), Thompson (2012), Rosborough (2012), Hinton (2011), Michel (2011), and Pitawanakwat (2009), show the experiences and potential of First Nations language revitalization in the context of diverse BC languages. They also show the hard work ahead.

1.5 THE ROLE OF SCHOOLING IN FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

More than thirty years ago, Irish language activist Fennel (1980) reminded us:

a shrinking language minority cannot be saved by the actions of well-wishers who do not belong to the minority in question. In particular, its shrinking cannot be halted by the action, however benevolent and intelligent, of a modern centralised state. It can be saved only by itself: and then only if its members acquire the will to stop it shrinking, acquire the institutions and financial means to take appropriate measures, and take them.

In fact, language revitalization cannot be achieved without the deep spiritual and practical commitment of people who care and are willing to put in enormous, long-term effort in learning, teaching, recording, and developing materials. All successful language revitalization practitioners share stories of working long hours, experiencing the interminable sadness over the passing of fluent Elders, and carrying out their work within the real living conditions of First Nations communities still marked by the fall-out of the trauma historically inflicted on them.

Reflecting the significant effort needed to make positive change, numerous First Nations language practitioners and educators have stressed that language revitalization cannot be left to schools alone; it is a community and Nation, as well as a family and home issue. However, given the tremendous scope of effort needed, schools *do* have a vital role to play. As Hinton (in Hinton and Hale 2001, pg. 7) has observed, “an hour a day [of Indigenous language instruction], if taught with appropriate methodology, can bring children a long way toward fluency.” Thus, education systems *can* play a vital role in facilitating access to First Nations language learning among children and youth. They can also meaningfully support community language revival and maintenance efforts. What is needed is language education in schools connected to larger efforts to improve the status and use of languages in communities, with everyone collectively “taking ownership” of the language in a practical, spiritual, emotional and social sense.

But language education in schools – in particular public schools – is not without constraints, including a range of policies and laws that privilege English over First Nations languages, and that represent a continued part of a colonial structure. Generally, public schools favour “core” subjects like math, language arts, science and social studies, all of which are better resourced and much better supported with relevant curriculum materials. First Nations language education is often perceived as having to compete against “academic” subjects, rather than more rightly being seen as offering its own solutions for cognitive development, literacy, self-esteem and cultural connection – as is strongly suggested by a wealth of research. Despite

those challenges, a 2009 report by the Canadian Council on Learning titled the *State of Aboriginal Learning in Canada: A Holistic Approach to Measuring Success*, emphasizes the importance of Aboriginal language education in improving and enhancing the educational experiences of Aboriginal youth. It describes how “knowledge of ancestral languages is key to how Aboriginal people view learning — a process that is lifelong and extends well beyond the classroom.” As the report points out, ancestral languages are considered a key source of knowledge for learners, as they help “transmit knowledge and values from one generation to another.”

All of these issues are described in more detail below.

1.6 THE LEGAL PICTURE – OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AND ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES

At a time when the very survival of First Nations languages hangs by a thread, Canada continues to maintain its national policy – or myth - of two “founding languages,” and the crucial role (or even existence) of the 59 or more Aboriginal languages of the country is not acknowledged in Canadian law.³

Canada’s Aboriginal (First Nation, Métis, Inuit) languages are not mentioned in the *British North America Act* (1867), in the *Indian Act*, nor in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982). Section 35 of the *1982 Constitution Act* does not mention Aboriginal languages, but deals with undefined Aboriginal rights, stating, “The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.” The question of whether Aboriginal language rights (individually, collectively, or both) legally qualify as “existing aboriginal rights” has not been tested in court.

Canada’s Official Languages Act, initially passed in 1969 and amended in light of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1988, acknowledges English and French as the two official languages of the country, and guarantees minority language rights for English and French speakers, including access to services in the respective languages and to language education. However, the Act is silent on Aboriginal languages.

Based on a bilateral agreement (2009-2013, and recently renewed until 2018) between the Province of BC and the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage, federal funds support K-12 French programming in schools (core, immersion, and intensive French) and universities, and provide grants for learning resources, teacher

³ By contrast, in various international jurisdictions, Indigenous minority languages have legal recognition as official languages - e.g. Maori in New Zealand/Aotearoa, and Hawaiian in the U.S. State of Hawaii. Other countries also have a measure of protection and support for regional or minority languages (e.g. the 1992 *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages*).

professional development, cultural activities, student and teacher exchanges, and other activities (www.bced.gov.bc.ca). The 2009-2013 protocol between the federal government and BC provides \$64.4 million (approximately \$16.1 million annually) in federal funding for French minority language and second language education based on a formula of up to 50 percent of the funds contributed by the federal government, with the remainder contributed by BC.

Although the 2003-2005 national Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures (TFALC) strongly recommended the “legislative recognition, protection and promotion of First Nation, Inuit and Metis languages as the First Languages of Canada” (Canada, 2005), such legal recognition at the national level or at any provincial level has not been realized to date. In fact, the *1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act* and the subsequent *Canadian Heritage Languages Institute Act* (1990) classified Aboriginal languages as “heritage languages,” putting them in the same category as immigrant languages.

Two territories have accorded official language status to their Aboriginal languages.

- The Northwest Territories (NWT) now recognizes Chipewyan, Cree, Dogrib, English, French, Gwich'in, Inuktitut and Slavey as official languages of the territory.
- The legislature of Nunavut unanimously passed a territorial *Official Languages Act* in 2008, recognizing two related Inuit languages – Inuktitut and Innuinaqtun, as well as English and French, as official languages. Importantly, the *Official Languages Act* was accompanied by the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, “the only Act in Canada that aims to protect and revitalize a first peoples’ language” (langcom.nu.ca). The two acts have enabled Inuit in Nunavut to set targets and standards for increasing language proficiency in Inuktitut/Innuinaqtun, to promote the use of the languages, and to quickly expand Inuit language education as a *right*, including creating language nests, early immersion education, and Inuktitut/Innuinaqtun education across all grades, with the educational resources required to do so.

Since 2007, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) has represented an important additional voice for Indigenous language protection. The UNDRIP was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007, and aims to establish legal and human rights standards for the planet’s 370 million Indigenous people. Canada finally endorsed the UNDRIP in November 2010, stating that it supported it in “spirit” and as an “aspirational” document. As it exists now, the UNDRIP functions as a UN Declaration, but does not have the force of law in the international or Canadian setting. The UNDRIP addresses Indigenous land and environmental rights and rights to health, cultural and intellectual property and

cultural expression, and moreover includes several Articles that specifically address language rights.

- Article 13.1. states: “Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.”
- Article 14.1 states: “Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.”
- Article 14.3. states: “States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.”
- Article 16 addresses the right of indigenous people to establish their own media in their own languages.

1.7 BC LANGUAGE PROTECTION LAWS AND POLICIES

Although BC has no official language recognition or protection for its more than 30 Indigenous languages,⁴ it has developed limited policies and programs to protect First Nations languages. In 1996, BC passed the *First Peoples Heritage, Language and Culture Act* as part of its *First Peoples' Heritage initiative*, and created a Crown Corporation with the purpose of: providing operating and capital funds for the “creation, maintenance and administration of Native cultural centres and programs throughout BC” (Section 6); supporting the government on ways to preserve and foster “native languages and other aspects of cultural development of Native peoples throughout BC;” and acting in an advisory capacity to the BC government on such matters. This Act provides the foundation for the BC First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC).

Since 1990, the FPCC has allocated more than \$20 million in grants – including federal Aboriginal Languages Initiative and provincial BC Languages Initiative

4 A good overview of Aboriginal language recognition measures in Canada is provided in www.slmc.uottawa.ca/?q=native_legal (retrieved Oct. 1, 2014). Neither the *Nisga'a Final Agreement Act* (1999), the *Sechelt Indian Band Self-Government Act*, nor the *BC Treaty Commission Act* includes language provisions. The 2010 *Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement* notes that “Canada and BC acknowledge the aspiration of Tsawwassen First Nation to preserve, promote and develop the culture, heritage, language and economy of Tsawwassen First Nation” (p. 2).

grants - to First Nations organizations to enable local language revitalization and documentation projects. It also has produced a number of useful guide books on a variety of topics, including language immersion camps, language nests, mentor/master-apprentice learning programs, and language policy and planning (all available at www.fpcc.ca).

1.7.1 The BC Ministry of Education Policies

The BC Ministry of Education Language Education Policy regulates the teaching of English and French as official minority languages, as well as foreign, immigrant languages and Aboriginal languages in the K-12 school system. This policy stipulates that all BC students must take a second language as part of the curriculum in Grades 5 - 8 (except those exempted as special needs students, those receiving English Language Learner services, or those enrolled in late French immersion).

While *not legally mandating* Aboriginal language education, the Ministry *supports* Aboriginal language education as an option, noting (www2.gov.bc.ca):

All students, especially those of Aboriginal ancestry, should have opportunities to learn an Aboriginal language. ... The Board of Education and the local Aboriginal people should collaborate to develop Aboriginal language curriculum and resources.

The Ministry's policy stipulates that it is up to School Boards to decide which second languages will be offered. Core French is offered by default if a school district does not offer an alternative language. Only languages with curricula listed in the Ministry of Education's Educational Program Guide Order are eligible to meet the second language requirement for Grades 5 - 8. In the case of First Nations languages, this includes only languages with a provincially approved Integrated Resource Package (IRP) based on the Ministry's Languages Template (see 2.1 below).

Alternately, School Boards can develop their own second language curricula for elective or additional language studies as permitted under the *Board Authorized Course Order*. Boards can apply to the Ministry to have their locally developed second language curricula given provincial approval. This can presumably happen without completion of an IRP, but accredited senior secondary courses in a First Nations language that lead to graduation seem to require an IRP.

Therefore, rather than providing mandatory First Nations language education, the BC Second Language Policy provides options for delivering First Nations languages for Grades 5 - 12. Although early second/additional language education is well supported by research and advocacy groups, the policy makes no provisions for

Grades K - 4 language education, (although some school districts include some measure of primary level and early intermediate language education).

Other challenges for First Nations language education in BC public schools also exist. The Ministry's policy guidelines for the amount of language education per week stipulate 90 to 120 minutes at the Grades 5 - 7 level. In Grades 8 through 12, First Nations language education is part of the system of rotating blocks, usually about 115 minutes in length, in most schools based on a semester system. As provided within a semester system, many schools are unable to offer secondary language education throughout the year, and instead, based on school scheduling, a student may have a block of First Nations language in Semester 1, not in Semester 2, followed by a summer break, and then again in Semester 1 of the following year, or based on scheduling perhaps not until Semester 2 of the following year. Such gaps in scheduling are not conducive to incremental language learning, which best occurs in continuous lessons throughout the year.⁵

In light of demographics, Aboriginal language education also faces a disproportionate shortage of resources in comparison to heritage or immigrant languages.

Finally, although the *BC School Act* provides that a language other than English or French can be the language of instruction, thus technically enabling First Nations language immersion education, no school district has yet made use of this provision, and First Nations educators who were hoping to implement immersion schooling through school districts have expressed disappointment about the seemingly insurmountable obstacles to establishing First Nation language immersion schools in the public system.

⁵ Independent Schools – including First Nations schools that are accredited as Category I or II Independent Schools – offer some flexibility regarding curriculum and First Nations language education, but generally follow provincial curriculum guidelines as set out in the *BC School Act* and Ministry of Education policies. First Nations schools not accredited as Independent Schools at present offer greater flexibility in establishing programs outside of the norms of policy and legislation, including immersion programming or partial immersion. The inclusion of language teaching in First Nations schools is discussed in more detail later in this document.

2 FUNDAMENTALS OF LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

As described in Part 1, given the unique importance of First Nations languages and the limited human and financial resources available to support them, school language education programs represent a vital component of the daunting task of language revitalization. By addressing several key concepts, school programming can meaningfully contribute to efforts to breathe new life into languages.

2.1 THE URGENT NEED FOR FLUENT SPEAKERS:

In considering the vital role of First Nations languages in First Nations education generally, as well as the declining number of fluent first-language speakers – especially in BC – there is an urgent need to create and support highly proficient second-language speakers of First Nations languages who can fill the role of language teachers in high quality second language, immersion and adult education programs, as well as language nests. In fact, it takes tremendous time and effort to become fully proficient in a language, and due to a variety of factors, there are few highly competent second-language speakers of First Nations languages. Contributing factors, as expressed by adult language learners and teachers, include the following:

- There are fewer and fewer opportunities for contemporary learners to immerse themselves in situations where only the First Nations language is used. With the critical decline in the number of fluent first-language speakers (see Part 1), many learners struggle to find opportunities to practice the language outside of the classroom.
- There is a lack of intensive language training opportunities and incentives beyond introductory level courses and beginner competencies.

- It is difficult to find funding, individually or in groups, for the sustained and intensive work needed to develop high proficiency (although in recent years, some initiatives like Mentor (Master)-Apprentice training have created small numbers of highly motivated learners who have been able to accelerate their skills (FPCC, 2014).
- Work responsibilities and personal stresses make it impossible for many individuals to dedicate themselves to intensive language learning.
- The degree of difficulty of First Nations languages, combined with far fewer learning resources (especially user-friendly materials beyond the beginner level) is a serious challenge. In fact, the structure of First Nations languages makes them inherently more challenging to learn, and makes it impossible to simply adapt or translate English language-based curriculum materials.
- The legacy of Residential Schooling continues to negatively impact many speakers and learners.

But these challenges must be overcome, as today's second-language learners will become the teachers of the language into the next generation. Further, adults who become the new (and future) generations of First Nations language teachers must have the opportunity to develop strong proficiency and competence in their language, or the language itself will atrophy and change as it is taught to children in the K-12 education system. As Hinton (1999, pg. 75) has observed, "any incomplete learning (accent, grammatical, or lexical deficiencies, etc.) will become part of the future of the language itself," and diminished competence can also lead to tensions over which ways of saying things are "correct" or acceptable.

2.2 CREATING PROFICIENCY IN FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES THROUGH K-12 EDUCATION

In considering how to promote language programs, it is useful to begin by considering what is known about producing "fluent" or proficient speakers who demonstrate a level of effortless, fluid communication in everyday topics.

To begin, the ultimate goal should be communicative competence – being able to take part in conversation, narrate events, and engage in culturally grounded and meaningful interactions. Because present and future second-language learners will be the torch-bearers of the language, at least some of them will need to acquire advanced competence – meaning the ability to understand details of what is being said rather than just the "general gist," and the ability to express oneself with fluidity and accuracy, creatively using the language rather than merely repeating previously heard sentences. Competent or proficient speakers can communicate in the

language to such a degree that they can function in all, or nearly all, communicative situations without “getting stuck” or having to switch to English.

For First Nations languages, oral proficiency is obviously needed in order for learners to (re)build domains of use in the home, family, and public settings. Where communication involves written media (books, other print materials, and social media, etc.), a level of accurate and fluid expression in reading and writing is also important. It is generally agreed that this level of proficiency requires that the individual:

1. acquired the language in early childhood;
2. has intuitive knowledge of the language;
3. is able to produce fluent, spontaneous discourse;
4. is competent in communication;
5. identifies with or is identified by a language community; and
6. does not have a foreign accent (see wikipedia.org/wiki/First_language).

In addition, First Nations speakers usually consider indicators of native-like fluency and high proficiency to include:

- intuitively accurate pronunciation and accent (phonemes or sounds, word stress, prosody or sentence melody, pitch-tone);
- intuitively accurate use of grammar;
- a sufficient range of vocabulary;
- an ability to engage in word-play; and
- an ability to perform culturally important protocols (prayer, speech, story, ceremony).

2.2.1 How Many Words Are Needed for Proficiency?

How many words, or what amount of vocabulary, makes a competent speaker? One way to answer that question is to consider the number of words listed in dictionaries of First Nations languages. The *2012 Dictionary of the Squamish Language* contains about 8,000 headword entries, the current *Secwepemc Dictionary* contains 6,000, and the *Alaskan Haida Dictionary* contains 5,500 headword entries. For First Nations languages, it is not always easy to determine what is a “word” and what is a “phrase”, given their productive grammar systems to build complex concepts out of smaller building blocks.⁶ However, the number of words used in everyday communication

⁶ See below, pg. 26, also Kell 2014 for a non-technical explanation of polysynthetic languages. Polysynthetic languages are languages in which words are strung together composed of many parts that give information about Who? What? In what way? When? Beyond

is actually far less than the number of headword dictionaries in existing First Nations language dictionaries, considering that in everyday communication, in all languages, speakers tend to rely to a good degree on high-frequency words, and only to a very small degree on unusual, specialized and rare words. For the English language, the General Service List, recently updated to the New General Service List shows that in various oral communication modes (everyday speech, radio, TV) 90% of words used are from a repertoire of between 822 and 1,388 words. 95% of words used consist of a repertoire of between 1,849 to 2,855 words. Based on research with a corpus of 273 million words, researchers compiled an overall list of 2,818 high frequency words (the New General Service List) that cover 90% of speech production. To move to the 95% in the 95 % range, it consists of 6,828 words –more than double!

Corpus	90%	95%
Spoken English	822	1,849
Radio	1,348	2,766
TV	1,388	2,855
Whole New General Service List	2,818	6,828

Source: <http://www.newgeneralservicelist.org>

For indigenous language learning, the New General Service List gives us two important lessons:

- Excellent listening and speaking skills require command over a rather finite amount of words – not exceeding around 2,800 words
- Focus should be on high-frequency, common words
- The amount of vocabulary required of proficient speakers moving from what would be an intermediate to an advanced level (see below p. xx) rises exponentially!

Regarding the amount of vocabulary that should be included in curriculum in order to provide competence in a language, a school program that is offered at the Grades 5 - 12 level would need to provide learners with some 250 vocabulary items per year over 8 years to be within the 95 percentile for spoken language. It is also important to focus on high frequency words in a concrete and authentic context of use, which will greatly assist in the development of good listening and speaking skills from the onset.

Learners differ in how quickly and efficiently they are able to memorize new words and transfer them from short-term into long-term memory. Aside from memorizing words with the help of flash-cards, learners need to be exposed to new words in

different situations and contexts, through different media, and with much repetition in order to retain them in long-term memory. Hinton (2001) reports that a new vocabulary item must be heard and practiced approximately 20 different times in each of 20 different situations (for a total of 400 times) before a learner will master it.

Creating New Words

For some time, First Nations language teachers, speakers and learners have realized the need to create or adapt new words in order to name newly introduced items that are used and talked about in everyday life. In the past, speakers of all languages did this based on what an object reminded them of, was used for, or its shape, consistency, kind or type. For example, when they first experienced television, Secwepemctsin (Shuswap) speakers coined the term *melkwék'wye7ten* for a television set, derived from the root *melk'w-* for “shadow,” to which an instrumental suffix *-ten* was added. This was in the days of grainy, often shadowy black-and-white TV reception in the 1950s and 60s. Sm'algyax speakers coined the term *xbiism gwiniitsk* for television, which literally means “box for looking at.” Another way to make new words is to borrow the English root word, and then modify it according to the word-building processes of the First Nations language.

It is useful to teach students about word creation and borrowing; not only does it show that the language is flexible and inventive; it also provides fascinating insights into the way past and present speakers perceive(d) introduced objects and concepts (see Kell, 2014 for further discussion).

As they expand and re-awaken their use of the language, language teachers, fluent speakers and learners are constantly devising new words – in some cases through their language authorities, in other cases on the spot or through the process of developing curriculum. In First Nations language classrooms, children often ask the words for things that have not yet been named. Many language teachers, speakers and learners have therefore expressed the need for more opportunities to develop, discuss and authorize new words.

2.2.2 What is Grammar and How Is It Best Taught?

It is well known that memorizing a dictionary does not make a proficient speaker. When we speak a language, we combine words into larger chunks of meaning. We use the term grammar to describe the ways in which words, with the addition of particle words or affixes, are combined to make new words or even complex strings of meaning that amount to phrases, sentences and larger narratives. One of the reasons that British Columbia indigenous languages are difficult to learn and take more time to learn is the fact that their grammar is very different from English, what Kell (2014) has referred to as polysynthetic language structures.⁷ For example, in Athapaskan languages, as well as Tlingit and Haida, the verb of a sentence embeds not only the action itself, but includes within it a wealth of information that includes how the action is carried out, what is the shape and kind of the object acted upon, the duration, status of completion and time of the action, and the modality and status of evidence about what happened (real, inferred or hear-say, always, never or from time to time, real or potential, etc.).

Someone who learns any language as a child intuitively learns its grammar without being able to describe how sentences work. As fluent speakers, they produce sentences that are “correct” or acceptable to others, and they are also able to intuitively tell whether utterances produced by others are acceptable or grammatical.⁸

In terms of teaching grammar, in the earlier decades of the twentieth century grammar was taught as an object in itself, with a focus on grammar rules and learners producing accurate speech at the sentence level. Later, the emphasis switched to communicative competence and strict grammar teaching became chastised. In recent years, however, language teachers have acknowledged that a communicative approach alone does not ensure grammatically accurate speech, and that instilling some conscious awareness of grammar is useful, often referred to as *focus on form*.

7 Linguists define polysynthetic languages as languages in which words are composed of many morphemes (words or word parts that can stand independently or need to be attached to other particle words), so that what is a whole sentence in English is represented by a long word, often focused around a verb, which incorporates and encodes references to subject, object, qualities, duration, mode of action, time, etc. While the term “polysynthetic” is useful to address the very different way in which ideas concepts are expressed in indigenous languages that are different from English or other Indo-European languages, it is important to keep in mind that the many indigenous languages found in BC behave very differently from one another in expressing such ideas and concepts, and not all are equally polysynthetic.

8 Linguists who study the grammar of a language specialize in determining the “rules” that underlie the production of grammatical sentences. Most First Nations languages in BC have grammars produced by linguists, which lay out the rules for the grammatical construction of words and sentences. Linguistic grammars tend to be very technical, even theoretical, and are in most cases very difficult for the layperson or non-linguist to decipher; in other words, they are everything but “user-friendly” and indeed are often frustrating for learners.

In fact, as Hale (2001) and Hinton (2001) pointed out, awareness of grammar is especially useful for teachers, as it will guide them in leading learners to correct speech. Members of the Indigenous Languages Institute in the United States declared: “We cannot teach language simply because we are speakers of that language. We must know what our language is like – its structure and function in everyday existence” (cited in Watahomigie and Yamamoto, 1992). William O’Grady, a linguist and language acquisition specialist from the University of Hawai’i at Manoa wrote an insightful paper on this topic. His important point was that learners of critically endangered [Indigenous] languages need to be led to produce accurate speech similar to what the generations before them produced, lest the language they have learned undergo tremendous attrition and loss as a result of second learners’ reduced proficiency (O’Grady 2013).

The real point lies in *how* grammar practice is carried out. To make it meaningful and useful for learners, it should not involve learning rules, but instead should involve interactive games and varied activities in oral and written form. For example, in a few instances linguists have worked with fluent speakers and language teachers to produce pedagogical or teaching grammars of First Nations languages. One example is *Visible Grammar: Ts’msyen Sm’algyax Grammar Resources – Twenty User-Friendly Modules on Key Ts’msyen Sm’algyax Structures* created by M. Anderson and M. Ignace, in cooperation with many fluent speakers of Sm’algyax (2008). That resource colour-codes Sm’algyax sentence parts and allows the learner to literally “build” Sm’algyax sentences by assembling time-words, verbs, subjects, objects, and their identifying connectives in the correct order. Learners can also do this with magnet strips of many example words and grammar particles, which they can assemble into correct sentences.

Understanding and using grammar can be inductive, in that students can be led to self-discover the meanings behind forms (particle words, endings) as they hear them in a variety of contexts. Inductive teaching of grammar should involve the following.

1. **Presentation:** the teacher leads students to perceive a structure (like a pronoun ending) in form and meaning. This can be done by emphasizing it alone and by staying in the language. Students can be presented with a set of sentences (like a short story, told in the “I-form”) where the “I-form” (first person singular) is emphasized and stressed by the teacher each time it occurs. In the elementary classroom, the teacher’s presentation of grammar structures and their meaning can be flagged as “focus-on-form” teaching and learning activities (see section 4.5.1 for more details).
2. **Isolation and explanation:** most teachers zero in on grammatical form in English by way of an explanation. However, it is possible to do this while staying

in the language by way of asking yes/no or either/or questions about which ending needs to be added. In the AIM method (see section 2.5.4 for more information) language students are presented with basic grammar rules through jazz-chants!

3. **Practice:** exercises done in the classroom and as further homework practice help learners to fully absorb the structure and to transfer its use from short-term to long-term memory. Practice should include oral and written exercises, whole-class, group and individual work, games, Total Physical Response (TPR) and Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPR-S) activities (described further in Part 4), and, if the written language is taught, it can involve work and practice-sheets.⁹

How do we identify what grammar structures exist for First Nations languages? One way is by studying (and making “user-friendly”) the existing linguistic grammar of the First Nations language, including identifying its topics. Another way is to consider a set of grammatical functions that the learner of any language needs to be able to understand (and read) and use in speaking (and writing). The following are some universal grammar topics (although not an inclusive list) that are expressed in a variety of forms in different First Nations languages.

- Simple sentences that describe the characteristics, state of being, quality of a person or a thing (the cat is big; my grandmother is tired; etc.). Note that these can function in very different ways than in English.
- Yes-no questions (Is the house blue? Is your grandmother well?).
- Information questions or “wh” questions (Who? Where? What? When?).
- Pronouns that express I, you, he/she, we, you folks, they as the “doer” or subject of a sentence (note that these may be organized differently than in English).
- Sentences with a “doer” (subject or agent) and a person who receives the action (object or patient).
- Pronouns that express objects (to me, to you, to him or her, to us, to you folks, to them).
- Reflexive pronouns (doing something to oneself).
- Negation (sentences with NOT).
- Modals (can, might, should, always does, used to do). These might be particle words inside verbs or added to verbs.
- Demonstratives (this, that, that way over there, etc.).

⁹ Examples of interactive Grammar Teaching resources include Schessler, Eric, *English Grammar Through Actions* (1997); Schessler, Eric, (n.d.) *How to Teach Grammar Using TPR Ur, Grammar Practice Activities; The Grammar Practice Book* from the *Oxford Language Learning Series*.

- Adverbs of time, tense and aspect. (Is the action described in a sentence taking place now, is it completed, did it start at some point in the past and is it still ongoing, is it expected to happen in the future?)
- The relative location of things and people.
- Singulars, plurals of nouns and actions.
- Word order in different kinds of sentences.
- Complex sentences. (Ifthen; when.....then, first x happens/happened, then y).

In organizing grammar topics, especially for the beginning learner, Michel (2009) shares an important word of caution, based on many years of teaching primary and elementary level children in an immersion program:

... A general rule to keep in mind is that the process of teaching and acquiring any new pronoun form, tense, or grammatical structure takes up to one month and sometimes longer. During the pilot stages of the curriculum, teachers should make careful notes on whether the form is readily understood or acquired by their students. Give ample time to teach and practice each form before introducing any new ones. Often, you will find that the introduction of certain language skills are out of sequence with what students are ready to learn. It is important to note that language learning cannot be forced nor sped up. It is much easier (and less stressful) for all involved to just delay that teaching for another unit, or even, to a later grade. One feature of second language acquisition to keep in mind is, the more a skill parallels the student's first language, the greater chance they will acquire it. The opposite is also true, so, regardless of how important or integral the skill is to the language, resist introducing complex and confusing structures until you know the students have enough competency to comprehend it, or even to notice it.

For Secwepemctsin, Sm'algyax and Upper St'at'imcets, curriculum development teams have developed Communicative and Grammatical Scope and Sequence charts (see Appendix 1 for an example). These charts map out and list the grammatical topics that matter for the specific language according to several sub-topics or areas. Within a communicative learning framework that does not aim to teach grammar as an object, it is possible to match up at what grade level concepts are initially used by the teacher, without expectation that learners will be aware of or be able to use them with accuracy. At subsequent grade levels, such concepts are then introduced, practiced, and ideally mastered. As Kell (2014) has suggested, communicative and grammatical scope and sequence charts can also perform double duty by being adapted as rubrics for emergent grammatical competence in learners.

2.2.3 Phonology – Correct Accent and Pronunciation

In general, most second-language learners who begin learning at a young age do not require specific explanation and scaffolding to help them with good pronunciation, accent and sentence melody. As long as they receive an adequate amount of exposure to the language from a teacher who has accurate speech, along with ample opportunities for speaking the language, they will intuitively develop good pronunciation.

However, especially adult learners may benefit from practice that targets the sound system of the language, focusing in particular on difficult to produce sounds that are unlike English. These could include *sound discrimination* exercises, where the learner has to identify and produce the correct sound in a set of words that have sounds that are difficult to distinguish for ears attuned to the English language. For example, Xaad Kil or Haida has a series of consonants difficult to distinguish for learners: The word k'áad (with a “pinched” or “glottalized” k means deer, whereas the word k'áad, with a pinched or glottalized throat-k sound means dog-fish. Another good way to practice difficult to pronounce and difficult to distinguish sounds is through tongue twisters, chants etc. Many language teachers find that songs with repetitious lyrics help learners pick up difficult sounds.

2.2.4 The Culture in the Language

A further aspect of gaining competence in a First Nations language involves minding cultural protocols in one's speech, and respectfully interacting with other speakers according to the ways people mutually reinforce and support one another's statements and stories. Fluent speakers often comment on the importance of not “thinking in English” but from within the categories of speech and cultural protocols of speech of the indigenous language. Culturally inappropriate or inaccurate speech most often occurs when learners approach what they want to say from English and then try to translate it into the First Nations language. A much more authentic and feasible (but harder!) way is to approach content from within the choices of words, grammar, protocols of speech and cultural ways of perceiving and organizing the world that are embedded in the language..

It is important to point out that as languages become critically endangered, some of the speakers who are left may have specific knowledge of some specialized domains and registers (e.g. hunting, fishing, ceremony, place names, storytelling, oratory), but not of others. Some individuals also may have received somewhat limited exposure and socialization in the First Nation language, resulting in a good grasp of basic but not all complex structures. These differences are connected to the life experiences of individuals, the amount of communicative exposure to the language they had as

children, and the particular teachings or language socialization they received from their own Elders.

2.2.5 How Many Hours or Years Does It Take?

Various factors determine how quickly fluency levels are reached. In addition, “if second language acquisition begins at the age of 5 it follows a different pattern than when second language acquisition begins at age 25 or at age 15” (Archibald et al., 2006). This is not to say that language learning can only be successful if someone starts at a very young age: it just means that the path, methods, milestones and outcomes will be different. In fact, while some researchers argue that there is a “critical period” between early childhood and around 15 years of age – an optimal period not only for the acquisition of a first language, but also for the acquisition of a second language, other research has shown that older youth and adults can still gain very good fluency if they begin learning later in life (although the most difficult thing to acquire is a near-native pronunciation or accent).

Regarding the amount of time it takes to learn a First Nations language, Hinton (1994) notes that one needs about 500 hours of regular and well-structured instruction to reach basic proficiency. Referring to teaching the Arapaho language, Greymorning (1997) estimates that 600-700 hours, with as much as 6 hours a day of instruction, is needed to produce proficiency. However, in describing her own and her young adult colleagues’ path to mid-intermediate level proficiency in Nsilxcen (Okanagan), Johnson (2013, 2014) estimates that it takes at least 1,000 guided teaching hours to reach that level of proficiency in Nsilxcen.

The U.S. Foreign Service Institute and the Association of Language Testers of Europe (ALTE) have provided estimates regarding the number of “guided teaching hours” required to reach not only beginner and mid-intermediate level proficiency, but to reach advanced level proficiency. Their estimates are based on the experience that some languages are easier to learn than others, with proficiency in the more difficult languages requiring far more time. FSI and ALTE’s estimates distinguish between four to five categories of difficulty for English speakers among widely spoken world languages: Thus, languages like Italian, Spanish and Dutch in Category 1, and languages like Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese and Korean in the most difficult category (IV) which, according to these scales, requires 1,000 to 1,200 hours to high intermediate proficiency, and 2,400 to 2,760 hours to high advanced proficiency!¹⁰ Among learners and linguists alike, First Nations languages are commonly perceived to fall within that most difficult category, This challenge is further exacerbated by

¹⁰ Section 4.1 below provides more information about proficiency levels in the context of learner assessment and language learning benchmarks.

factors such as relatively fewer learning resources, limited language teacher training, and the limited ability to “soak oneself” in the language by being surrounded by radio, TV, social networks, and speakers who are willing and able to remain in the language. Other factors that affect the speed of attaining language proficiency are described below.

- Personal ability / aptitude characteristics, such as the ability to focus or prior experience in language learning, can be important (although as described above, research shows that second language learning is itself beneficial for cognitive development, problem solving, mental flexibility, attention control, etc.). Students with learning disabilities and behavioural disabilities *may* have a harder time learning a second language.
- Learner motivation and attitudes can be positive influences. For example the desire to connect to one’s culture, knowledge and worldview can inspire learning, and among an increasing number of learners and First Nations language activists, the determination and resolve to provide a lifeline to language survival is a significant motivational factor and catalyst. However, attitudes can also make language learning difficult. For example, the lingering trauma resulting from Residential Schools continues to represent serious challenges for many individuals across generations.
- Low anxiety levels are crucial, and removing threat (in differing forms) from the classroom will keep students open to cognitive growth (Gaffney 1999).
- Teachers who are proficient enough to use the language for all communication in the classroom better promote fluency (as opposed to teachers who use English for instruction while teaching isolated words in the First Nations language). Also, teachers who are well versed in effective language learning methods are crucial.
- Effective curriculum and curricular resources that allow for incremental and sequential learning of a language, supported by a variety of learning resources, are beneficial.
- Modern technology (digital media, audio-files, language apps, smart-boards) can play a positive supporting role.

The time requirements associated with difficult languages have important implications for K-12 First Nations language education. If the goal of First Nations language programs is proficiency building that, at least for some students, will lead to conversational competence and the revitalized use of the language, it is important to provide enough time for learning.

of practice and exposure they are provided, and their personal motivation and interest level.

An Option for More Guided Teaching Hours – Hinton’s “Hour a Day” in Practice

In terms of their effectiveness in enabling children to become proficient through the guided teaching hours they provide, immersion programs are by far the best option (see Section 2.3.2 below). Yet given the initiative and human resources required for immersion programs, they are rarely being implemented in BC.

Fortunately, Hinton’s (1004) recommended “hour a day” practice for the K - 12 years as a means to achieving competence may be an option within the existing policies and practices of the BC public education system. By rule of thumb, in elementary schooling, school districts allow 20 percent of the curriculum to be designated as local curriculum – translating into about one of 5 hours per day.

Here is how this could work ...

K – Grade 7 – 1 hour/day x 175 days	approx. 1,520 hours
Grades 8 - 12 @ 125 hrs/year	approx. 625 hours
Total:	approx. 2,145 hours
K – Grade 7 – 45 minutes/day	approx. 1,050 hours
Grades 8 - 12 @ 95 hrs/year	approx. 475 hours
Total:	approx. 1,525 hours

In this section, we have discussed the components of language teaching and learning that need to be addressed in the language classroom to produce proficiency among learners. Next to introducing a good amount of vocabulary, modeling and instilling accurate pronunciation and embedding what is learned in cultural connections, a crucial area is “user-friendly” and communicative grammar learning, which in turn requires adequate teaching methods and resources. Beyond that, it is of utmost importance that in order to lead to results, i.e. learner proficiency, First Nations language programs must allocate the amount of time learners need to reach proficiency.

2.3 TYPES OF LANGUAGE PROGRAMS AND THE LANGUAGE EDUCATION THEY PROVIDE

In Canada, various types of school programs that offer instruction in a First Nations language have been implemented for some time, and at least one additional type of program currently offered for French in some school districts may have potential for First Nations languages. Those programs are briefly described below, including a consideration of the amount of guided teaching hours they offer.

2.3.1 Second Language or Additional Language Programs

In second language programs, the language is taught as one among a set of subject courses (along with math, science, etc.). First Nations second language courses are often based on thematic units connected to traditional seasonal rounds and subsistence activities. Most second language programs offered at the primary/elementary level focus on oral language as opposed to literacy skills (reading and writing). At the higher grades, they usually include literacy and various kinds of practice (grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary building) aimed at instilling oral communication. In some instances, the programs include cross-curricular connections to other subjects; for example, if the socials unit explores traditional travel by canoe, vocabulary and actions of canoe building and travel may be the topic of the language unit. (First Nations second language programs that teach content in the language (e.g. math problems, science observations, cultural activities, physical activities, art, crafts, song and drumming) with adequate time allocation can be considered on a continuum with partial immersion (see below)).

First Nations second language programs exist in various forms in BC. Some exist at the full K - 12 grade range; others exist only at the elementary or secondary levels. While these programs exist to some degree in most First Nation schools, not all school districts in BC offer First Nations language programs, and those that do have widely varying time allocations. In some settings they are well supported by curriculum; in other settings they are not (yet).

In terms of the number of guided teaching hours they are currently able to offer, second language programs fall well short of the number of hours required to create a new generation of proficient speakers or even intermediate level speakers. This shortage in time allocation does not deny the fact that many well trained and competent language teachers work tirelessly in second language programs to help children and youth learn their ancestral language, but it does highlight the enormous challenges they face.

2.3.2 First Nations Language Immersion Programs.

The term “immersion” is often used to refer to language programs in which the teacher and learners attempt to “stay” in the language, rather than using English to teach First Nations language words and phrases. In other words, in immersion education, also called Content-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), all subject matter (literacy, numeracy and math, socials, science, physical education, etc.) is taught through and in the “target language.”

French immersion programs have been in existence throughout Canada since the 1970s and are supported by Canada’s “official bilingualism” policy, discussed earlier. The academic benefits of French immersion and early bilingualism have been well studied (Genesee, 1987). For French immersion, early (K) and late (Grade 5/6) entry models exist, with early entry the most common in BC. Early immersion follows a natural path of language acquisition that mirrors the path of first-language acquisition. Early immersion French typically starts with 100% instruction of primary curriculum in French, and reduces French language-based instruction to 50 percent by the middle school years and some 30 percent by senior secondary. Based on research, today’s immersion programs usually include focus-on-form practice that models and reinforces correct speech.

Compared to students who learn French as a second language or as a school subject for several years, French immersion students develop much higher language communication skills. French immersion programs result in advanced “functional proficiency” by the end of high school, with listening and reading abilities being native-speaker-like (ahead of speaking and writing ability, which in most students will not be native-speaker-like). Numerous studies have also shown that immersion education does not “hold back” students in their academic development. In fact, French immersion students’ performance meets or even exceeds the performance of English-only students in math and sciences. Initially, immersion students may lag behind non-immersion students in their English literacy skills, but they catch up within about two years. Students who develop literacy and numeracy skills through language immersion generally transfer these skills, and immersion students have been shown to benefit from the cognitive advantages of bilingualism (described above).

Several First Nations language immersion programs have been inspired by Maori and Hawaiian movements, which followed up on early childhood “language nests” by continuing the immersion experience into the K - 12 school system. Aboriginal language immersion in Canada was pioneered by the Mohawk in Kahnawake, and immersion programs now exist for Anishinabe, Cree, Peigan, Mi’kmaq, Oneida,

Inuktitut, Innuttitut, and some other languages.¹⁴ In BC, a small number of immersion programs also exist.

- Ts'elc'éwtqen Clleq'mél'ten (Chief Atahm School): The Secwepemctsin (Shuswap language) immersion program at Chief Atahm School near Chase, BC grew out of a language nest and has offered immersion education since the early 1990s. It currently operates as a full immersion program at the K - 3 levels, followed by bilingual education at the Grades 4 - 9 levels that includes 2 hours/week of Secwepemctsin instruction.
- Clao7alhcv Immersion Program at Xit'olacw Community School, Mount Currie (Lil'wat) is a cohort-based primary/elementary immersion class within the larger school. The school offers a second language program in the remainder of its K - 12 school, which is attended by some 250 students.
- WSÁNEĆ School Board offers a SENCOTEN language immersion program at the primary level at LENONET SCUL, AUTW Survival School.
- Nkmaplqs I Snmamayatn kl Sqilxwtet is an Okanagan language (N'syilxcen) immersion program operated by the Head-of-the-Lake Band, which was created in 2006 (Cohen 2010; Michel 2012).

No First Nations language immersion programs currently exist in BC public schools.

Overall, despite their advantages, developing immersion programs requires risk-taking, conviction, passion, hard work and high energy among teachers, families and communities, or at least groups of families within communities. In addition, they require fluent adults who are also trained and experienced classroom teachers, although programs like Chief Atahm School have successfully met this challenge through team teaching by fluent Elders and language apprentices who are trained as teachers.

2.3.3 Partial Immersion or Bilingual Programs

"Partial immersion" programs usually teach about 50 percent of the subject matter in the target language, although in some settings it may be less.

¹⁴ Good sources on Aboriginal language school immersion programs include Morcom, Lindsay, (n.c.); Kipp, Darrell (2009), McIvor, Onowa (2005), Michel, Kathryn (2004). The CARLA - Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (University of Minnesota) - website also provides a detailed list of sources on Indigenous immersion programs: www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/bibs/results

It is unclear what number of First Nations partial language immersion programs exist in BC. It appears that few programs offer 50 percent or 2.5 hours of daily First Nations language instruction, although programs that offer 45 minutes to 1.5 hours per day, with a combination of language- and content-focused instruction, do exist. Tahayghen Elementary School in Masset BC, for example, began in 2011/2012 with an all-day K class that included Xaad Kil (Haida language) instruction two afternoons each week.

2.3.4 Intensive French

Another option has been developed as an alternative to French immersion, and is now offered in most provinces, including BC. This model does not currently exist for any First Nations language, but it might provide inspiration for a First Nations intensive language program that is a compromise between full immersion and a second language program.

Intensive French is usually offered at the Grade 6 level. In the first half of the year, 80 percent of class time is taught in French, with 20 percent (math without reduction and English reduced by half) taught in English. During the first half of the year, students receive high-intensity, concentrated exposure to and instruction in French, which quickly builds competence. Curricular content (geography, history, health, etc.) is then integrated as students' language skills improve. Language instruction is highly interactive and communication-based, while also including reading and writing and problem-solving group work in the language. During the second half of the Grade 6 year, students receive 20 percent of instruction in French and 80 percent in English. In the French-intensive first half of the year, the curriculum is stripped of all but bare bones; in the second, English-intensive half of the year, the regular Grade 6 curriculum is "compacted" to meet learning outcomes for the year. The program continues with strong French instruction in the following years (usually one hour per day), called "enhanced French."

Assessments of students who have completed intensive French have shown that, following the Grade 6 year, students had oral competence comparable to core French Grade 9, 10 or even 11 students, and they had written communication skills similar to Grade 3 - 4 Francophone students. Their French language skills at the secondary school level were similar to the language skills of French immersion students. Data has indicated that the "compacting" of core curriculum has had no long-term impacts on overall student achievement levels. Providing that intensive French students receive "enhanced" French in Grades 7-12, by the time they graduate from secondary school, their French skills are on par with French immersion graduates.

Intensive language programming is, in principle, enabled by the BC Ministry of Education's language education policy. Supported by a fluent speaker (or through a team-teaching approach) and with curricular resources focused on fast-paced intensive teaching, it could offer cohort grade 5 or 6 level programs for particular First Nations languages that are supported by fluent and well trained teachers, motivated learners, families and Elders. If properly resourced (instruction, curriculum, and human resources) it could lead to advanced level proficiency that would be comparable to the results of a full immersion program.

2.4 LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS IN K-12

Below is a listing of teaching methods embraced by language teachers in BC and teachers of Indigenous languages worldwide. These methods are consistent with best practices and meaningful First Nations language teaching activities.

2.4.1 The "Berlitz Method" (Interactive question/answer)

At the heart of this approach are two principles.

- Only the target language is used in the classroom, with the teacher leaving English outside and carrying out all teaching, student prompts, and communications with students in the language.
- The use of question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students is at the heart of the Berlitz Method. Through questioning techniques, learners interact with the teacher and each other using the language, and thus enhance their communicative abilities. Question/answer sets are organized around a set of techniques and principles.

The examples below are adapted from Berlitz (2000).

TECHNIQUE 1: DEMONSTRATION

- **Salient Feature:** Ask a question while acting out or pointing at an object or picture.
- **Linguistic Focus:** Adjectives (comparison), adverbs, verb tenses, WH questions, straightforward vocabulary items, pronouns, passive voice

Example:

Teacher: (holding up a picture of a salmon) - is this a salmon?

Student: yes.

Teacher: Yes, it's a salmon.

Teacher: (acting out writing on the blackboard) Am I writing on the board?

Student: Yes, you are (writing on the board).

TECHNIQUE #2: ELIMINATION

- **Salient Feature:** Ask two or more questions until the student gives the correct response.
- **Linguistic Focus:** Adjectives (comparison), adverbs, verb tenses, WH questions, straightforward vocabulary items, pronouns, passive voice

Example:

Teacher acts as though reading a book.

Teacher: Am I drinking juice?

Student: No, you are not (drinking juice).

Teacher: What am I doing?

Student: You are reading (a book).

TECHNIQUE #3: SUBSTITUTION

- **Salient Feature:** Ask two questions, with the second question having the same meaning or answer as the first. Affirm the response.
- **Linguistic Focus:** Adjectives (comparison), adverbs, verb tenses, WH questions, straightforward vocabulary items, pronouns, passive voice

Example:

Teacher: Is the man glad? Is the man happy?

Student: Yes, he is happy.

Teacher: Yes.. He is glad and he is happy.

TECHNIQUE #4: CONTRAST

- **Salient Feature:** Ask a question whose answer is not depicted in the illustration or mime.
- **Linguistic Focus:** Adjectives (comparison), adverbs, verb tenses, WH questions, straightforward vocabulary items, pronouns, passive voice

Example:

Teacher: Is the man cooking?

Student: No, he is eating salmon. (This requires use of negative phrases, which can be much more complex in First Nations languages than plain declarative sentences).

TECHNIQUE #5: DEFINITION

- **Salient Feature:** Provide lead-in questions giving additional clue to the meaning or answer after students have listened to a dialogue, or listened to a short story.
- **Linguistic Focus:** Adjectives (comparison), adverbs, verb tenses, WH questions, straightforward vocabulary items, pronouns, passive voice.

Example:

Teacher: Did Richard call Susan this morning?

Student: Yes, he called (Susan this morning).

Teacher: Did he tell her that he would visit her tonight?

Student: Yes. (He told her that he would visit her tonight).

Teacher: Right. He told her that he would visit or drop by her house tonight.

TECHNIQUE #6: CONTROL

- **Salient Feature:** Ask questions to call on students to reproduce the sentence they have just been asked to repeat.
- **Linguistic Focus:** Grammatical structure covered by technique used to introduce the new lesson.

Example:

Teacher: Richard called up Susan this morning?

Student: Yes. (He called up Susan this morning).

Teacher: He will visit her tonight? (Or: He said he would visit her tonight?)

Student: Yes. He called up Susan this morning and said that he would visit her tonight.

TECHNIQUE #7: QUESTION-ANSWER

- **Salient Feature:** Ask questions to practice the lesson that has been introduced by way of a story or dialogue.
- **Linguistic Focus:** Yes/no questions, or Wh-questions (Who? What? When? Where?)

Example:

Teacher: Is Ms. Taylor looking for a suit?

Student: Yes, she is (looking for a suit).

TECHNIQUE #8: QUESTION FROM STUDENT

- **Salient Feature:** Ask questions to practice the lesson that has been introduced.
- **Linguistic Focus:** Question-answer-question pattern, answer-question pattern, indirect question pattern

Example:

Teacher: What are you doing?

Student: I'm listening to you.

Teacher: What did I ask?

Student: What are you doing?

Such exchanges (involving content or “wh”, as well as yes-no questions), and continuous reinforcement of vocabulary and grammatical forms through answers, can be integral building blocks of additional language teaching strategies, including those discussed below.

2.4.2 Total Physical Response

The Total Physical Response (TPR) approach, developed by Dr. James Asher and others, is a right-brain approach to second language learning, which uses commands in the target language combined with physical actions to instill listening skills in students. It is based on the concept that language learning can be greatly accelerated through the use of body movement, and it focuses on nurturing listening comprehension before the students are expected to produce speech, read or write. TPR command sets typically involve:

- The modeling of commands with a volunteer student or teacher's helper
- Commands to the class, small groups, or individuals
- The creative combination of previously learned commands and new words into novel commands

TPR by itself has three serious limitations.

1. It is mainly in the imperative (command) mode, generally excluding the rest of the language's sentence forms. However, with training and by using extensions beyond basic motion commands – like asking learners to respond to what they just did and what they will do, as well as converting commands into first-person, third-person, and “we” sentences – the limitation of command forms can be overcome.
2. It is often focused on short phrases or single-item vocabulary words, although “TPR routines” as stories (see below) can be productive follow up.
3. It might mainly produce only passive (listening) language skills, *unless* speaking is introduced relatively early on (after 10 hours) in the process.

Overall, language learned through TPR alone rarely develops into meaningful communication. In addition, TPR teachers and students eventually get tired of executing commands and tend to run into the proverbial “TPR Wall.” However, TPR is a very useful teaching method for physical action verbs (run, jump, turn around, dance, etc.) and for creating noun vocabulary by combining noun words with actions (such as touch, point to, give, take, etc.). Short daily TPR command segments of 5 - 10 minutes are integrated into lessons throughout Grade 3 Sm'algyax, derived from B. Segal-Cook's (1987) *Teaching English Through Action*. Other very useful resources are the TPR 1 and 2 books developed by Chief Atahm School (see Chief Atahm School website).

2.4.3 Total Physical Response Storytelling

TPR Story-telling (TPRS) builds on both the fast-paced question/answer sets of the Berlitz Method and the physical action commands of TPR. It provides fast-paced, comprehensible input through a series of steps that lead to learners being able to tell a story with the help of visuals, after having learned and practiced the needed vocabulary. The steps of TPR-S are as follows.

1. The pre-teaching of sets of 3 - 4 vocabulary items at a time through TPR commands, emphasizing gestures and kinesthetic movements, as well as the use and handling of visuals (flashcards, pictures, photos, props and models of items).
2. The incorporation of this vocabulary into Personalized Question-Answer sets (PQA's), through which the teacher incorporates the new and previously learned vocabulary into yes/no questions and "wh" questions.
3. The creation of Personalized Mini Situations (PMS), which combine the new and previously learned vocabulary into very short narratives of a few sentences.
4. The repetition of 1 - 3 until all vocabulary of the story is internalized.
5. The telling of a story that involves previously practiced vocabulary, with the help of visuals (a series of pictures) and first modeled by the teacher and then told by learners.

Because TPR-S is multi-sensory, involving auditory input (teacher's commands, questions, answers, narration), visual images (pictures, props, models), gestures and kinetics, it meets the needs of various learning styles.

2.4.4 AIM – Accelerative Integrated Method

The Accelerative Integrated Method (AIM) is also a useful approach for language instruction (www.aimlanguagelearning.com). Key aspects of AIM are as follows.

1. The use of a specially selected vocabulary to accelerate language acquisition: simplified, high-frequency vocabulary (PDL - Pared-down language).
2. The use of an innovative gesture technique, where not only noun words but also adjectives, pronouns, and grammatical elements are gestured.
3. Creative use of the language in plays, song, drama and story.
4. Promotion of productive and cooperative learning and transfer of the language skills acquired during structured whole-class activities in order to promote spontaneity and authentic conversations through creative collaborative work.
5. An inductive approach to teaching grammar (not teaching "rules," but having students discover regularities through games, repetition, modeling, gesturing, emphasis).

6. Incorporation of emotional language and rhythm.
7. Incorporation of “pleasant repetition.”
8. Limit on classroom activities to intensive 10-minute whole class activities.

2.4.5 “Where Are Your Keys?”

The Where Are Your Keys? (WAYK) method is a game-based approach that uses gestures and sign language to facilitate immediate communication in the language. The game is based on repeated questions and answers (an approach derived from the Berlitz Method), and also integrates concepts from TPR and TPR-S. Like AIM, WAYK uses gestures as “scaffolding” to help the learner understand what the speaker is telling him, and the learner also uses gestures to help convey meaning.

Each short lesson is organized as a language “game” that begins with objects and then quickly moves into adjectives (for example contrasting size, colour, qualities). From there, ownership (mine, yours, his/hers), wishing or wanting something, verbs, singular vs. plural – all of these are easily expressed in obvious ways. As in AIM, each word has an American Sign Language hand sign, so if learners need help clarifying the meaning of a word or phrase, they and the teacher can use sign language and gesture to convey meaning instead of switching to English. Since there are hand signs for “slow down your speech” and “faster,” the learner has good control of the learning situation in the “game.” WAYK prompts learners to respond in complete sentences from the beginning, rather than spending the first set of lessons physically responding to comprehensible input, as with TPR. Stimulating students’ use of the language in sentences from the onset in turn stimulates communicative competence.

See also www.whereareyourkeys.org, and several videos showing First Nations language learning using WAYK can be found online on You Tube (Squamish, Karok, Yurok).

2.4.6 Other Conceptual Pedagogical Approaches

In addition to the well-recognized language teaching methods outlined above, other “best practice” pedagogical approaches include the following.

- Teaching through active engagement of learners – e.g. based on the concept of Imaginative Education developed by Kieran Egan (<https://www.sfu.ca/~egan/>).

- “Discovery learning” approaches, which support experiential or hands-on learning on the land – in this case involving Elder and knowledge keeper teachings (e.g. drum making, tanning, traditional food gathering, experiencing traditional village sites and stories). This model may mean dealing with challenges related to the logistics of arranging field-trips and fitting land-based learning into regular scheduled school hours. First Nations schools tend to have more flexibility for implementing such learning experiences.
- Indigenous approaches to learning – learning by doing, experiential learning, and culturally embedded learning. The *Western Canadian Protocol Language and Culture Curriculum Framework* discussed in Section 3.2.1 of this report describes methods for thoughtful integration of Indigenous approaches.

In addition, for the past seven years, the Sm’algyax Committee has integrated aspects of the *Imaginative Education* approach into its K-12 language curriculum binders as a way to support students’ emotional engagement, creativity, use of story, metaphor, song, drama and rhythm, or in other words:

a way of teaching and learning that is based on engaging learners’ (and teachers’) imaginations. Imagination is the ability to think of what might be possible; it is the ‘reaching out’ feature of the mind, enabling the learner to go beyond what he or she has mastered so far. Connecting the child’s imagination with the world is the key to much successful teaching and learning (www.ierg.net/LUCID/overview).

During 2006-09, several school districts participated in a LUCID Project (Learning for Understanding Through Culturally Inclusive Imaginative Development), including workshops focused on how Imaginative Education concepts could be used in the First Nations language classroom. Imaginative Education is based on the idea that children’s development of intellectual and cognitive skills is supported through a variety of approaches that appeal to learners’ emotions and physical senses through rhythm, visual and verbal imagery, patterning to support learning, humour, the use of mime and gesture, notions of extremes, adventure and drama.

- **Emotions:** What is emotionally engaging about this topic? How can the teacher connect it with the student’s feelings?
- **Senses:** How can the topic engage the senses? How can students see it, touch it, hear it, smell it and even taste it?
- **Rhythm and Music:** How can the topic be explored through rhythms (seasonal, syllabic and daily rhythms)? How can music and song give access to the topic?

- **Metaphor/Images:** What image or metaphor will help to explain the topic?
- **Patterns:** What patterns can be used to explore the topic? (frame sentences, repetition, patterns within sentence or word structure = focus-on-form)
- **Humour:** Are there any double meanings? How can you incorporate the unexpected?
- **Exploring Limits of Reality – Extremes and Collections:** What is the greatest and the least of the topic, the most extreme? How can students become experts on the topic? How can they organize or list it?
- **Gesture/Imitation:** How can you show the topic through gesture? How can you use your body to explain the topic? Can the students learn by imitating your example?

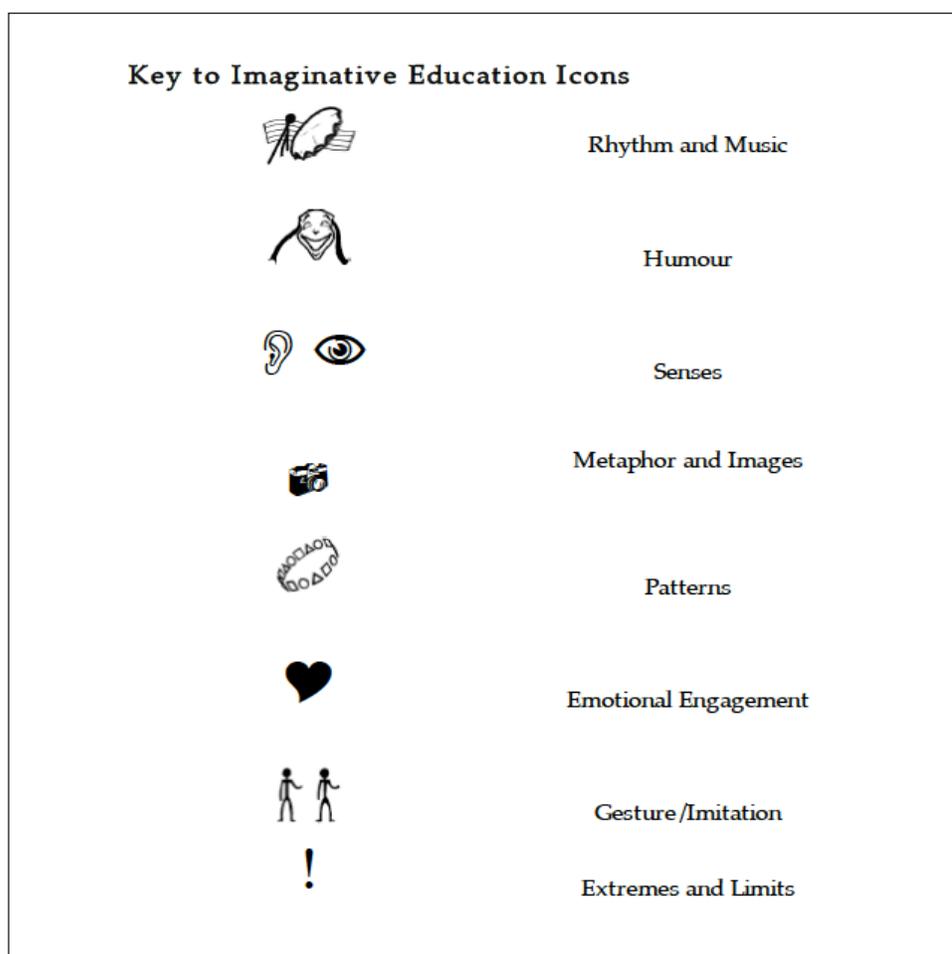


Figure 3: Imaginative Education is based on the idea that children's development of intellectual and cognitive skills is supported through a variety of approaches that appeal to learners' emotions and physical senses.

From the perspective of best practices and methodology in language teaching and learning, the above concepts can easily be translated into sensible and rewarding methodologies and approaches to language teaching, as follows.

- Engage students through humour, interesting props, stories, words, actions and games that will capture their attention and curiosity. For example, the teacher can integrate Imaginative Education concepts into the classroom by bringing interesting objects into class that fit into the unit, hide objects in the classroom or during TPR lessons, and/or introduce silly or unexpected commands and phrases.
- Use lots of gesture and body language in teaching to convey and emphasize meaning, and provide “scaffolding” for students internalizing vocabulary and grammar. TPR and TPR-S are both based on the use of actions (mainly through commands) to support the internalization of vocabulary.
- Use rhythm and music, as well as rhythmic speech that makes use of the beautiful intonation pattern of the language. Also, songs can help young learners learn and use vocabulary and structures of the language in a fun and interesting way.
- Integrate collections of items, counting, and comparison.

3

LANGUAGE-SPECIFIC CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

3.1 THE NEED FOR CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS AND PLANS

The term **curriculum** is used in this document to refer to “the overall plan or design for a course and how the content for a course is transformed into a blueprint for teaching and learning which enables the desired learning outcomes to be achieved” (Wiggins and McTighe, 2006). A curriculum is a “roadmap” or plan of what is taught, how it is taught, with what materials, and in order to achieve what intended outcomes.

A First Nations language curriculum document usually includes the following.

- ✓ Broad **goals** and **objectives** and their **rationale** – Why should the language be taught? Curriculum frameworks are increasingly focused on setting objectives in the form of standards and benchmarks that can be implemented, assessed specific to a language, and also compared across languages.
- ✓ The intended **outcomes** – What might be the outcomes based on what we know about the benefits of bilingualism and First Nations language maintenance (see Part 1)? Appreciation of the First Nations language and culture? Competence or proficiency in the language? What level of competence?
- ✓ The overall **approach** to the subject matter – What assumptions, in this case about language learning and language acquisition, guide the curriculum? Instead of stressing linguistic and grammatical competence (i.e. the mechanics of the language), contemporary approaches to language teaching and learning tend to focus on communicative competence, authentic communication in the language, action-oriented approaches to teaching, and the enhancement of learning through engaging emotions.

- ✓ **Specific prescribed learning outcomes** – What are learners expected to be able to do within specific increments of the curriculum? Although intended outcomes stated as prescribed learning outcomes (PLOs) were for decades the norm of curriculum writing (for example, it is expected that students will be able to.....), “can do” statements are now increasingly used in curriculum frameworks (described more below).
- ✓ **Instructional strategies** – What classroom activities will be used to deliver the program?
- ✓ **Learning resources and materials** – What will teachers use and what do they need to facilitate learners’ progress?
- ✓ **Assessment formats** – What will: enable the teacher to determine if and how the learner has met learning outcomes; guide the way students reflect on their learning; and allow the teacher to reflect on what works well, and what perhaps does not work as well, as they teach subject matter laid out in curriculum?

For many teachers, their program descriptions, course plans, or the year plans they develop for the school principal constitute their curriculum. Indeed, “what students are likely to learn” can often be inferred from a teaching / instructional plan.

However, a teaching / instructional plan usually only reflects the approach of the teacher who created it – his or her particular teaching style and teaching circumstances (i.e., it assumes a particular student population, a certain body of prior learning, and the availability of particular resources). It often focuses more on how teachers intend to guide student learning than on what students will take away from the program. But what is deliberately taught is not always what students in fact learn.

On the other hand, standardized curriculum plans can lay out a permanent set of objectives, outcomes, instructional methods and assessment tools that extend beyond the individual teacher who teaches the subject matter at a given time. In other words, while curriculum frameworks create common goals, instructional methods, and assessment formats, they also serve as a way to standardize what is taught and how and can be used as a way to accredit education programs. Recent curriculum frameworks also aim to not only provide common standards but also to establish common and comparable outcomes of language proficiency, usually with a set of levels and benchmarks based on descriptors of learner competence in the areas of listening, reading, speaking (in interaction and in telling), and writing.

3.2 EXISTING CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS FOR FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES IN CANADA

Since the 1990s, various curriculum frameworks for First Nations Languages in Canada have been developed. The website of the *Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers* (www.caslt.org) includes a link to First Nations Languages, which provides access to provincially and territorially developed and approved curriculum guides for First Nations languages. For several provinces (Alberta, Ontario, Nova Scotia) language-specific curricula have been developed, such as Cree/Nehiyawewin, Anishinabek, Mikmaw/Miigmao, and Blackfoot. In addition, Ontario and Saskatchewan have developed general Native / Aboriginal language curriculum guides for Grades 1 - 12. For BC, only the Ministry of Education Languages Template (discussed below) is listed.

3.2.1 The Western Canadian Protocol Common Curriculum Framework

A curriculum framework of particular interest is outlined in *the Common Curriculum Framework – Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs – Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education*, published in June 2000 (www.wncp.ca).

This Western Canadian Protocol for Aboriginal Language and Culture (WCPALC) was developed in 1997-2000 by a consortium of Elders and language educators from the four western provinces (BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba), as well as Yukon and the NWT. Its purpose is to create a common vision and language for teachers, school representatives, administrators and trustees to communicate the objectives and goals of Aboriginal language and culture programs. The Framework views language and culture as inseparable, with language perceived as vital to understanding unique cultural perspectives. In other words, language is considered as “a tool that students can use to explore and experience their cultures and the perspectives embedded in their cultures.”

With a goal of supporting the revitalization and enhancement of languages, the document recognizes that the community must take responsibility for revitalizing its language and its culture, and notes:

The Elders tell of the power of the language to generate change and a sense of direction within the learner. Learning the First Language becomes a powerful source of one’s personal commitment to become healthy and to learn the ways of achieving a healthy environment once more.

Much of the WCPALC consists of learning outcomes for culture and language aimed at both first-language and second-language learners (children whose first language

is English). As the Framework authors acknowledge, the first-language outcomes are also suitable for immersion programs or partial immersion (“bilingual”) programs. First and second language outcomes are tied to the cultural outcomes in various implicit and explicit ways. The cultural content is organized around Aboriginal ‘laws of relationship’, as articulated by the consulting Elders – whose advice and knowledge was viewed as fundamental to the WCPALC. The laws of relationship identified in the framework include the following.

A personal commitment to the sacred (respect in relationships)

- Protocol (conduct in ceremonies and social interaction)
- Medicine (personal habits and practice in relation to health and spiritual gifts)
- Ceremonies (roles and conduct)
- Copyright (earning the right to knowledge)
- Oral tradition (expression of knowledge, its forms and ownership)

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE PROGRAM AIM

Language and culture programs developed from the Framework will have the aim of providing students with Aboriginal perspectives and skills (including language) that will help them to:

- find balance within themselves to live peacefully and respectfully with themselves, one another and the land
 - play a role in revitalizing Aboriginal languages and cultures
-

PROGRAM GOALS

Cultural	First Language	Second Language
<p>Students will demonstrate the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in the practices and use of the products of their Aboriginal culture • understand the perspectives and underlying knowledge of their Aboriginal culture • willingly reflect on their relationships with themselves, one another and the natural world 	<p>Students will demonstrate the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the Aboriginal language to interact with others in order to build relationships • learn from the words of their people • research and record cultural knowledge • create and express effective Aboriginal text • explore their changing language 	<p>Students will demonstrate the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use language in community and school situations requiring interaction, production or interpretation of language • use strategies for learning a language • communicate with degrees of precision, coherency and fluency • use language to give and get information, socialize and celebrate, interpret and produce talk, and research culture

In the WCPALC, the laws of relationship are organized into three curriculum organizers – 1. Laws of Sacred Life, 2. Laws of Nature, and 3. Laws of Mutual Support, with three broad categories of learning outcomes for each: Cultural Outcomes (cultural skills and personal development), First Language Outcomes, and Second Language Outcomes, all of which are articulated at six levels (K-1, Grades 2-3, Grades 4-6, Grades 7-8, Grades 9-10 and Grades 11-12). Cultural outcomes are further divided into Cultural Understandings and Cultural Skills.

The tables below are sample excerpts from the WCPALC, which show how cultural outcomes are organized and expressed.

Example 1: Cultural Outcomes

LAWS OF MUTUAL SUPPORT

Leadership: Cultural Skills

Level 1 (K-Gr.1)	Level 2 (Gr. 2-3)	Level 3 (Gr. 4-6)
<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow the cultural rules and practices established in the classroom for everyone's safety and well-being • practice cultural ways of showing respect for the Elders • participate in group work • encourage and acknowledge contribution of others • help those who seem to need assistance • listen respectfully to other students when sharing 	<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow basic protocols or practices, if any, relating to interaction with special roles in their families • follow the cultural rules and practices of their families • practice cultural ways of showing respect for their Elders and other culture keepers in their families • participate in group work • help to clarify and articulate tasks to others • listen to the suggestions of others 	<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow basic protocols or practices relating to interaction with special roles in their nation/ community • take or promote and support leadership in class projects • take or promote and support leadership in the school • practice cultural ways or protocols for showing respect to the leaders of the community/ nation • participate in group work • acknowledge skills and talents in others • actively listen to and watch for concerns of others • express personal ideas or concerns to the group • participate in brainstorming solutions • listen respectfully to the voices of those more experienced, especially Elders and adults

Example 2: Second Language Outcomes

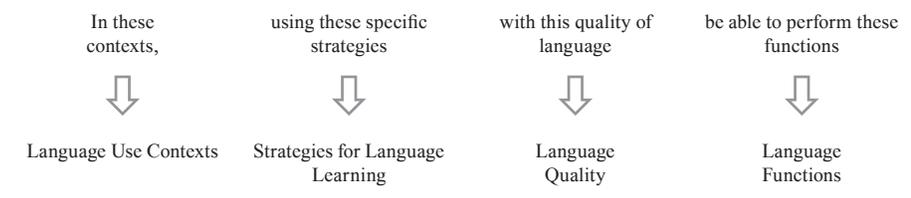
LEARN FROM THE WORDS OF THE PEOPLE

	Level 1 (K-Gr.1)	Level 2 (Gr. 2-3)	Level 3 (Gr. 4-6)
<i>Students will use cues and strategies to understand Aboriginal text by:</i>			
TRADITIONAL ORAL NARRATIVES FROM ELDERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recalling what is already familiar about the narratives to be told, prior to the telling listening for and committing to memory the main character's actions and consequences demonstrating attentive facial expressions and respectful silence during the telling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recalling what is already familiar about the narratives to be told, prior to the telling listening for the opening statement, which sets the theme or purpose of the narrative listening for and committing to memory the sequence of main events and final resolution or conclusion listening for details about way of life demonstrating active listening by providing encouraging verbal cues to the storyteller showing respectful appreciation during presentation of a gift to the storyteller in exchange for a story or knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recalling what is already familiar about the narratives to be told, prior to the telling listening for and committing to memory examples of laws governing relationships to nature, one another and oneself listening for story parts or subplots demonstrating appropriate audience behaviour by encouraging the storyteller with verbal "punctuation" to the story or by filling in story parts showing respectful appreciation during presentation of a gift to the storyteller in exchange for a story or knowledge

In the WCPLC, the second language outcomes stress the development of communicative proficiency in listening, reading, speaking and writing. Levels of communicative proficiency are described in terms of characteristics such as: degree of accuracy in the communication of meaning; the variety of topics that can be dealt with; and the amount of spontaneity and abstraction involved in various language-use situations. At a particular level of proficiency, second language outcomes are organized into four types: language use contexts, strategies for language learning, language quality, and language functions.

SECOND LANGUAGE OUTCOMES

At a particular level of proficiency, students will:



In terms of language quality (grammatical/phonetic accuracy, fluency or ease of communication, coherency) the WCPLC notes:

While the communicative approach to teaching second languages emphasizes the primacy of function over form, the qualitative features of language use must not be dismissed nor delayed during instruction. Ignoring skills in these areas tends to lead to a fossilization of language development regardless of continued instruction or language use. Individuals are able to function relatively well in the second language, understanding and being understood, but are viewed by the language community as having a 'broken' language or a 'pidgin' language.

The Framework provides detailed learning outcomes for each of the four areas of proficiency. Below are examples of learning outcomes that measure accuracy for Levels 1-3 (Grades K - 6) and 4-6 (Grades 7 - 12). As described in Part 4 of this document, for specific languages it is useful to map out the particular grammatical and phonetic concepts that underlie learning outcomes expressing accuracy and fluency. It is also useful to map out at what grade or competence levels specific concepts are introduced, practiced, known by students, and expected to be mastered, at least to some degree.

LANGUAGE QUALITY

Accuracy

Level 1 (K-Gr.1)	Level 2 (Gr. 2-3)	Level 3 (Gr. 4-6)
<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • base understanding and production on mostly memorized utterances and expressions of 2-3 words • understand and accurately use basic vocabulary relating to the immediate classroom environment and personal needs • rely extensively on context rather than on understanding of language for meaning • use simple, basic sentences as memorized forms 	<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempt to pronounce words accurately • use a larger basic vocabulary • continue to rely on context for clues to understand communication at the sentence level • understand and use high frequency noun inflections • distinguish basic tense forms for past, present and future action • begin to distinguish features that indicate functions of possession, number and person in phrases • use simple sentences with relative accuracy • make accurate sound associations with most written symbols of language (difficulty with some foreign phonemes) • spell short words based on their ability to distinguish sounds of the language • read and write simple familiar words 	<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • combine individual words to form short sentences • pronounce most sounds of the language accurately • begin to pay attention to regular changes in verbs or verb phrases that determine meaning • begin to understand notions of aspect – action as beginning, repeating, progressive • understand, more consistently, longer simple sentences and complex sentences if spoken slowly and clearly in context • write simple dictated sentences with correct punctuation and correct spelling of contrasting sounds that are not difficult to distinguish • read and understand simple sentences on familiar topics

 LANGUAGE QUALITY

Accuracy

Level 4 (Gr. 7-8)	Level 5 (Gr. 9-10)	Level 6 (Gr. 11-12)
<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempt to self-correct pronunciation • understand and use specific vocabulary associated with their daily lives • begin to use the more common structure words in sentences – words that have not meaning but have grammatical importance • use common regular verb affixes with relative accuracy • attempt to use various verb forms, but make frequent errors in choices • use correct word order in short utterances and basic constructions • begin to use some complex sentences, but syntax is not always correct • spell with accuracy based on the accuracy of their pronunciation and grammar 	<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce sounds of language that are difficult to the second language student, with enough clarity to prevent misunderstandings of common words • understand and use specific vocabulary associated with a range of common topics • understand and produce sentences containing a subordinate clause • understand and use a wider range of common verbal affixes with relative accuracy • understand simple authentic written text, such as from magazines, or prose that is transparent 	<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a variety of basic sentences using accurate grammar • use complex sentences and phrases but not without error • use idioms, and basic and specialized vocabulary from course content, to communicate ideas • use understanding of the varying sound systems of different dialects to understand them better • read 1-2 page text of factual, concrete information from a cultural study or prose that is relatively straightforward

Note: *from the point of view of language quality or linguistic quality, “simple sentences” are those with a single statement; “complex sentences” are two or more sentences that are linked by a conjunction (“he did this and then he did that,” “she did x but y happened,) or sentences that give causes (like “because,” “due to”, etc.). Complex sentences are more difficult than simple sentences because they involve significant juggling of detail.*

In summary, the WCPALC is a thoughtful and detailed document that was developed with participation from language educators, Elders and other key stakeholders. It details approaches underlying First Nations language education, First Nation approaches and philosophies that should be embedded in language education, along with learning outcomes and assessment materials, all of which are still relevant fifteen years after its inception. Yet while this resource has guided Aboriginal language education in other jurisdictions, it has not been put to productive use in BC.

3.2.2 BC Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs) and Languages Template

As described in Part 2 of this document, in BC public schools second language instruction, including First Nations language education, is regulated through the BC *School Act* and through the Ministry's Language Education Policy, developed in 1997.

As noted above, the BC Ministry of Education Language Policy encourages Aboriginal language education by noting: "all students, especially those of Aboriginal ancestry, should have opportunities to learn an Aboriginal language." Specifically, the languages policy determines that all students "must take a second language as part of the curriculum in Grades 5 to 8," making certain exceptions for students with special needs, students who receive English Language Learning services, and students in late French Immersion. School districts that offer languages at the Grades 5 - 8 level usually offer them for Grades 9 - 12, thus enabling students to complete Grade 11 and 12 in the language – allowing them to use the language for academic credit towards graduation and meet second language requirements established by universities.

In order to set standards for second language education in schools, in the mid-1990s the Ministry began to develop Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs) for all core subjects. IRPs provide an overview of the approach and principles used in teaching the subject and, broken down into curriculum organizers, lay out prescribed learning outcomes for specific grade levels. They also list provincially approved curricular resources and provide student assessment formats and samples.

The Ministry has also developed a Languages Template document, last updated in 2003, which provides an organizational framework and wording for an IRP for any second language – including a First Nations language – for which local organizations seek provincial approval (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/language_template).

The Ministry website provides a list of Ministry-authorized second languages developed through the provincial Languages Template, which includes fifteen First Nations language IRPs that were complete and provincially approved as of August 2014.

- Halq'eméylem (Upriver Halkomelem/Sto:lo) 5-12 and Introductory 11
- Heiltsuk 5 to 12 and Introductory Heiltsuk 11
- Hul'q'umi'num' (Island Halkomelem) 5 to 12 and Introductory Hul'q'umi'num' 11
- Kwak'wala 5 to 12 and Introductory Kwak'wala 11
- Liqwala/Kwak'wala 5 to 12 and Introductory Liqwala/Kwakwala 11
- nsíylxcən (Okanagan language) 5 to 12 and Introductory nsíylxcən
- Nte?kepmxcin (Thompson language) 5 to 12 and Introductory 11
- Nuu-chah-nulth 5 to 12 and Introductory Nuu-cha-nulth 11

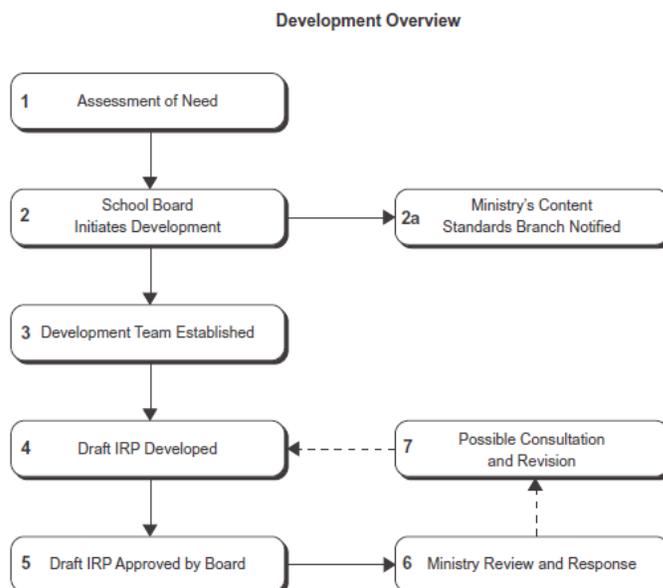
- Secwepemctsin (Shuswap Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Secwepemctsin 11
- SENĆŦEN 5 to 12 and Introductory SENĆŦEN 11
- Shashishalhem (Sechelt Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Shashishalhem 11
- Sim'algax̣hl Nisga'a 5 to 12 and Introductory Sim'algax̣hl Nisga'a 11
- Sm'alg̣yax (Coast Tsimshian) 5 to 12 and Introductory Sm'alg̣yax 11
- Tsek'ene (Sekani) 5 to 12 and Introductory Tsek'ene 11
- Upper St'at'imcets (Fraser River Lillooet) 5-12 and Introductory Upper St'at'imcets 11

Several additional First Nations language IRPs are now in preparation or are awaiting Ministry approval.

Unlike other Ministry-approved IRPs, First Nations language IRPs are not available on the Ministry's website, as their copyright is in the name of the First Nations organization / language authority that sponsored the IRP production in collaboration with a local school district. The Kwak'wala IRP, however, has been made available online, with permission from the First Nations organization that produced it (see more in part 4).

Writing an Integrated Resource Package

The Languages Template document, available as a read-only PDF file and as a Microsoft Word document that can be overwritten and edited, includes detailed instructions. The diagram below (from the BC Languages Template) shows the steps involved in developing a First Nations language IRP.



An IRP includes the following components.

- **An introduction**, which includes a number of sections based on Ministry of Education Policy that must appear exactly as written in the template (e.g. sections on the communicative-experiential approach to language teaching, prescribed learning outcomes, cross-curricular integration, suggested instructional strategies, exemptions from the language policy, special needs students). The only section that allows First Nations language groups to explain the cultural and historical context of the language and its unique nature is the rationale section.
- **The core of the IRP** – including four “strongly recommended” **curriculum organizers**: (*Communicating, Acquiring Information, Experiencing Creative Works and Understanding Cultural Influences*), which for each Grade level (5-12 and Introductory Grade 11) list prescribed learning outcomes, suggested instructional strategies, suggested assessment strategies, and learning resources.
- **A set of appendices**, which presents the prescribed learning outcomes in tables, provides assessment and evaluation samples, and lists learning resources available for the language according to grade level, along with information about suppliers.

Constraints, Challenges and Alternatives

At present, the BC Languages Template represents the only option for having First Nations languages meet the provincial second language requirement. Yet First Nations representatives have pointed out various constraints related to the template.

- It was not designed according to the particular conditions and context of Aboriginal languages. Unlike the WCPALC discussed above, the BC Languages Template is perceived as primarily accommodating heritage and immigrant languages.
- The current version of the Languages Template (2003) is 13 years old.
- IRPs only address First Nations language education at the Grades 5 - 12 level. Despite the fact that some school districts and most First Nations schools offer First Nations language education at the Grade K - 4 level, to date no provincial IRPs have been approved for primary and early elementary First Nations language education. A few First Nations language groups have produced IRPs for Grades K - 4, but these are not accommodated within existing Ministry policy.

- Despite the production of IRPs, First Nations language programs (unlike French and foreign language programs) in most cases are not covered by core school district funds.
- IRPs have no provisions for immersion or partial immersion programming, and instead are entirely focused on second language learning.
- First Nations language IRPs based on the BC Languages Template function as *authorizing* documents for the provincial accreditation of First Nations languages, rather than providing practical guidance (let alone detailed substance) for the preparation of units and lessons, including language content. Accordingly, some First Nations have engaged in IRP development, and in addition have developed grade-specific binders of curricular content that list broad learning outcomes, sample instructional strategies and assessment formats, and *detailed content* in the First Nations language laid out in units and lessons – all described in Part 4 below.

Despite these constraints, participants in consultation workshops and First Nations Elders and language teachers tend to support the development of First Nations language IRPs, in large part due to the improved status and recognition that IRPs provide, the incentive of academic credit they offer secondary students, and – to a lesser extent – the curricular support they offer.

IRPs have been completed and submitted to the Ministry of Education by communities and schools representing just over half of the First Nations languages in BC.

3.3 EXAMPLES FROM ELSEWHERE

3.3.1 The Australian Draft Framework

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (www.australiancurriculum.edu.au) has produced a draft curriculum framework for Australia's more than 200 Indigenous languages. Like the WCPALC discussed above, the Australian Framework provides three learner pathways:

- ***L1 – First-Language Learner Pathway*** for languages that are still learned in the home as first-languages and that still have a substantial community of speakers across generations. A key feature of this pathway is the development of written literacy and numeracy skills in the Aboriginal language, valuing the language,

and building tools to adapt the capacity of the language for communication in all contexts.

- **LR – Language Revival Learner Pathway** provides students with the opportunity to “study a language that is being revived, revitalized and remade by its owners, custodians and communities, and they range from languages that are only beginning to be revitalized to languages so advanced in their revival that initial generations of new first-language speakers are beginning to emerge as parents use the languages with their children.” These learners will not only become language revitalization practitioners who can communicate in the Aboriginal language: they will also acquire “techniques of linguistic practices that apply to language revival,” and techniques to work with recorded materials.
- **L2 – Second Language Learner Pathway** provides students of all backgrounds with opportunities to learn an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language that is well documented and still spoken. L2 students may not live in the homeland where the language is spoken.

The ACARA is organized around learning outcomes that instill cultural and language competencies within two curriculum organizers – communication and researching – paying significant attention to the role that learners of Aboriginal languages will play in language revitalization.

3.3.2 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an international standard for second or foreign language competence. Developed by the Council of Europe in 2001, it establishes international standards for learning, teaching, and assessment, and represents a tool for describing and comparing learners’ communicative ability in a language as it emerges. The CEFR is a common reference for curriculum guidelines and resources, and in recent years, it has also been used for some of Europe’s 84 regional and minority languages (www.coe.int/minlang), some of which are endangered or even critically endangered, and some of which are Indigenous. In the past decade, the CEFR has been implemented world-wide.

The CEFR sets common standards and criteria for levels of language learning and proficiency, and it describes a Global Scale that can be used with virtually any language.

- A1 and A2 – Basic User (Basic/Beginning learner)
- B1 and B2 – Independent User (Intermediate learner)
- C1 and C2 – Proficient User (Advanced learner)

The CEFR is organized around a set of statements (what someone should be able to do at each level), each with descriptors (ways in which that competency is shown). In addition, the CEFR has turned competency levels and descriptors into charts of “can do” statements, which learners themselves can use to check their competency as they are learning – whether in a formal school, adult education setting, or otherwise. The CEFR provides a road map for levels of competency that is based on communicative competence in everyday, authentic settings and the ability to function in the language. Communicative competence is mapped out as listening, speaking (comprising spoken conversation and spoken production),¹⁵ reading and writing skills.

In 2006, based on a comparison of various assessment frameworks and benchmarks, the CEFR was recommended for describing language proficiency across Canada (Vandergrift, 2006). As of 2011, the Department of Canadian Heritage recommended the implementation of the CERF for “official languages” across Canada, although the document does not make mention of First Nations languages.¹⁶ Ministries and Departments of Education across North America are adopting the CEFR for guiding Second Language templates and IRPs, and the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) has reviewed and supports the application of the CEFR in Canadian schools.¹⁷ The current (2011) BC Draft IRP for French is based on the CEFR model and is organized around CEFR-based proficiency levels, matched up with approximate grade levels.

An important tool that has resulted from the CEFR is the European Language Portfolio. Owned by learners within the context of life-long learning, the portfolio documents the learners’ emerging proficiency in the languages they are learning / have learned. It consists of three components:

- Language Passport – completed by a learner’s teacher(s) or school, this reports on the learner’s accomplishments, level of competence attained, course(s) completed, and includes letters of recommendation;
- Biography – this self-assessment by the learner provides a reflection on language learning challenges and successes, as well as emerging language skills and use of the language(s) being learned; and

¹⁵ Spoken conversation refers to authentic use of language in verbal exchanges (dialogue); spoken production includes narrating, making an oral presentation, presenting a verbal report on a topic.

¹⁶ [elpimplementation.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/Canada/ ProposalofaCFRforCanada/tabid/122/language/fr-FR/language/en-GB/Default.asp](http://elpimplementation.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/Canada/ProposalofaCFRforCanada/tabid/122/language/fr-FR/language/en-GB/Default.asp)

¹⁷ *Working with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in the Canadian Context: Guide for Policy-Makers and Curriculum Designers.*

- Dossier – a portfolio that includes samples of the learner’s work at various stages of language learning.

Within Canada, Nunavut has adapted the language portfolio concept to allow teachers and learners to report and reflect on their emerging language competence. For web links to electronic language passport samples see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/french.

Another very useful example of a student language portfolio, as well as a teacher’s guide for its use and implementation, was developed by Maxwell for AIM Language Learning. This document also includes a Language Assessment Activities Package based on the CEFR (see www.aimlanguagelearning.com).

CEFR and First Nations Languages

Given the attention that the CEFR has received among language educators, it is worthwhile to consider whether a First Nations K-12 Language and Culture Framework could draw inspiration from the CEFR.

One welcome aspect of the CEFR is the fact that it is based on statements of what learners “can do” (not what they can’t do or are doing wrong). In addition:

- The CEFR is learner-oriented and encourages reflection on learning.
- Rather than stipulating “mastery” of a second language, the CEFR focuses on developing communicative, action-based repertoire and use. Given the fact that of the K-12 students and adults who have begun to learn their First Nations languages, only a few individuals are likely to achieve high-level proficiency, such an approach may be most realistic and feasible.
- The CEFR considers language learning as a life-long task. Similarly, for those who are learning their ancestral language, it will be important to support their continued learning and long-term use of their language as they help to re-build domains of use.
- Since its aim is to set common objectives, outcomes and standards across languages, the CEFR deliberately does not refer to or include grammatical structure, amount and content of vocabulary, or competence over the phonetics or sound system of languages. It is the curricula and textbooks for specific languages, which are guided by the CEFR, that address language-specific competency over vocabulary, grammar, phonetics and cultural connections. In this way, this curriculum framework leaves room for language-specific

curricula and curricular resources in a variety of formats (print, audio- and video materials, digital apps).

- The CEFR promotes plurilingualism, understood as competence and use of (to varying degrees) two or more languages. Given the fact that revitalizing and re-creating competence and use of First Nations languages with the help of K - 12 schooling exists and will continue to exist in addition to English competence (rather than replacing use and competence of English) the concept is relevant for this context.

In summary, is the CEFR – which arises from an international foreign language context – appropriate? Is it meaningful for languages that have almost no fluent first-language speakers left? The points listed above make it worth considering within the context of First Nations languages. At least it would most definitely be useful to adapt and develop competency assessments that will guide learners of First Nations languages – whether adults or youth – to a clearer understanding of where they are on the path to gaining competence in their language. Such a process will also guide First Nations language authorities that are charged with determining the proficiency of users and speakers of the language (all discussed more in Part 4 of this document).

3.3.3 WHAKAMĀTAURIA TŌ REO MĀORI (National Maori Language Proficiency Examinations)

Another framework is offered by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, the Maori Language Commission. It offers five levels of Maori language proficiency:

- Level 1) Basic Routine Language
- Level 2) Basic Conversational Proficiency
- Level 3) Moderate Proficiency
- Level 4) Higher Proficiency
- Level 5) Complete Proficiency

These levels are measured by the Maori Language Commission using a Level Finder Examination, which measures Maori language knowledge and acts as a “general indicator of language ability.” Its test consists of vocabulary, grammar, dictation and self-assessment tasks reported as one of the five levels listed above.

3.4 ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE BENCHMARK AND STANDARDS DOCUMENTS

Several other benchmarks exist in North America, many of which have been influenced by the CEFR – especially its use of “can do” statements. Some attempts also have been made to apply them to Indigenous language teaching and learning. These are discussed below.

3.4.1 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines (www.actfl.org) are presented as descriptions of what individuals can do in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context. For each skill, the guidelines identify five major levels of proficiency: distinguished, superior, advanced, intermediate, and novice. The advanced, intermediate, and novice levels are subdivided into high, mid, and low sublevels. The levels in the ACTFL Guidelines describe a continuum of proficiency from highly articulate, well-educated to little or no functional ability.

Criteria for each of the levels include:

- fluency (use without hesitation, pausing, switching to English);
- range, depth and variety of topics that can be addressed;
- accuracy of use (grammar, use of simple vs. complex structures, pronunciation and accent, and the degree to which use of vocabulary, pronunciation and syntax are influenced by the learner’s first language); and
- the ability to respond to unexpected situations and unfamiliar topics, and the ability to use the language creatively, rather than relying on memorized words and phrases.

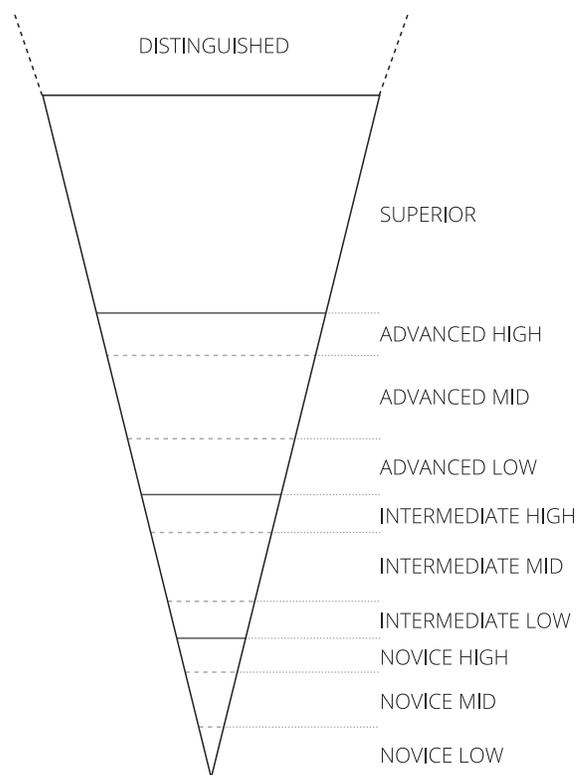
Similar to the CEFR benchmarks and Can Do charts, in the ACTFL guidelines, independence from memorized repertoire, creative use of language, and accuracy beyond very basic structures begin to occur at the intermediate mid-level.

The ACTFL Benchmarks have been used by the Northwest Indian Language Institute (NWILI) – a group of Oregon and Washington Indigenous language speakers, educators, learners, specialists and linguists housed at the University of Oregon (www.uoregon.edu/nwili). In a simplified format and expressed as learning outcomes, the NWILI benchmarks lay out proficiency levels (listening, speaking, reading, writing)

with a focus on accuracy around increasingly complex topic areas or themes that have been identified by speakers and Elders as culturally relevant and important.

The ACTFL proficiency levels represented in the graph below show the exponential degree to which language competence increases between the novice and superior levels.

ACTFL Proficiency Levels (www.actfl.org)



3.4.2 CLB - Canadian Language Benchmarks

The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB; www.language.ca) were initially developed in 1992 by the Government of Canada to guide English as a Second Language (ESL) learning for adults (now also commonly referred to as EAL - English as an Additional Language). The current 2012 version was produced in comparison with CEFR and ACTFL guidelines, and it was tested for validity, reliability and accuracy. Its intended audience is *NOT* K-12 language educators, but rather adult ESL teachers. Like the CEFR and ACTFL guidelines, the CLB standards focus on communicative competence in real-life tasks.

The CLB standard is a descriptive scale of successive levels of English language ability among ESL/EAL learners. Based on descriptors similar to the CEFR and ACTFL, 12 benchmarks exist for listening, reading, speaking and writing skills, all organized into three *Language Ability Stages*:

- Stage I (Benchmarks 1-4) expresses Basic Language Ability
- Stage II (Benchmarks 5-8) expresses Intermediate Language Ability
- Stage III (Benchmarks 9-12) expresses Advanced Language Ability

The CLB acknowledges that learners may be at different benchmarks in the four skill sets (listening, reading, speaking and writing).

On the one hand, the CLB focuses on *language competence*, which consists of:

- Grammatical knowledge – practical knowledge of grammar and vocabulary at the sentence level;
- Textual knowledge – cohesion and coherence in building discourse and narratives;
- Functional knowledge – the ability to convey and interpret communicative content getting things done, persuading others, learning and thinking, creation and enjoyment, and making requests, threats, warnings, pleas; and
- Sociolinguistic knowledge – rules of politeness, register, dialect, appropriateness of speech, figurative language, cultural knowledge, social relationships.

The CLB also encompasses *strategic competence*, which ensures effectiveness in communication (planning and assessing communication, repairing difficulties in communication, coping with breakdown, using affective devices).

The CLB functions as an assessment tool that allows standardized testing of ESL/EAL learners based on the ability of learners to carry out a variety of language tasks. With the recent development of “Can Do” checklists, the CLB can also help learners carry out self-assessments.

3.4.3 First Nations Language Benchmarks

Miller (2004) has attempted to adapt the Canadian Language Benchmarks to develop a *Language Teacher’s Guide to Assessing First Nations Language Proficiency*, using a simplified set of three stages (basic, intermediate, advanced), each with three proficiency levels (developmental, progressive, and accomplished). Like the

CLB, these First Nations Language Benchmarks (FNLB) involve four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing). The three “competency areas” are social interaction, following and giving instructions, and information sharing, although the charts for the three stages do not particularly reference these competency areas. It is unclear to what degree the FNLB charts have been field-tested for specific languages. In addition, language teachers and learners will benefit from transferring the descriptors for proficiency levels into more concrete examples of speech produced at respective levels in the particular First Nations language.

It would be useful to revisit and expand upon the FNLB in light of the recent implementation of the CEFR in additional/second language learning, and to develop assessment tools for competency levels in particular First Nations languages, similar to the detail and methods employed for tools recently developed for French.

3.4.4 First Nations Language Essentials

Additionally, a very practical framework for beginner-level First Nations language curriculum is found in Michel’s First Nations Language Essentials (FNLE) project, developed for the First Nations School Association (FNSA), which builds learning goals for the beginning Grade K - 4 learner around three main goals:

1. Self Expression

The goal of self-expression develops a student’s ability to communicate their most basic needs and to help regulate and control their environment. Students are encouraged to explore imaginative and creative pathways to express “self” and develop positive identities.

2. Social Interaction

The goal of Social Interaction enables students to initiate and maintain social contact, and to create a sense of identity within a group setting.

3. Discovery

The goal of discovery describes the process of learning new information and the sharing of information to others.

Each of the three goal areas has an accompanying set of basic learning outcomes.

Self-Expression	Social Interaction	Discovery
Ask and answer simple questions	Express personal viewpoint	Ask questions to derive meaning
Control their environment	Make and respond to simple requests	Comprehend and respond to main ideas being taught
Express basic needs	Respond to one-on-one interactions	Describe or explain an event, process or experience
Express likes and dislikes		Give directions, commands and instructions
Express state of being		Present a personal narrative to an audience
Self-Exploration		Respond appropriately to directions, instructions, and commands

Finally, the communicative objectives and learning outcomes connect to a set of Language Benchmarks. These benchmarks focus entirely on comprehension skills based on memorized repertoire for the first 150 hours, with speaking skills also based on memorized repertoire, very simple utterances, interference from the learner's first language (English), incomplete and faulty utterances, along with imprecision (See Appendix 2 for FNLE Benchmarks).

3.4.5 Perceptions of Proficiency

Another way to organize levels of learner proficiency is to apply descriptive terms in the First Nations language to stages and proficiency levels. This was done by N'syilxcen (Okanagan) language learner and language educator Michele Kay S7imla7xw Johnson (2012, 2013), employing Nsilxcen terms that describe successive developmental acquisition stages during the process of adult N'syilxcen language learning, and thus provide culturally relevant orientation for learners. It was rewarding for a group of learners who completed about 1,000 hours of language learning in a language house to be considered by speakers to be at the *nleqwcin* ("clear speech") stage, meaning their speech was starting to be heard and was becoming clear and audible to Elders/speakers. Johnson equates the *nleqwcin* stage with mid-intermediate language proficiency according to CLB benchmarks.

N'syilxcen Acquisition Stages (Johnson 2012)

k'lp`x`ina?	holes cut in the ears, when a person begins to comprehend language; the first stage of N'syilxcen acquisition
q`lq`liti?st	first speech, when words are formed, similar to a child's speech, short utterances; the second stage of N'syilxcen acquisition
n`l̥aq`cin	starting to be heard, make a noise, become more clear voiced, audible, from liq ^w , plain to see; the third stage of N'syilxcen acquisition
n`tl̥cin	straightened or true speech, when speech contains few errors and is like the Elders; the final stage of N'syilxcen acquisition

Secwepemctsin (Shuswap Language) Competency Stages According to Skeetchestn Elders (2014)

When asked to think about stages of Secwepemc language acquisition by learners who began with little or no prior knowledge, the *Skeetchestn Elders Secwepemc Language Group* spontaneously arrived at six successive stages of language competency, beginning with very basic, difficult to understand speech, and moving to clear speech or what could be understood as “fluency” or high proficiency. In discussing and collectively naming these stages, the eight Elders – only some of whom write the language, although all consider themselves and one another “fluent” – focused on the importance of *speaking ability* from Stage 2 onwards, as opposed to listening, reading or writing skills.

STAGE 1: estq̣elp̣éne – “you’re listening [as a learner] and you are understanding a little bit.” - Also used when someone understands you and you didn’t think they could understand anything.

STAGE 2: estp̣enllexwtsín – “it’s coming out of his/her mouth”
The learner is beginning to use language actively in very simple and incomplete ways.

STAGE 3: lexptsín – when your speech is starting to make sense (lexép = having arrived at the process of learning, internalizing and getting somewhere).

STAGE 4: tsqixtsín – your speech is a little bit off, not too bad, and sometimes you’re saying it wrong.

STAGE 5: xexewíl̥c – starting to become smart, improving.

STAGE 6: tuxwtuxwtsín – straightened out, correct speech.

Although focus on the four competency areas – listening, speaking, reading and writing – makes sense within the wider field of assessment in second/additional language acquisition, there is an important point to the focus on *speaking ability* emphasized by the Skeetchestn Elders and the Nsyilxcen speakers. As noted in Part 1 of this document, competent second language speakers who can transmit the language intergenerationally are the best hope for the future existence of First Nations languages. Therefore, listening, reading or writing competence, although important skill sets, do not serve the purpose of intergenerational language transmission. Only individuals who have good competence in *speaking, and who use this competence in day-to-day communication*, can ensure the survival of First Nations languages.

3.5 STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering information about students' learning in order to describe what they know, what they are able to do, and what they are working toward. Learners benefit when teachers assess students' learning and emerging abilities regularly and on an ongoing basis. Rather than critiquing students for the mistakes they are making, assessments should promote learning by showing students their strengths and suggesting how they can develop their learning further.

Within K-12 education, assessment is *criterion-referenced*, meaning assessment formats (e.g. oral or written tests, teacher observations of student performance, portfolios of student work) are based on the learning outcomes set out for the age, grade level, or particular unit, measuring whether a student is able to carry out the tasks set out in the learning outcomes.

According to guidelines from the BC Ministry of Education, assessment at the primary level should focus on the following areas.

- **Assessment for learning** allows the teacher to identify the learning needs of students, to select and adapt materials to suit those needs, to provide feedback to students, and to choose teaching strategies suited to the students.
- **Assessment as learning** enables students to become conscious of their learning and to improve and gain mastery over tasks and skills. Assessment as learning mirrors the natural learning that takes place for children outside of school, where they work alongside their parents or Elders and are guided as they come to master skills and learn how to emulate their older siblings and family members.

- **Assessment of learning** allows the teacher to determine what students are able to do as a result of learning and how they can demonstrate what they know.

The guidelines of the BC Ministry of Education give particular attention to assessment for learning, with the Six Big Assessment FOR Learning (AFL) Strategies.

1. Clarify learning intentions
2. Provide clear criteria for success
3. Provide regular coaching feedback that moves learning and learners forward
4. Develop classroom discussion, questions, and learning tasks that generate evidence of learning
5. Activate students as learning/teaching resources for each other using self and peer assessment (learners use criteria to assess their own learning)
6. Develop learners as owners of their own learning

Re-Thinking Assessment with Purpose in Mind

(Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education; www.wncp.ca)

ASSESSMENT <i>for</i> LEARNING	ASSESSMENT <i>as</i> LEARNING	ASSESSMENT <i>of</i> LEARNING
Formative assessment is <i>ongoing in the classroom</i>	Formative assessment is <i>ongoing in the classroom</i>	Summative assessment occurs <i>at end of year or at key stages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher assessment, student self-assessment, and/or student peer assessment ▪ Criterion-referenced – criteria based on Prescribed Learning Outcomes identified in the provincial curriculum, reflecting performance in relation to a specific learning task ▪ Involves both teacher and student in the process of continual reflection and review about progress ▪ Teachers adjust their plans and engage in corrective teaching in response to formative assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-assessment ▪ Provides students with information on their own achievement and prompts them to consider how they can continue to improve their learning ▪ Student-determined criteria based on previous learning and personal learning goals ▪ Students use assessment information to make adaptations to their learning process and to develop new understandings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher assessment ▪ May be either criterion-referenced (based on Prescribed Learning Outcomes) or norm-referenced (comparing student achievement to that of others) ▪ Information on student performance can be shared with parents/guardians, school and district staff, and other education professionals (e.g. for the purposes of curriculum development) ▪ Used to make judgments about students' performance in relation to provincial standards

As curriculum binders are developed, assessment *as* and *for* learning should be integrated into the very nature of activities and instructional strategies. It is useful at the end of each unit, in a separate section, to also support assessment for learning. The language teacher and classroom teacher should provide feedback on which activities worked well, producing communication and interactions, and/or stimulating student interest and response. Teachers can also provide feedback about the effectiveness of learning resources, and language teachers should be encouraged to reflect on the overall and individual learning needs of students and how classroom instruction was adapted to meet those needs.

As described above, to encourage students to engage in assessment for and as learning tasks, the CEFR advocates for and has developed student portfolios or “Language Passports” that invite students to comment on their learning of a language, to develop a “biography” of their language learning, to list and comment on activities they enjoy, to keep track of their learning by listing and showing examples of their work in the language, and by including “Can Do” checklists.

For relevant examples, see *Draft Core French Curriculum, 2011*, and Maxwell, *Language Assessment Activities Package and Student Portfolio based on the Principles of the CEFR*, AIM Language Learning, 2011.

3.5.1 Assessing Emerging Language Proficiency in Relation to Levels and Benchmarks

As noted above, the development of competence levels connected to benchmarks, along with learning outcomes for each grade level and specific to each unit, is connected to assessment formats and strategies. Tables that list what skills learners should be able to do as evidenced by a task they are able to perform, and the extent to which they can perform this task (fully, to some degree or with help, not yet) are referred to as assessment rubrics. Assessment rubrics are usually in the shape of a grid or table. Various examples of assessment rubrics, accompanied by examples of measuring performance according to rubrics, are included in the BC Ministry of Education Languages Template. Below is an example from the Sm’algyax Grades 5 - 12 IRP. The student task was to develop a poster on the topic “This is my family” – *nagyedgu*, and to present this poster to the class as an oral presentation.

RATING	CRITERIA
Outstanding	Presents the information on the poster, typically reciting carefully rehearsed expressions and structures. Clearly makes an effort to speak Sm'alg'yâx, and the result is comprehensible without much effort on the part of the listener. Pauses tend to be at the end of phrases or sentences. Shows awareness of his or her speech and attempts to self-correct (often by restarting a sentence or phrase).
Good	Reads or recites the information on the poster, possibly including an introductory or concluding phrase. (e.g., <i>This is my family.</i>) Most parts are easily understood, given the context. Pauses frequently and may restart in the case of a blatant pronunciation error. May ask for confirmation after a particularly challenging word or phrase.
Satisfactory	Reads or recites the information on the poster and attempts to provide accurate Sm'alg'yâx pronunciation of patterns that have been practised in class. The result tends to mix Sm'alg'yâx and English pronunciations (sometimes within a single word) but is comprehensible with some effort on the part of the listener (the teacher may understand easily; students may have a great deal of difficulty). Pauses frequently and tends to focus on individual words.
Requirements Not Met	May be incomplete, inappropriate, or incomprehensible.

Rubrics should be available to students. Based on the criteria for what constitutes performance that is outstanding, good, satisfactory, or requirements not met, the teacher (or students as peers) can assess performance. Beyond that, in order to help students improve their language learning, it is very useful to provide feedback about what things were done well and what things (pronunciation of words, use of vocabulary and choice of words, grammatical form) require additional work.

A further crucial assessment task for language teachers is to measure and keep track of students' ability to perform specific language tasks as mapped out in learning outcomes for a unit or a grade level. For older students, written tests (vocabulary, grammar, translation, dictation, re-telling a story) are a meaningful measure of student ability to perform language tasks that were introduced and practiced in a given unit. For younger students, or in order to measure comprehension and production, teachers can take students through a set of language tasks and use checklists to measure performance.

A simple oral assessment exercise that tests Grade 1 and 2 students' ability to identify (listen) and say (speak) words and phrases was developed by Chief Matthews

School. The language teacher carries out short tests for each unit, providing feedback on what simple language tasks learners are able to do after a series of lessons, and providing a record of students' abilities in the language (See Appendix 5 for a sample).

Similarly, the FNLEs include progressively more difficult assessments of student performance of language tasks. These initially involve having students carry out a simple command ("walk," "sit down," "go to the window," etc.), with increasing complexity gradually introduced, such as "draw a fat pig," "erase the pig," or prompts like "give the apple to me," "give Mike the pen," "grab the boy from the table and growl like a bear!" Assessment of speaking skills, which begins many hours later, involves questions about pictures or props ("Is this a man or a woman?," "Pretend to give a fish to the father, say goodbye to the father, and walk to your chair and sit down.") Student performance is measured according to three progress indicators: 1=beginning, 2=developing, 3=mastery. Such simple assessment tools provide useful measures and indicators of language tasks that students are able to do, struggle with, or are not yet able to do and require further help to perform.

Beyond assessing students' basic ability to perform language tasks, an area that First Nations language educators might develop is the assessment of students' language proficiency development as it involves measuring and documenting accuracy in pronunciation and in the use of grammar.¹⁸ Very little assessment of this type is currently taking place in First Nations language classrooms, although one important exception is the Cherokee Kindergarten Immersion Language Assessment (C-KILA) and the Cherokee Language Immersion Literacy Assessment (C-LILA), both of which measure not only language functions (being able to perform tasks in the language), but also students' use of forms (grammar). The Cherokee assessment team is still developing measures for many of the polysynthetic features of the language. Gathering information about common learner errors and inaccuracies has provided important feedback for teachers and curriculum developers about addressing focus-on-form (grammar) instruction in the classroom. As Kell (2014:57) has suggested, the tables of grammatical topics that mark increased proficiency developed by Ignace (see Appendix 1) could also be adapted into rubrics and used as assessment checklists according to progress indicators (4 = exceeds expectations, 3 = meets expectations, 2 = approaching expectations, 1 = not yet meeting expectations).

Overall, the development of assessment tools that measure and analyze students' emerging grammatical competence in the First Nations language will enhance the development of curriculum tools and teaching strategies.

18 Sonya Bird from the University of Victoria is currently carrying out research with four generations of SENCOTEN speakers on pronunciation change. Marianne Ignace and a group of Haida learners and speaker have been gathering and analysing assessment data on learners' use of grammar and pronunciation.

4

DESIGNING CONTENT CURRICULUM FOR YOUR COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

4.1 BEYOND CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS: THE NEED FOR CONTENT IN CURRICULUM DESIGN

The Curriculum Frameworks discussed in Part 3 of this report all aim to provide common objectives, standards and benchmarks for K-12 programs for multiple languages. Curriculum frameworks provide maps for achieving the “outputs” of desired student performance, and suggest learning activities and assessment formats that make it most likely that students will achieve the desired results. By contrast, the term “input” is used to refer to the language-specific content of a course or program (Richards, 2013).

In workshops organized by FNEC, language teachers and curriculum developers strongly agreed that beyond frameworks, the effective teaching and learning of First Nations languages requires content-based curricula that map out, for specific grade levels, what content will be presented.

The *2014 Report on the Status of BC First Nations Languages* underscores this urgent need for First Nations language curriculum. It emphasizes that only 52 percent of First Nations communities had any kind of curriculum for teaching their languages in schools, and that many of the existing curricula “are very limited and have not been developed for many levels of language learners.” That report also notes: “clearly this is an area that still needs attention. If First Nations languages are to be taught as well as any other language typically taught in school, curriculum is urgently needed” (FPCC 2014).

For teachers, there are several important advantages to having access to as much developed classroom content as possible.

- Curricular content in the language facilitates monthly, weekly and daily planning, helping to answer key questions: What vocabulary, phrases, sentences and forms will students be exposed to? What are students expected to be able to do after a certain set of activities that have them practice words and sentences? What methods and classroom activities will be used? How will students be assessed? What hand-outs and worksheets will be used?
- Especially if the First Nations language group has not yet produced textbooks, workbooks, or other print or digital media resources, content or “input” based curriculum binders can function in lieu these resources.
- Where they have been developed by proficient speakers/writers of the language, curriculum documents or binders provide authorized ways of spelling words, correct and appropriate use of words, correct sentence structure, etc., which will help the novice teacher determine word use, correct and appropriate grammatical construction, and spellings.

4.2 ASSEMBLING OR CONSOLIDATING YOUR TEAM

To begin, it is necessary to bring together a curriculum development team to support the efforts ahead. Depending on the situation and circumstances of each community, there are different ways to convene such a team. Of crucial significance, fluent speaker(s) must be represented on the team, as they can guide the content development and lend their advice. If there are dialects of the language (either major dialects or “microdialects” representing particular village communities), it also will be important to include representatives of each to fully account for their versions of speech.

Additionally, First Nations language curriculum development teams benefit from a resource person who has a background in language teaching and learning theory and method, and who has expertise in formulating learning outcomes, assessment formats, teaching strategies, and classroom activities. This person should have strong skills in writing these components of curriculum. Sometimes it works well to have an apprentice from the community assisting with this work and receiving mentorship in these important skills from the senior curriculum developer. Language curriculum development teams also sometimes rely on help from a linguist who has successfully collaborated with speakers and has the trust of the community. This can be especially useful where the linguist has interest and expertise in applied, on-the-ground work in language teaching and learning, and has an associated skill set.

Other considerations include the following:

- It is important to keep in mind that the group is intended to do the practical work of language curriculum development, rather than getting bogged down in political decision-making – or what Cohen (2010) has identified as the “politics of distraction.” It is thus best to have a clear mandate from a political body (band council, board of directors).
- A working committee of 6-10 individuals is an effective size to do the necessary work.
- An important principle of language curriculum development committees is the spirit of collaboration.
- It is also important for the curriculum committee to have a role in editing and revising the curriculum, perhaps collaboratively with the local Language Authority.
- When formulating goals and objectives for the language program, or in using the process of curriculum development as a way to enhance existing content, it is important to consider some of the issues raised in Part 1 of this document and to determine what kind of program is feasible and desirable. In considering these issues, remember that a language program in which words in the First Nations language are taught while the teacher communicates in English will not instill any level of communicative competence. Similarly, a program without ample instructional time or with no progression of learning will likely not be successful in reaching communicative goals.

4.3 STARTING WITH A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

One vital component of language curriculum planning is a needs assessment, which involves gathering information about the actual state of the language in the community and/or Nation, to get a sense of how many speakers of the language are left and who is able to actively support language teaching and learning and/or assist with developing curriculum and producing resource materials in print, audio, video and other forms. A good starting point may be information already collected by the speech community and/or neighbouring speech communities about the number of speakers, “silent speakers,” learners, as well as existing school programs and language resources. For many First Nations, needs assessments already exist in the form of online Language Assessments provided to the FPCC through funding applications (see FPCC 2014).

Undertaking a needs assessment may involve having a community discussion and planning meetings with Elders, parents, teachers, language activists, leaders, and

youth. It is important to hear community members' hopes regarding present and future language revitalization efforts, their thoughts about best ways to learn the language, and approaches they think have worked at home.

Another useful component of a needs assessment and planning process may be joint discussion of "promising practices," as well as open discussion of how cutting edge and innovative measures (immersion, adult master-apprentice learning, language nests, language-in-the-home projects, intensive First Nation as second language or bilingual programs) could be implemented locally. This review may lead to a discussion about what kinds of sustained efforts, resources, organizations and/or institutions might be needed for the critical work ahead.

As part of the planning process, Elders, adults, youth, educators and other community members can formulate powerful statements of why it is important to keep the language – in connections with the culture – alive. Community members may also reflect on and articulate the role of K-12 education in regard to the future of the language. Leading up to such a discussion, it could be useful to show community members the resources for community language programming that have been produced by FPCC (www.fpcc.ca) and by FNEsc (www.fnesc.ca). These resources address community language planning, language nests, language camps, Master-Apprentice programs, developing a Language Authority, developing goals within the community, and many other issues.

Through the process of reviewing existing information, engaging in community consultations, and discussing best practices, it should be possible to formulate a statement that can become a preamble to a curriculum document, which articulates the rationale for revitalizing the language, as well as the vision, goals and objectives for the program.

4.3.1 Determining the Type of Program and Starting Point

In terms of determining what is feasible and what kind of language program the community members want, it may be useful to consider the types of programs that currently exist and what is possible under existing policies. These considerations may address the following questions.

- Are you considering a full immersion, partial immersion, or bilingual program? At the primary, elementary, middle, and/or secondary levels?
- If it is not feasible to design curriculum for a language program at the full K-12 range (recognizing that it takes at least several months to develop a year's worth of content curriculum), where will you begin?

- If a program for some grade levels already exists, what is the most feasible way to enhance it?
- What communicative, task, and activity-based classroom activities can be incorporated?
- What kind of language teacher training, short and long term, is required?
- Perhaps trying an innovative approach, would it be possible to implement an intensive First Nations language program at the grade 5 or 6 level, followed by a semi-intensive, hour-a-day program that continues through to Grade 12?
- Given that few solutions will be perfect, what is your short-term and long-term plan? Are there any possible “hybrid” ways to improve the status of the language in the school?

Additional considerations include the following.

- Public school programs may be constrained by the BC Ministry of Education Second Languages Policy, discussed in Parts 2 and 3.
- For primary or elementary programs, it may be useful to begin at the earliest level (Nursery or K) and progress toward higher grade levels.
- Considering the importance of time allocation, it will be important to revisit the number of hours of “guided instruction” required to reach intermediate level proficiency (see Part 2). In most schools, time allocations tend to be approximately 1,000 hours, but to develop independent user (high intermediate) proficiency, more time would be useful. School programs that fall under the BC Ministry’s Second Language policy typically offer 90 - 120 minutes of instructions per week – often closer to the 90 minute level. This level of instruction amounts to 60 hours or less per year, and even with 13 years of continuous instruction, students will have less than 1,000 hours of guided instruction from Grades K - 12. By contrast, if instructional time could amount to at least an hour 4 times per week, students could receive approximately 2,000 hours in total between the elementary and secondary levels – enough to actually attain high intermediate level proficiency or even greater.
- An additional option, as explained in Part 2, might be partial immersion, with a high focus on teaching content through the medium of the First Nations language at the primary level, followed by a gradual reduction of instructional content to some 20-30 percent by the secondary school level.

4.4 HUMAN RESOURCES NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

No matter how well designed, a language program's success hinges on the availability of well-trained speakers and teachers of the language. Therefore any language program design must include a thoughtful consideration of the following questions.

- What human resources are available for teaching?
- What number of qualified language teachers will we need in 5 years; in 10 years?
- What institutions provide the kind of training we need (Developmental Standard Term Certificate, full teacher education degrees and professional certification, effective training in First Nations language and language revitalization)?

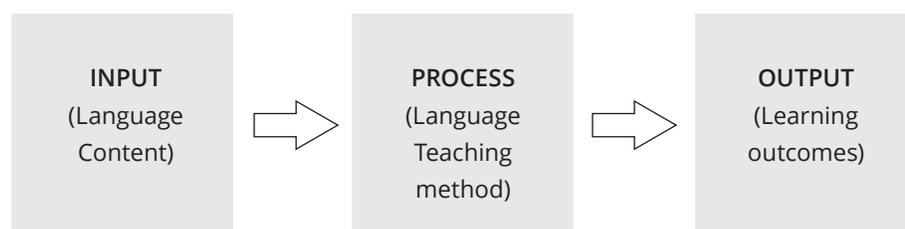
4.5 TYPES OF CURRICULUM DESIGN

Developing content-based curriculum for a First Nations language can be approached in different ways. For example, it can begin with a "grand" or "forward" design map of an entire scope and sequence plan or syllabus for a K-12 curriculum, it can be undertaken one year or one unit at a time out of the practice of teaching – "central design," – or it can use "backwards design" of learner-based communicative objectives.

4.5.1 Grand or Forward Design

"Grand" or "forward" design begins from scratch. With the language as the subject matter, content is accumulated according to a scope and sequence of themes, with associated vocabulary, phrases, and cultural concepts and increasingly complex grammatical structures integrated into the thematic content. In sequence, from early nursery/K to elementary, middle, and secondary school, content is organized around age- and developmentally appropriate subject matter. Subject matter is then organized around language teaching methods and activities that have been shown to be effective, and matched with resources (books, video, audio, games, manipulatives, etc.) that either exist or need to be produced. Finally, the units, grade and age levels are organized around prescribed learning outcomes, and perhaps are additionally organized according to how they relate to benchmarks like those discussed in Part 3. Deriving from the prescribed learning outcomes identified for each grade level, assessment formats are developed to help the teacher determine if individual students and the class are meeting the outcomes.

Such “forward” design is linear. It begins with mapping out the language content that the curriculum development group wants to include, and after mapping out the syllabus (the “what” that is being taught), it addresses the language teaching methods and strategies that will be used. Then it formulates the expected skills learners will develop, described as learning outcomes that are connected to assessment formats and tools.



Forward design planning begins with developing a syllabus (or Scope and Sequence Chart) as a grand master plan for K - 12 content, which maps out what topics are to be taught/learned in what sequence. This work will involve consideration of the following.

- **Themes or language topics** – Appendix 2 provides a list of communicative topics that learners will need in their repertoire, including a range of fairly universal themes. For example, thematic topics exist in vocabulary (words), but they also connect to conventions of speech (how to organize a story, a speech, modes of polite speech), and optimally will be integrated with grammatical components (see below).
- **Cultural Lessons:** Units may also include cultural lessons about, for example “principles” (a term used by the Sto:lo) or “laws” (reflecting the Secwepemc term *stsq’ey’*), or *ayaawx* (or “laws” as used by the Ts’msyen people in Sm’algyax). Depending on the objectives of the language program and the language skills of the teacher, these can be communicated in the First Nations language using simple sentences and accompanying images, or they can be explained using English.
- **Grammatical forms:** Forms should be ordered from elementary or basic moving to more difficult grammatical forms that continuously build upon previously learned simpler forms.

As discussed in Part 2 of this document, in best teaching practices, where lessons are conducted in the language (especially for younger learners), grammar is not taught as a topic in itself. Instead, they should be “focus-on-form” components

of language activities, meaning grammar structures (such as pronoun prefixes or suffixes, connectives, etc.) are emphasized to convey meaning and are taught through gesture, repetition and contrast. This approach will enable learners to grasp grammatical concepts by hearing and seeing them repeatedly modeled by the teacher.

EXAMPLES FROM XAAD KIL GRADES 1-2 CURRICULUM, CHIEF MATTHEWS SCHOOL, OLD MASSETT

Example 1: Teaching inalienable possessive pronouns used for relatives and body-parts, but not belongings or other things



FOCUS-ON-FORM:

For the teacher: unlike the possessives (“my”, “your” etc.) for things, words for relatives and body parts use a different set of possessives:

Díi	my
Dáng	your
‘ll	his/her/their
íitl’	our
daláng	you folks’

Use the possessives when reviewing the names for relatives. Show students pictures of your own relatives, name them with the possessives and the correct kinship term, pointing to yourself, and emphasizing díi.

Example 2: Teaching the modal suffix sGwáanang (keep on doing something)**FOCUS-ON-FORM**

For the teacher: the ending (or suffix) – **sGwáanang** means that an action is going on and on, or keeps going on:

dii kaj guugangs Gwáanang gaa	my head keeps hurting
hlaa uu k'usangs Gwáanang gaa	I keep on coughing, I cough on and on
dii sk'alaaws Gwáanang gaa	I keep on having diarrhea
Eli uu k'usangs Gwáanang gaa!	Eli keeps on coughing!
Mary uu sgayhlang sGwáanang gaa!	Mary keeps on crying.

☞ Use a hand-gesture or sign language gesture to convey the idea of “on and on” to students in sentences with **sGwáanang**, as you emphasize the ending **sGwáanang** as well. After a number of repetitions with various verbs/actions, the students will catch on what **sGwáanang** means.

For older students, it is useful to include grammar practice activities that help learners:

1. identify structures in the language, like pronoun suffixes, correct word order, tense markers, question markers;
2. apply such structures in a variety of exercises (fill-in-the-blanks, unscrambling, substitution, or perhaps translation exercises);
3. apply such forms in targeted conversations and by having students carry out narrations – for example telling what they did yesterday, narrating a sequence of events according to pictures or a comic strip, etc.; and
4. listening for and applying corrected forms, where they are only partially or not yet producing them.

In the early years of French immersion education, it was realized that years of immersion alone did not produce native-like and grammatically correct speech in students. Accordingly, intensive French and French immersion education now includes “focus-on-form” exercises and activities to help students acquire the correct use of grammatical forms. The same is true for many Indigenous language programs. For example, as Kell (2014) reports, a 2007 assessment of Cherokee Nation primary students’ language skills who attended an immersion program:

showed that most students could not use past or future tenses, or even produce all present tense forms accurately. A detailed analysis of this assessment data by fluent speakers and linguists revealed specific knowledge of Cherokee language structures that the children were lacking, and suggested that immersion was not sufficient for them to achieve language proficiency with grammatical accuracy. Research in other immersion settings has had similar findings. Peter, Sly and Hirata-Edds (2011 [the Cherokee research team]) identified a need for teachers to balance natural input with planned opportunities for practice using specific language functions and their forms... The 2008 [student language assessment] showed that an increase in form-focused instruction had led to greater proficiency and accuracy in children's production of Cherokee verb forms.

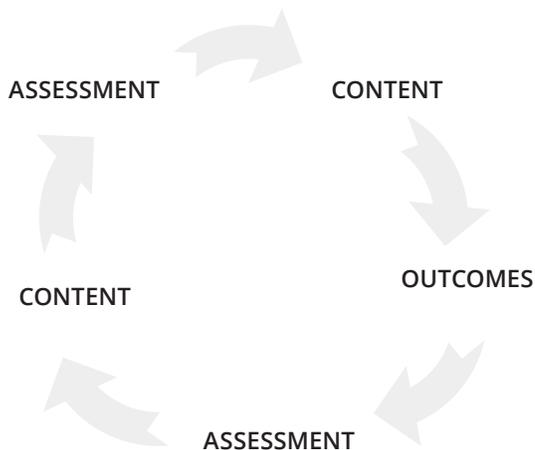
In this case, focus-on-form practice involved the steps of:

- a) discovering the linguistic rules of Cherokee grammar, especially verb forms;
- b) planning lessons to provide opportunities for children to practice such forms; and
- c) preparing learning and teaching materials to expose and encourage students to use such forms in engaging ways.

4.5.2 Practice-Driven Central Design

Another way to embark on curriculum development is to begin not with a grand or forward design approach, but by building smaller blocks and adding to them on an ongoing basis, as needed. Many language teachers take this approach based on their practical needs, existing resources, and their classroom teaching practice. Curriculum is thus visualized and implemented as clusters and sets of classroom activities, with the materials and resources required to carry out lessons. Such curriculum design (sometimes called "central design") is more immediately teacher and learner focused and based on classroom practice.

Central design can be graphed as follows (adapted from Richards, 2013).



In the central design model, the language teacher leads the curriculum development, often by unit or working on a single grade level at a time. The teacher's preferences and/or skills in language teaching approaches and methods are the focus, and the units and lessons developed through central design are often determined by seasonal themes and cultural practices (salmon migration and fishing in fall; bird migration or animal hibernation patterns; plant gathering in late spring or late summer).

The First Nations Language Essentials mentioned in Part 3 (FNLEs) are an example of central design, as they arose out of practice. The FNLEs engage TPR and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to develop basic aural and oral communicative skills based on two decades of practice using TPR and CLT strategies in immersion classrooms – especially at the K to Grade 4 level. The FNLE program is designed to develop a basic level of communicative vocabulary that can be reused and recombined in many ways so that students can produce authentic speech to meet their own communicative needs. Initially, vocabulary is introduced in the imperative or “command” form so that teachers may begin to teach in the language immediately, without resorting to English, because the content is comprehensible to the students and there is no expectation of an oral response. As students build vocabulary and their level of “comprehensible input,” teaching strategies expand to include TPR-Storytelling and other communicative activities.

4.5.3 “Backwards Design” – Starting with Competency Levels

Yet another type of curriculum design – “backwards design” – begins not with the language and its content, but instead with communicative outcomes as expressed in existing curriculum frameworks and benchmarks. This approach begins by asking what learners should be able to understand or do regardless of what activities or tests are used, what is the evidence of such ability, and therefore what texts, activities and methods will best enable such a result (Wiggins and McTighe 2006, cited in Richards 2013).

In “backwards design,” the focus is on how to create competency levels in learners, which is articulated according to a number of authentic “survival tasks.” For First Nations, culturally important authentic survival tasks might involve: communication and dialogue related to relatives, their well-being and whereabouts; introducing and asking about family; cooking a meal, preparing traditional foods, visiting an older relative, cleaning house, traditional subsistence tasks; etc.

Such competencies, according to topics and tasks (broken into “Can Do” statements), are then matched with language content (vocabulary, grammar) in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Instructional materials – either in print, electronic media, video or audio – are chosen or identified as needed. The curriculum developers also determine which of the four areas (speaking, listening, reading and writing) should have priority.

Overall, the sequence of curriculum design in a competency-based approach or “backwards design” can be visualized as shown in Figure 4. (from Richards 2013).

In this model, the curriculum development team begins by considering what kinds of competency levels the group expects as learners progress. Such mapping out of emergent competence or proficiency in the language can be adapted from existing language benchmark documents, like those discussed in Part 3. For example, the Draft 2011 *Core French Integrated Resource Package* uses CEFR benchmarks to guide learners through numerous levels in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. As students reach each benchmark, they are assessed on the basis of tasks they “Can Do.” Below are a few examples of listening and speaking “Can Do’s” adapted from Maxwell (AIM Language Learning, 2011).

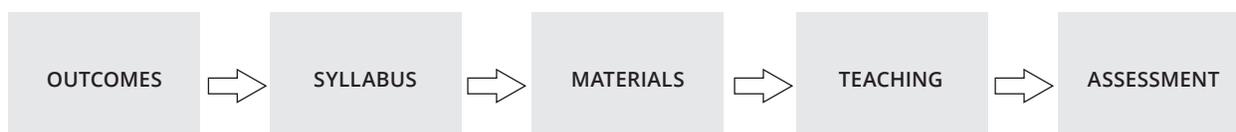


Figure 4: Competency-based approach to curriculum design or “backwards design”

SAMPLE CAN DO Examples

A1 – Listening

- I understand the words that the teacher uses all the time. [*suggestion: list these words in your curriculum document*]
- I understand short and easy phrases and questions [*suggestion: list them*]
- I understand the phrases the teacher uses every day when talking to the class [*suggestion: list these!*]
- I understand the actions the teacher makes
- I understand the words to songs we sing in class and stories our class is listening to

A1 Speaking (interaction)

- I can say words I have heard many times before in very short and simple phrases
- I can say where I live and who my immediate family members are
- When the person speaks very slowly, I can respond to simple questions
- I can ask simple questions

For many people, especially those who have previously engaged in IRP development, these Can Do's will be fairly familiar; in large part, they reflect the prescribed learning outcome statements as they existed in previous iterations of curriculum.

In writing and assessing “Can Do’s” adapted from English or French language, it is important to note some cultural constraints, such as different conventions of speech. For example:

- It could be rude for a child to interrupt or be perceived as interrupting an Elder (e.g. teacher). It could also be considered rude for a younger learner to interrupt or correct an older learner (even if the learners are an older sibling).
- According to many First Nations’ conventions, while people speak casually about themselves, the preferred conversation tends to not emphasize self, but instead to validate others. Accordingly, from a First Nations perspective, focused talk on Me is in conflict with social norms of diminishing self for reasons of social interaction. Therefore, while talk of preferences, likes, wants and interests are often emphasized in IRPs and “Can Do” statements, such talk (as questions and declarative sentences) is not a high frequency topic in authentic First Nations language discourse.

- Correcting someone explicitly (or being perceived to do so) can be construed as violating a person's social space, and the more authentic way of correcting a person may be teaching through a story (see, for example, Basso, 1995).
- While TPR has proven to be a useful and productive method in many First Nations language classrooms, some speakers consider basic imperative forms as lacking in politeness (although they may be appropriate at least with young learners).

In the end, “Can Do’s” are useful ways to show learners’ progress, but they cannot be simply translated from English or French-based CEFR or CLB statements; instead, they must take into account cultural norms and conventions of how protocols between self, others, community, society, and all living things are construed in particular languages.

4.6 MAKING A CASE FOR “SCRIPTED CURRICULUM”

As discussed in Part 1, second language learners or “semi-fluent” speakers are increasingly acting as teachers in First Nations language classrooms. Therefore, many present and future language teachers are still improving their language proficiency and could benefit from detailed, “scripted” curriculum that lists not only learning outcomes, teaching strategies, assessments and resources, but also provides the detailed content of what is taught in the language (vocabulary, phrases as “frame-sentences,” stories, TPR exercises, dialogue, “focus-on-form” exercises). Ideally, the whole document would be in the First Nations language, but this may be infeasible.

“Scripted curriculum” also can include the questions, prompts, instructions, and other sentences for unit-based and recurrent activities (weather, calendar, time, season, crafts, clean-up, turn-taking, games) that the not-yet-fluent teacher can use in order to conduct lessons in the language as much as possible. Such scripted curriculum works most efficiently if it also exists as sound file recordings that the teacher can listen to and practice when preparing for lessons. It is important to continually build “teacher talk” and classroom communication repertoire as the teacher gains more confidence in conducting lessons in the language, and as lessons reach higher grades and become increasingly complex.

A good example of detailed “scripted curriculum” that does not limit the teacher’s verbal interactions with students are the binders produced by AIM language learning (www.aimlanguagelearning.ca). For First Nations languages, the Sm’algyax Primary Curriculum (Grades K-4) and the Chief Matthews School curriculum provide additional examples of ways to include detailed communicative content in the language, as well as the “teacher talk” necessary for carrying out a variety

of classroom activities, including games, crafts, cleaning up, turn-taking etc. (see below). For Okanagan (Nsilxcen), the Paul Creek Language Association has developed detailed sets of curricula that engage a variety of methodologies with detailed content in the language. See <http://www.interiorsalish.com>.

Examples of Language Curriculum Development

The Sm'algayax Committee has engaged in Sm'algayax (Coast Tsimshian) curriculum development with Dr. M. Ignace since the late 1990s. Following community consultations, a Sm'algayax Grades 5 - 12 program was implemented in all schools of the district in 1997-98, beginning with a Grade 5 curriculum. Between 1999 and 2006, one to two years of curriculum binders were added annually up to the grade 12 level, with an IRP developed in 2001 and a beginners Grade 11 course, as stipulated by the IRP, developed at the same time. In 2007, the Sm'algayax Authority and school district 52 also embarked on a K – Grade 4 Sm'algayax program, which led to the development of curriculum binders for those levels. With the first student to complete the K - 4 program now having moved to Grades 5 and 6, the curricula for Grades 5 - 12 are being adapted to reflect the prior K - 4 language skills of students. Each curriculum binder includes units for a 10-month year, in most cases organized around the “Ts'msyen Seasonal Round” (seasonal rounds are described more below). Each unit includes unit-specific learning outcomes, particular topics with vocabulary, stories, dialogue, and other language content, as well as teaching strategies and classroom activities, worksheets, student exercises, and student assessment formats.

Chief Matthews School in Old Massett is a First Nations school with Xaad Kil (Haida language) instruction, including learning on the land as an important component of the school's objectives. Led by the Xaad Kil teacher Rhonda Bell, an advanced learner of the language, along with an assistant, the focus is on teaching communicative content *in the language*, rather than using English while teaching Haida words and sentences. The school comprises Nursery, K and Grades 1 - 5. Students receive 45 minutes of instruction in Xaad Kil per day, based on communication almost entirely in the language. The school began with a Nursery/K curriculum in 2007/2008, adding an additional split grade year of curriculum annually until Grade 3/4 was completed in 2011. The curriculum was produced out of initial discussion of cross-curricular goals and content between the Haida language teacher, Rhonda Bell, the school principal, and the curriculum developer (M. Ignace). Subsequently, the language teacher and curriculum developer mapped out a year long sequence of themes and language content. The details of communicative content (teacher talk, classroom routines, TPR sequences, short stories taught with TPR-S, games, crafts and other hands-on lessons, were subsequently recorded in sound and text with fluent Elders, most

of whom are now deceased. Due to the age of speakers and logistics, content was recorded during some 80 hours of sessions per split grade with Elder fluent speakers.

4.7 THE ROLE OF LITERACY IN K-12 EDUCATION

An important consideration in developing First Nations language curriculum is the role of literacy skills (reading and writing). Many Elders and fluent speakers who are involved in developing First Nations as second language (FNLS) programs strongly advocate oral language education in the early grades (e.g. K - Grade 4), with the gradual introduction of the orthography of the language at around the Grade 5 level. In the intermediate levels (Grades 5 - 7), reading and writing practice becomes the focus of 30 – 50 percent of instruction, while continuing to focus at least 50 percent of instructional time on oral language skills.

Similarly, the FNLE discussed above begin with oral language only, initially focused on comprehension alone and subsequently introducing spoken language learning outcomes and assessment benchmarks after the first 150 hours of instruction.

The Chief Atahm Secwepemc immersion program is also highly focused on oral language in the primary grades, although students are introduced to pre-literacy and early literacy instruction in Secwepemctsin, and they are expected to transfer their literacy skills to English literacy by Grade 4, at which point teaching English language arts and other subjects in English begins.

Many First Nations language teachers nonetheless like to display labeled pictures, charts, visuals, and posters in the classroom, which will introduce students gradually to the written language from an early age, without making reading and writing skills part of learning outcomes and assessment. In this way, pre-literacy and literacy is a tacit part of the early primary First Nations language classroom, when many children are naturally curious about the written language.

4.8 ACCOMMODATING DIFFERENT DIALECTS

Most First Nations languages in BC have two or more dialects characterized by a slightly different pronunciation of words, and often by the replacement of certain sounds with others. Dialect-based differences in speech identify speakers as members of particular communities or areas within their territories, and act as marks of collective local identity. Various options exist to incorporate dialect diversity.

For example, Secwepemc language curriculum was developed for Grades K - 4 and 11/12 in the late 1990s by a committee that consisted of seven speakers from the First Nations represented in School District 73 (Kamloops – North Thompson), along with M. Jules and M. Ignace. The Elders initially felt that each of the seven speech communities (four of them representing the Western Dialect of Secwepemctsin, and three representing the Eastern Dialect) should have their own version of the curriculum. This could be done fairly easily by keeping track of the small number of different words and phrases associated with each speech community. Once the Elders realized how small the differences were, they preferred to note the different words used in some communities, but to make only an Eastern Secwepemc and a Western Secwepemc version of the curriculum.

In the case of the Southern Tutchone curriculum, developed in 2010 by the Yukon Government in partnership with the Champagne-Aishihik First Nation, the group produced a single curriculum document, while noting and audio-recording words and phrases in each of the three local dialects where they differed.

4.9 COMMUNICATIVE TOPICS OR THEMES

Whatever type of curriculum design being used, it is always useful to determine what communicative topics matter for your language, culture, and present and future speakers. Appendix 3 provides a list of topics to consider. The following tips also may be helpful.

- Meaningful connections can be made between theme or content and grammatical form. For example, learning about relatives can incorporate personal pronoun markers (for my, your, his/her, our). In some languages, pronoun markers for relatives and body parts differ from pronoun markers for one's possessions and things. Learning about going places (places in the village, in town, houses) can involve post-positions or prepositions (in front, behind, beside, above, below, etc.).
- It may be useful to consider levels of difficulty in grammar or vocabulary associated with communicating about topics, and how they relate to suggestions about focusing on high-frequency vocabulary and phrases.
- Some topics are more suitable for certain age levels.
- A key consideration is the cultural relevance and the interest that the content will generate.

- It is common to begin with familiar topics like making introductions, telling about one's family, foods, "body parts," clothing, community, etc., but each group should decide what is most fitting (see FNLEs as an example).
- It is useful to include only *a limited amount* of content (vocabulary, grammatical form) in each theme unit. For example, when first introducing words for relatives, it is not necessary to include all of the kinship terms that exist in your language; instead, begin at the introductory level with the eight to ten most common and age-relevant terms. The topic of family and kinship can be revisited later, adding new terms incrementally. Keep in mind that students will not be able to retain more than 3-4 words per lesson, and time is also needed for review.
- When designing theme units and content, include a variety of word classes and phrases, rather than just noun vocabulary.

4.10 DEVELOPING CURRICULUM BINDERS AND BREAKING THE YEAR INTO UNITS

Based on the type of design being used (forward, central, backward, or a combination), the curriculum team should chunk the syllabus or benchmarks into age and grade level curriculum binders that reflect learning outcomes or benchmarks specific to each level.

As mentioned above, when developing thematic units and lessons, many teams use a seasonal round approach based on the traditional names of months (moons), and on traditional resource gathering activities throughout the seasons. Below is an example from the Grade 3 Sm'algyax Curriculum binder developed by School District 52 Aboriginal Education Services and the Sm'algyax Authority. It breaks a year down into 10 thematic units, with associated content.

Example: Grade 3 Sm'algyax at a Glance

Month	Themes
Ha'lilaxsimaay - September	<input type="checkbox"/> Ha'lilaxsimaay – the berry month, or month of blueberries; berry words and phrases. <input type="checkbox"/> Questions and answers surrounding the Seasonal Round Poster and booklet for Ha'lilaxsimaay (September) <input type="checkbox"/> Review of some classroom words, question words and short sentences for describing where things are in the classroom. <input type="checkbox"/> Optional review activity: my family
Ha'lilaxsigaboox - October	<input type="checkbox"/> Ksuut - Fall time – questions and answers about changes in nature occurring in fall <input type="checkbox"/> Ha'lilaxsigaboox– the cockle month: showing and telling about gaboox (cockles). <input type="checkbox"/> Question and answer activities with the Seasonal Round Poster and Booklet for Ha'lilaxsigaboox (October). <input type="checkbox"/> Introducing the Beaver and Porcupine Story : Noun and action vocabulary, and the plot of the story. <input type="checkbox"/> Optional: Review of Halloween Words.
Ha'lilaxsits'a'ax - November	<input type="checkbox"/> Ha'lilaxsits'a'ax – the month for digging clams. <input type="checkbox"/> Questions and answers around the Seasonal Round Poster and booklet for Ha'lilaxsits'a'ax <input type="checkbox"/> Dm liitsgm - Review of Sm'algyax Counting 1 - 10, and counting in 10's to 100 <input type="checkbox"/> Action words and sentences for climb, swim, walk, dive, jump and directionals up (man) and down (tgi)
Ha'lilikluulgit - December	<input type="checkbox"/> The Seasonal Rounds Poster and Booklet for Ha'lilikluulgit <input type="checkbox"/> Words for Christmas things (review) <input type="checkbox"/> Decorating a Christmas Tree – based on a 10 sentence TPR action routine that includes prompts for getting a tree, putting it up, decorating it with different colour ornaments and lights. <input type="checkbox"/> Making a Christmas Card with a Christmas message in Sm'algyax <input type="checkbox"/> New and Review Christmas Songs
Ha'lisuwiliinsk - January	<input type="checkbox"/> The meaning of Ha'lisuwiliinsk: the month when people trap animals <input type="checkbox"/> Ha'lisuwiliinsk in the Ts'msyen Seasonal Round – Questions and answers <input type="checkbox"/> Counting animals with the animal counting system (review) <input type="checkbox"/> Describing the tracks of Beaver and Porcupine <input type="checkbox"/> Song: The Bear went over the Mountain in Sm'algyax

Month	Themes
Ha'liwilgisi'yaask - February	<input type="checkbox"/> Ha'liwilgisi'yaask, the North Wind Month <input type="checkbox"/> More words and phrases for winter, snow and cold <input type="checkbox"/> The Seasonal Round Poster and booklet for Ha'liwilgisi'yaask <input type="checkbox"/> Learning about emotions (Beaver and Porcupine) <input type="checkbox"/> Winter weather and dressing warm (optional review activity) <input type="checkbox"/> Making a Valentine's card with a Sm'algyax message
Ha'lilaxsiw'ah - March	<input type="checkbox"/> The seasonal theme of the month is 'wah - ooligans <input type="checkbox"/> Questions and answers about the Seasonal Round Poster and booklet for Ha'lilaxsiw'ah <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat or "playgrounds" for beaver and porcupine <input type="checkbox"/> Where do you live? – human dwellings and comparing beaver and porcupine habitat with human dwellings <input type="checkbox"/> Further optional review materials for this month will deal with vocabulary, questions and phrases that deal with spaces and places in the house.
Ha'lilaxsis'waanx – April	<input type="checkbox"/> Xs'waanx – Herring Roe on hemlock boughs <input type="checkbox"/> The Seasonal Rounds poster and booklet for Ha'lilaxsis'waanx – asking and responding to questions about the pictures. <input type="checkbox"/> Words and phrases for spring <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing a map or picture of beaver's house and habitat or of their own neighbourhood (creative activity) <input type="checkbox"/> Review of counting words for people <input type="checkbox"/> Song: K'bool K'abatgüülk
Ha'lilaxsiḡ'ask	<input type="checkbox"/> The Seasonal Theme of the Month: ḡ'ask – Seaweed <input type="checkbox"/> The Seasonal Round Poster for Ha'lilaxsiḡ'ask – asking questions and giving answers about people, things, actions and places in the pictures <input type="checkbox"/> Review: Foods we eat <input type="checkbox"/> Foods of beavers and porcupines – asking and telling what foods they like and don't like, and naming them <input type="checkbox"/> Expressing likes and dislikes (as negative sentences) about foods.
Ha'lilaxsimak'ooxs	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditional theme – mak'ooxs (salmonberries) <input type="checkbox"/> Questions and answers about the Seasonal Round Poster and booklet <input type="checkbox"/> Summer weather <input type="checkbox"/> The Seasonal Rounds Posters and booklets for July and August <input type="checkbox"/> Going for a Nature Walk (Review Activity) <input type="checkbox"/> Telling what I will do in summer

Where the seasonal round – which in the Sm’algyax program is well supported by a set of posters, accompanying booklets and learning resources – provides the cultural framework for the organization of theme units and their content, the challenge for curriculum developers is to develop additional content for more advanced learners that will enable review, while at the same time adding more complex vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural knowledge. Another option is to organize thematic units around seasons (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer), or to use a combination of seasonal activities (weather, hunting, fishing, gathering, trapping and traditional ecological knowledge, gardening, seasonal foods, observations of seasonal changes among animals, plants and the land) and everyday vocabulary (family and relatives, human body and hygiene, clothing, food, utensils).

The Southern Tutchone curriculum developed with Champagne-Aihishik First Nation Elders and educators includes a seasonal rounds approach that features lessons about fall freeze-up, hibernation of animals, bird migrations, winter celebrations, and in late winter to early summer, the return of birds and fowl, animals “coming out” of hibernation, and the coming of spring and early summer. In the winter months, indoor lessons about common themes like clothing, body, in the house, etc. were added to the units.

4.10.1 Unit Development as a Web

Figure 5, from the Sm’algyax Grade 3 Curriculum, provides some orientation for how to map out a unit based on a theme. In this case, the theme unit encompasses three to four months of the school year. It is a web-like set of topics that derived from the Beaver and Porcupine (*Sts’ool dił Awta*) story, a well-known *adaawx* or oral tradition that exists in various versions as transcribed recordings from deceased Ts’msyen Elders, and as a black and white illustrated booklet in Sm’algyax with English translation.

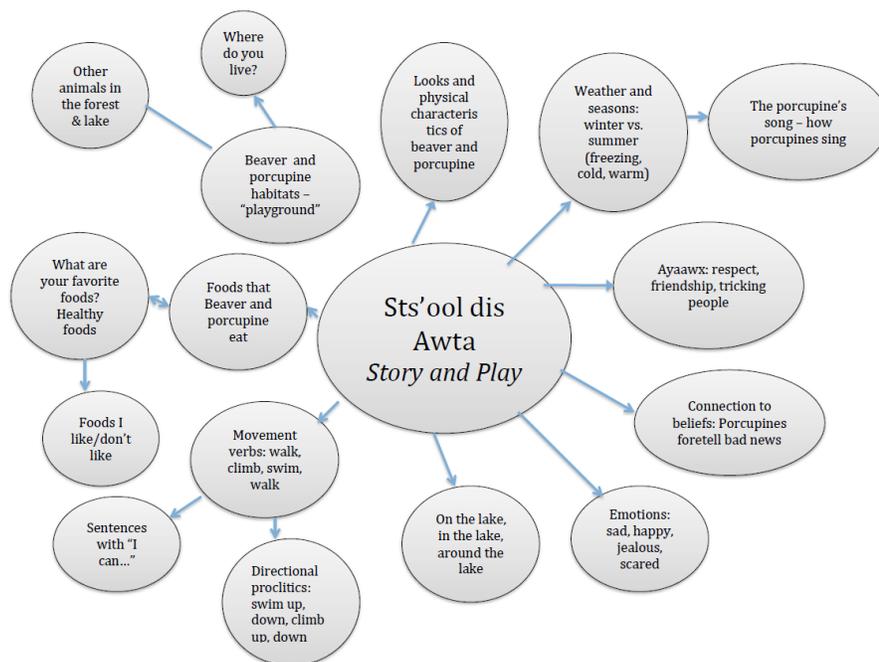
Sts’ool dił Awta is a widely known *adaawx* not subject to crest or other local group ownership restrictions, which makes it a good choice for use in school curriculum. Like many *adaawx*, it is multi-dimensional in that it includes messages that pertain to social and moral protocols, traditional ecological knowledge (animal characteristics and habitat), weather, seasons, and geography.

The Sm’algyax Committee undertook the following steps to make *Sts’ool dił Awta* the cornerstone of a theme-based unit – inspired by AIM Language learning theme units.

1. Reviewed and edited the story from versions previously recorded, and pared it down to simple language without compromising the essentials of plot and message (a relatively complex task).

2. Recorded the pared-down story and an accompanying song for teacher use (teachers themselves benefitted from learning and memorizing the story, especially since several of them were not yet fluent speakers).
3. Considered vocabulary and grammatical forms previously taught in Grades K-2 Sm'algyax, and isolated and listed story vocabulary to be pre-taught over several lessons with TPR and TPR-Storytelling methodology.
4. Developed age and learner appropriate teaching strategies and classroom activities for engaging students in learning the story over the course of several sessions.
5. Brainstormed related or extension themes and activities that flow from the story.
6. Developed vocabulary, phrase types (questions and answers, descriptions), and focus-on-form (grammar) elements for each of the extension themes, and organized these into a sequence.
7. Developed teaching strategies and classroom activities (communicative oral content, arts and crafts activities, games) for the extension activities.
8. With the help of the edited story and an existing English story-theatre version, developed a Sm'algyax story-theatre version, and developed teaching strategies and classroom activities for an end-of-unit performance.
9. Laid out learning outcomes for the unit based on evidence of students' understanding and production of words and phrases, understanding of plot and message, and participation in storytelling and the extension activities.
10. Based on learning outcomes, developed a variety of assessment strategies aimed at gathering information through observation and check-list testing of students' oral comprehension and production of language content, and based on portfolios of students' creative works and participation in classroom activities.

Figure 5:
Sm'algyax Grade 3 Curriculum, provides some orientation for how to map out a unit based on a theme.



4.10.2 Developing Content for Units

Each topic should include all, or at least most, of the following.

- “Teacher talk,” or communicative content produced by the teacher using prompts, props, visuals, role-play and actions.
- Dialogue or conversation, which in the early grades can be modeled dialogue with puppets.
- TPR exercises (TPR’ing new vocabulary with the help of props and phrases like “go to the ...”, “point to ...”, “show me ...”, “go and get ...”, “give x the ...”, etc.).
- Story/narrative about the topic, using print and audio, comics, TPR-S exercises.
- A traditional story in language appropriate to the learners’ level, like a Raven or Coyote story. At the beginner to intermediate level, this may need to be a pared down version of the full story, which will require some time, discussion and preparation, because the basics of the plot should not be changed.

- Games, including physical activity games, board games, flashcard games, guessing games – some for whole class, some as partner or small group activities.
- Video(s).
- Vocabulary Glossary (not only noun vocabulary, but ALL word categories - adjectives, verbs, adverbs, demonstratives, directives etc., plus affixes that express verb tenses, modality, applicatives, control), with icons, photos, pictures, and flashcards. The glossary should not be provided to learners as a word list, but instead should guide the teacher to break down content into chunks to be pre-taught and taught using various strategies (question-answers with the help of real items, pictures, TPR commands, etc.).
- Cultural context, including interesting facts in print, video, graphics, and photos.
- Grammar or focus-on-form activities. The increased level of complexity of grammar that is being taught can be tracked through a master syllabus with a table of grammar topics connected to communicative competence (see Appendix 4), or through a listing of grammar topics connected to “Can Do” statements and benchmarks.
- Exercises (oral [listening and speaking] and written [reading and writing]).
- Learning outcomes for the unit, based on the content, activities, vocabulary, focus-on-form, or grammar topics and exercises/activities offered. Learning outcomes should complete the stem “after completing this unit, students should be able to ...,” and they should use concrete ways to measure the tasks. For example, they can include verbs like “be able to say x,” “be able to do x,” “respond to questions about y by doing/saying z,” rather than using vague words like “appreciate,” which are difficult to measure.
- Assessment tools that are based on measuring if and to what degree learners are able to perform the language tasks listed in the learning outcomes.

4.10.3 Lesson Planning from Units

For the Sm’algyax curriculum, the curriculum development group developed 13 grade level curriculum binders (K - Grade 12), each with eight to 10 units partially based on the seasonal round, along with age- and grade-level appropriate communicative topics. In addition, themes, communicative topics and sample

assessment strategies developed for the Sm'algayax IRP at the start of the curriculum development process also provided guidance for themes.

As teachers, teams of fluent speakers, and team teachers¹⁹ were teaching specific grade levels, they broke down the curriculum units into a set of lessons according to the amount of instructional time available. With the help of written lesson plans, teachers added or adapted classroom activities to include particular props, resources and games they had retrieved. Lesson planning also provided a useful “reality check” for the usefulness of the content – whether it engaged learners, and whether the content was too difficult or too easy. Such considerations represented *assessment for learning*, and subsequently informed further editing of the curriculum binders.

4.11 ISSUES RELATED TO COPYRIGHT AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

In developing and printing a curriculum framework (like one based on the BC Languages Template) or language-specific content-based curriculum binders, it is important to consider the issue of how to protect your copyright and the intellectual property rights of your product. *Note: copyright addresses the right to make copies of published works (art, music, film/video, text), in print or digitally, but not the right to the knowledge contained in the product.*

In recent years (1997-2012), Canadian copyright law has been amended with a focus on allowing not-for-profit copying. Also, governance of copying for educational use is differentiated from for-profit use by some exemptions.

In many cases, making an individual copy of a document for personal, non-for profit purposes is allowed, but copying for further distribution is not. This principle applies to curriculum using samples of other people's work, or worksheets and exercises from existing works. In order to use materials from existing works (beyond citing and quoting sources), written permission from the publisher is required.

In copyrighting First Nations' curriculum, it is crucial to consider in whose name the copyright is stated – considering whether it should be the local language authority, a First Nations organization that sponsored the curriculum, the First Nations school, a school district, or some combination. Permissions, if any, related to who can make copies of the product and for what purposes, should also be clearly stated.

¹⁹ In School District 52, many classrooms engage a team of fluent speaker and “team teacher”, the latter being a certified teacher who is not yet fluent in the First Nations language, but honing his/her language skills as they co-teach with the fluent speaker and as they prepare lessons and review content.

When First Nations language IRP development through the BC Ministry of Education's *Languages 5 to 12 Template* began in the late 1990s, First Nations organizations insisted on retaining the copyright to their First Nations language IRPs, reflecting the perspective that neither the language content nor the document should be copyrighted or owned by the province of BC. Accordingly, while the BC Ministry of Education makes most of its IRPs for core academic subjects available for download on its website, First Nations language IRPs are not included, as their copyright lies with the First Nations organizations that produced them. An exception is the Kwak'waka IRP, which is available online, although it is copyright-protected in the name of the organizations that produced it.

Copyright © 2010 School District 85 First Nations Education Council member groups: Kwakiutl Band Council, Whe-la-la-u Area Council (Mamalilikala, Lawitsis, and T'la'tasikwala First Nations), Da'naxda'xw First Nation, Musgamagw-Tsawataineuk Tribal Council (Kwikwasutinuxw-Haxwa'mis First Nation, 'Namgis First Nation, Dzawada'enuxw First Nation), Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation, Gusgimukw First Nation, and School District 85 (Vancouver Island North).

Beyond copyright as related to copying a document, it may be important to protect the intellectual property rights to the product. Intellectual property rights are “legally recognized exclusive rights to creations of the mind.” Under intellectual property laws, owners are granted certain exclusive rights to a variety of intangible assets, such as musical, literary, and artistic works; discoveries and inventions; and words, phrases, symbols, and designs. Common types of intellectual property rights include copyright, trademarks, patents, industrial design rights, trade dress, and in some jurisdictions, trade secrets (see Wikipedia – intellectual property rights).

While UNDRIP (although not legally binding in Canada) addresses the protection of Indigenous intellectual property rights, Canadian law does not specifically protect First Nations intellectual property rights. However, in anticipation of future legislation, some wording of First Nations' intellectual property rights could serve as useful models. For example, a group of researchers working with the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council developed wording to assert Secwepemc intellectual property rights to print and digital cultural and linguistic products. Various First Nations groups that have developed publications and curriculum documents have since adopted similar wording. The Sm'algayax Committee, for example, adopted the following wording in its statement of intellectual property and copyright.

“Published for the Ts’msyen people by the Aboriginal Education Council, School District 52, Prince Rupert, British Columbia. Printed by: Copy Services, the University of Northern British Columbia for Aboriginal Education Council, School District 52, Prince Rupert. The information included in this book is the intellectual property of the Ts’msyen people and is their cultural legacy. Not to be reproduced without permission of the Ts’msyen Sm’algyax Authority. The authors hereby affirm that the Ts’msyen people, as represented by the Ts’msyen communities and their hereditary Chiefs and Matriarchs, have inherent cultural rights and ownership of all cultural information on the Ts’msyen contained in this volume, and further claim first rights to any intellectual property arising from the cultural knowledge as derived from Ts’msyen elders and other Ts’msyen cultural specialists.
©Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Authority, 2008.”

In addressing the issue of copyright and intellectual property rights, First Nations language curriculum developers may also want to consider the following questions.

- What are our own legal traditions related to quoting, acknowledging, protecting, and celebrating the knowledge of individuals and groups?
- In whose name should our curriculum be copyright protected? Our Hereditary Chiefs, First Nations government, cultural centre or organization, Elders who contributed their information, a First Nations school or school district, or in partnership between a number of groups (e.g. the Kwak’wala IRP)?
- How can we create effective copyright and intellectual property rights statements to protect our existing and future rights?

CONCLUSIONS

This document contains information and ideas to support discussions by FNESC, the BC Ministry of Education, First Nations communities and schools, and public school districts about a suitable and improved curriculum framework for First Nations languages. This guide suggests that the BC Ministry of Education's K-12 second language policy is insufficient for First Nations languages. As noted in Part 1, the very future of First Nations languages in BC hangs by a thread, with First Nations Elders, language activists, and learners of different ages working hard to stem the tide of language loss. Given this context, K-12 First Nations language education can have a meaningful role in language (re)vitalization, but the premises for how First Nations languages are taught need to be improved and validated.

An additional urgent issue is the need to encourage and support the engagement of First Nations adults in accelerated language learning, particularly facilitating high levels of proficiency in the coming years. Without a critical number of highly fluent First Nations adult speakers it will not be possible to sustain K - 12 First Nations language programs that will enable children and youth to attain proficiency and therefore build another generation of people who can use First Nations languages in communication.

Indeed, we must make every effort to secure the fluent, creative and competent use of our beautiful and amazing languages.

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A1

COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES AND GRAMMATICAL CONCEPTS

PREPARED BY MARIANNE IGNACE, PHD

Secwepemctsin language teachers, elders and community members have stated that proficiency in Secwepemctsin is a desired goal for a school program in local schools. In order to meet this goal, it is useful to define particular communicative objectives which students of the language need to meet, and to define what grammatical concepts of Secwepemctsin students will need to know and master by the end of Grade 12 in order to be considered proficient in the language. The tables below break down essential communicative objectives and grammatical concepts into specific components. They also lay out a sequence from exposure to a concept, to working on it, and to eventual mastery which students should reach before or by the end of Grade 12. Thus, for each communicative objective and grammatical concept, the chart indicates at which grade level a concept is introduced, then worked on and eventually mastered by the student.

It is crucial that curriculum materials which will be developed in the future will enforce the practice of the concepts listed below through a variety of teaching strategies, through a variety of resources, including print, audio-, video-, audiovisual, computer-multimedia, hands-on materials, and live resources (teachers and elders), and through a variety of assessment strategies. The Integrated Resource Package Languages Template 5 - 12 by the BC Ministry of Education, Skills and Training suggests a variety of learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessment strategies which would allow for this. In addition, the existing Secwepemctsin Grades 11 Beginners' and Grade 12 Curriculum Guides, as well as existing Curriculum materials for Secwepemctsin 4 - 10, and future Curriculum Guides for these grade

levels will provide further detailed learning outcomes, instructional and assessment strategies to meet these objectives.

In stating grammatical and phonological (=sound system) objectives, this document follows the grammatical materials presented in Aert Kuipers, *The Shuswap Language* (Leiden 1974), A. Kuipers and M. Dixon, *A Shuswap Course* (Leiden 1984) and A. Kuipers, *A Report on Shuswap* (Paris 1989), as well as further unpublished grammatical materials developed by Marianne Ignace and Secwepemctsin fluent speakers 1995-2010.

The key to the letter codes in the tables below is as follows:

T = teacher	Teacher uses the concept but does not explicitly present it to students and does not enforce its use.
P = present	Teacher presents the concept to the class and all students are exposed to it.
W = work on	All students practise the concept. Some students will understand it and apply it independently, while others will need more time to understand and independently apply the concept.
K = know	Students understand the concept, but not all students can apply it independently.
M = master	Students can correctly apply the concept in most situations, including in new contexts and situations.

I. Communicative Objectives

<i>Communication</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Exchange simple greetings	W	K	M	M	M	M	M	M
Introduce themselves and others using appropriate terms of relationship (family terms)	W	K	M	M	M	M	M	M
Count to 20 and recognize numbers when given randomly	W	K	M	M	M	M	M	M
Recognize and use numbers to 100 and carry out mathematical operations (addition, subtraction)	W	K	M	M	M	M	M	M
Understand and use counting words for things of particular shapes	T	P	W	K	K	M	M	M
Communicate likes, dislikes and preferences	W	W	K	K	K	M	M	M
Follow classroom instructions and commands	W	W	K	K	K	M	M	M
Make requests, ask and give information about something in the classroom, community etc.	W	W	K	K	K	M	M	M

<i>Language Learning Strategies</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Guess the meaning of an unknown word by its context	P	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Recognize words derived from the same root				W	K	K	M	M
Be able to find words in the Secwepemctsin-English Dictionary		W	W	K	K	M	M	M
Be able to find words in the English - Secwepemctsin Dictionary				W	W	K	K	M
Be able to find words in the English-Secwepemc Wordlist			W	K	K	M	M	M
Use a new word correctly inside a sentence	P	P	W	W	W	K	M	M
Replace a word with a synonym or paraphrase			P	W	W	K	M	M

<i>Stories</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Draw pictures after listening to an oral description	W	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Recognize characters, place and events in an oral story	P	W	W	K	K	M	M	M
Act out a story that you have read		W	W	W	K	K	M	M
Respond to oral questions about a text student has read		W	W	W	K	K	M	M
Choose an appropriate title for a passage in a text				W	K	M	M	M
Present an oral summary after hearing a story	P	W	W	K	K	M	M	M
Complete a missing part of a text		P	W	W	W	K	K	M
Tell a short story from memory				T	W	W	K	M
Understand topic-tracking throughout a text					P	P	K	M
<i>Presentations and Speeches</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Do a show and tell activity		W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Give a brief oral presentation, using notes or cue-cards	W	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Lead a prayer in Secwepemctsin			W	W	K	K	M	M
Follow along a prayer in Secwepemctsin	W	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Give a brief oral presentation without notes	P	W	W	K	K	M	M	M
Recognize the main features of a feast or welcoming speech in Secwepemctsin			P	W	K	K	M	M
Translate an elder's feast or welcoming speech into English				W	W	K	M	M
Give a short speech in Secwepemctsin, using conventions of speech-making				W	W	K	M	M
Give an elaborate feast or welcoming speech in Secwepemctsin, including appropriate content and style					W	K	K	M

II. Phonology: The Sound System

<i>Sounds and sound system</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Distinguish and pronounce Secwepemctsin vowels	W	K	M	M	M	M	M	M
Distinguish and pronounce all sounds that are similar to English sounds	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Distinguish sounds that are different from English but not glottalized	W	K	K	M	M	M	M	M
Reasonable accuracy in pronouncing sounds that are different from English but not glottalized	W	W	K	K	K	K	M	M
Distinguish glottalized sounds	W	W	W	K	K	K	M	M
Reasonable accuracy in pronouncing glottalized sounds	P	W	W	W	W	K	M	M
Distinguish all vowel variations	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Reasonable accuracy in pronouncing all vowel variations	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Recognize correct stress marking in a word	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Pronounce stress correctly in a word	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Follow proper intonation of a phrase	T	T	P	P	W	K	K	M

III. Literacy

<i>Reading</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Read already known short words		K	M	M	M	M	M	M
Read already known longer words		W	K	M	M	M	M	M
Sight-read unknown short words		P	W	W	K	M	M	M
Sight-read unknown long words with consonant clusters and glottalized sounds			W	K	K	M	M	M
Read a short text aloud and understand it		P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Read a text of 250 words or more aloud and understand it			P	W	W	K	K	M
Read a text silently and find time, place, participants and events			P	W	K	K	M	M
Give an oral summary of a short text you read			P	W	W	K	M	M
Give an oral summary of a longer text you read				P	W	W	K	M
<i>Writing</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Copy already learned short words without mistake		K	K	K	K	M	M	M
Copy already learned longer and complex words without a mistake		W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Write known short words from memory		W	K	M	M	M	M	M
Write known longer and complex words from memory			W	K	K	M	M	M
Correctly sound out and write new words mainly with sounds similar to English			W	K	K	K	M	M
Correctly sound out and write new words with Secwepemctsin-only and glottalized sounds			W	W	K	K	K	M
Write a short dictation with largely known vocabulary				W	W	K	M	M
Transcribe a short text or speech in Secwepemctsin				W	W	W	K	M
Re-write a story you have heard in your own words					W	W	K	K
Compose an original short story and write it out					W	W	K	K

IV. Grammar: Morphology and Syntax

Grammar: Questions and Answers	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Respond to questions with the question marker -en with single words or yes/no	W	K	K	M	M	M	M	M
Ask questions with the question marker -en	W	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Respond to questions that ask stem'i , “what”, with a full sentence	W	K	K	M	M	M	M	M
Ask questions that begin with stem'i , “what”	P	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Respond with full sentences to questions that ask sweti7 , who?	T	P	W	K	M	M	M	M
Ask questions in full sentences that begin with sweti7 , “who”	T	P	W	K	K	M	M	M
Respond to questions using t'he7en , “where”, telhe7en “from where”, nehe7en “where at”		T	P	W	W	K	M	M
Ask questions using, “where”?		T	P	W	W	K	M	M
Respond to questions using kw'inc and its variations, “how many”	P	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Ask questions using kw'inc , “how many”	P	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Ask and respond to questions asking kenem, “what happened?”			T	P	W	K	M	M
Ask questions using kenem me7e, “why”			T	T	P	W	K	M
Respond to questions using kenem me7e “why”				T	P	W	K	M
Ask questions using penhe7en , “when”			T	T	P	W	K	M
Respond to questions using penhe7en , “when”				T	P	W	K	M
Ask questions using tkenhe7e, “how”					T	P	W	K
Respond to questions using tkenhe7e, “how”					T	P	W	K
Grammar: Deictics, Possessives and Verbs	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Understand the 3 levels of deixis in pointing words (yi7ene , yirey , yiri7 - this, that near you, that over there)	T	P	W	K	K	M	M	M
Use the pointing words yi7ene , yirey , yiri7 in short sentences	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Understand and use deictics that distinguish visible/invisible things, nekllu7 , nu7 etc.					W	K	M	M
Understand and use the intransitive verb pronoun suffixes, 1st, 2nd and 3rd person sing.	P	W	W	K	K	M	M	M
Understand 1st pers. singular consonant reduplication	W	W	K	K	K	K	M	M
Correctly use 1st pers. singular consonant reduplication	P	W	W	W	K	K	M	M
Understand and use the intransitive verb pronoun suffixes, 1st (inc./exc.), and 2nd pers. plur.	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Understand and use the possessive suffixes for 1st, 2nd pers and 3rd person sing.	P	W	W	K	K	M	M	M
Understand and use the possessive suffixes for 1st(inc./exc.), 2nd pers person plur.	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M

Understand the transitive subject suffixes, 1st, 2nd sing. And 3rd pers.	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Use the transitive subject suffixes, 1st, 2nd sing. and 3rd person	W	W	K	K	M	M	M	M
Understand the transitive object suffixes, 1st (inc./exc.), and 2nd pers. plural	P	W	W	K	K	K	M	M
Use the transitive object suffixes, 1st (inc./exc.) and 2nd pers. plural		T	P	W	W	K	K	M
Understand the transitive subject suffixes, 1st and 2nd sing. and 3rd pers.		T	P	W	W	K	K	M
Use the transitive subject suffixes, 1st and 2nd sing. and 3rd pers.		T	P	W	W	K	K	M
Understand the transitive subject suffixes, 1st and 2nd pers. plural		T	P	W	W	K	K	M
Use the transitive subject suffixes, 1st (inc./exc.) and 2nd pers. plural		T	P	W	W	K	K	M
Understand and use the intransitive subordination suffixes, 1st and 2nd pers. and 3rd pers. sing.				W	W	K	K	M
Understand and use the intransitive subordination suffixes, 1st (inc./exc.) and 2nd pers. plural				W	W	K	K	M
Understand and use the transitive subordination suffix, marked trans. suffixes + -es.				W	W	K	K	M
Understand and use passive forms					P	W	K	M
Understand and use prepositional phrases, including appropriate preposition, or prefix, or lexical suffix, or verb	T	P	P	W	W	K	K	M
Understand the independent pronouns re ntsetswe7 , re newi7 , renewi7s , wellenwi7s etc.	T	T	P	W	W	K	K	M
Use the independent pronouns re ntsetswe7 , re newi7 , renewi7s , wellenwi7s etc.	T	P	P	W	W	K	K	M
Use and understand the ct/cit benefactive form with transitive verbs			P	W	W	K	K	M
<i>Sentence Building, Determiners, and Connectives</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Correctly understand and make statements with a noun subject and intransitive verb or adjective	W	K	K	M	M	M	M	M
Understand and make statements using a two-word predicate	W	W	K	K	K	K	M	M
Understand and use negated sentences with ta7 and intransitive verbs.	P	W	K	M	M	M	M	M
Understand and use negated sentences with ta7 and transitive verbs		W	K	M	M	M	M	M
Understand time phrases and other adverbs at beginning of a verb phrase which are followed by nominalized verbs w/possesive or transitive endings	T	P	W	W	K	K	M	M
Use temporal designators at beginning of a verb phrase with correct nominalized verb form	T	P	P	W	W	K	M	M
Understand and use sentences expressing verb+es + correct intransitive poss. Or transitive form			P	W	W	K	M	M
Understand the use of the determiner/connective te in simple subject/predicate phrases	T	P	P	W	W	K	M	M

Understand and use the determiner/ connective re in simple subject/predicate phrases	T	P	P	W	W	K	M	M
Understand and use re and te correctly in object marking				W	W	K	K	M
Understand and use causal clauses (“because”)			T	P	W	W	K	M
Use and understand construction of relative clauses			T	P	W	W	K	M
Understand and use consequential clauses (“therefore”; “if... then”)			T	P	W	W	K	M
<i>Morphology: Word Formation</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Understand the concept of word roots	T	P	W	K	K	M	M	M
Understand the concept of singular and plural verbs, including plural reduplication in verbs				W	K	K	M	M
Correctly use singular and plural reduplicated forms on a range of verbs		P	W	W	W	K	K	M
Understand and correctly use a range of Lexical Suffixes on roots	T	T	P	W	W	K	K	M
Understand and use basic prefixes, like s-, c-, t-, tk, pell-, etc.	T	T	P	P	W	W	K	M
Understand the principle of and types of reduplication and plural formation in nouns and other words	T	T	P	W	W	W	K	K
Use the principle of and types of reduplication and plural reduplication in nouns and other words	T	T	T	P	P	W	W	K
Understand and use allophonic variations of prefixes, suffixes and clitics	T	T	P	W	W	K	K	M

A2

**LANGUAGE BENCHMARKS:
FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE
ESSENTIALS**

BY DR. KATHRYN MICHEL

Language Benchmarks (adapted from Interagency Roundtable)

G	Benchmark	Description	Contact Hours
K	Comprehension Stage 1B - Memorized Proficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate needs. 2. Understands with reasonable accuracy only when this involves short memorized utterances or formulae. 3. Utterances understood are relatively short in length. 4. Misunderstandings arise due to ignoring or inaccurately hearing sounds or word endings. 5. Understands context that strongly supports the utterance's meaning. Gets some main ideas but frequently makes comprehension errors unless well supported by props, body language, and graphics 	150
K	Speaking Stage A - No Proficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unable to function in the target language. 2. Has essentially no communicative language. 3. When responding rote to simple formulaic patterns pronunciation, stress and intonation are generally poor and heavily influenced by another language. 	
1 2 3	Comprehension Stage 1C - Developmental Proficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs. 2. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand simple questions and answers, simple statements, and very simple face-to-face conversations in a standard dialect. These must often be delivered more clearly than normal at a rate slower than normal, with frequent repetitions or paraphrase. 3. In the majority of utterances, misunderstandings arise due to overlooked or misunderstood syntax or other grammatical clues. 4. Comprehension vocabulary inadequate to understand anything but the most elementary needs. 5. Strong interference from the student's first language occurs. 6. Little precision in the information understood owing to a lack of understanding of grammatical structures and lack of vocabulary . 7. Understands main ideas with support. 	300-800

G	Benchmark	Description	Contact Hours
1	Speaking	1. Able to satisfy immediate needs using rehearsed utterances.	
2	Stage 2B -	2. Shows little real autonomy of expression, flexibility, or spontaneity.	
3	Memorized Proficiency	3. Can ask questions or make statements only with memorized utterances or formulae. 4. Attempts at creating speed are usually incomprehensible to native speaker. 5. Pronunciation , stress, and intonation are usually faulty.	
4	Comprehension Stage 1C - Developmental Proficiency	1. Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs. 2. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand simple questions and answers, simple statements, and very simple face-to-face conversations in a standard dialect. These must often be delivered more clearly than normal at a rate slower than normal, with frequent repetitions or paraphrase. 3. In the majority of utterances, misunderstandings arise due to overlooked or misunderstood syntax and other grammatical clues. 4. Comprehension vocabulary inadequate to understand anything but the most elementary needs. 5. Strong interference from the student's first language occurs. 6. Little precision in the information understood owing to a lack of understanding of grammatical structures and lack of vocabulary. 7. Understands main ideas with support.	1200
4	Speaking Stage 2B - Memorized Proficiency	Same as speaking benchmarks for Grades 1-3	

A3

LIST OF THEMED TOPICS FOR FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE UNITS AND LESSONS

- Making introductions: “How are you?” “I’m fine.” “What’s your name?” “My name is x.” A word of caution here: many language teachers, fluent speakers and elders are reluctant to use and teach greetings that in the end are translations from English conventions of greetings. For example, Secwepemc speakers, prompted by Euro-Canadian educators, at some point in the past devised phrases like *le7 te scwén’wen* “it is a good morning”, a greeting they say was never used by speakers in the past. Instead, they used tscwinúcw-en-k? which means something like “did you make it through the night?”
- My relatives, your relatives, our relatives: basic terms (mother, father, grandparents, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandchild). More advanced terms can be introduced incrementally. Some languages have very complex sets of terms whose use depends on whether a female or male is speaking, and/or whether they distinguish between relatives on the mother’s and father’s side. There are also differences between how kinship terms work when they are used as terms of address or to refer to a relative.
- Villages, communities and places in the Nation.
- Going to places/travel in the community and Nation. This could include place names, geographic terms, buildings, stores, modes of transportation, actions (walk, go back, turn left, turn right).
- Foods, eating and sharing foods: traditional foods from the land; modern foods, utensils, eating, setting and clearing table.

- Preparing certain foods: recipes, along with cut up, chop into bits, fillet, pour liquids or solids. Many indigenous languages have a variety of glued-together words for what in English can be expressed by such ubiquitous words as “put” or “cut”.
- Washing dishes, drying dishes, putting away dishes, wiping counters/tables in the kitchen.
- Things around me: rooms in the house, furniture and actions in the house (this can include some location words – in, on, under, next to, below, etc.).
- Cleaning house: actions of sweeping, vacuuming, mopping, wiping, words for gadgets.
- Getting firewood and making fire/a campfire.
- Camping out: travelling, building a shelter (or setting up a tent), making fire, cooking food.
- Preparing a sweat.
- Body parts: human and animal anatomy (basic terms & actions).
- Hygiene and health: grooming, bathing, washing up (this could also include cultural meanings and values).
- Sickness and getting healthy: flu season, different parts of body hurting.
- Doing laundry: clothing, actions, folding clothes, putting away.
- Talking about the weather: weather formations, announcing present, tomorrow and yesterday’s weather, getting dressed for the weather.
- Tides (in coastal areas) and changes to rivers (freshet/high water, low water, meltwater etc.).
- Celestial bodies: their meanings, stories and associations with the seasonal round – sun, moon, stars, constellations.
- Reckoning time: calendar, months, seasons, days of the week, clock time – if and where such time reckoning is culturally appropriate.
- Seasonal round of subsistence: what subsistence resources people engaged in, in the past and now.

- Animals and their habitats: characteristics and behaviour, including when animals go into and come out of hibernation; when different birds fly south and come back in early spring.
- Cardinal directions and wind directions (these may be different).
- Geography: the lay of the land and sea, noun words for geography terms, demonstratives, locational and directional affixes, instrumentals, classifiers, etc. etc., movement verbs and compounds.
- Occupations and jobs: places where people work and what they do there.
- Dwellings: long ago and now (longhouses, pithouses, shelters, camps) and locations, lay-out, and activities in a dwelling.
- Clothing: dressing for the weather (clothing words and put on/take off words).
- Trading (long ago and now).
- Going shopping at the local store or mall: for food, clothes, etc.
- Visiting relatives, Elders (combines words for “visiting” with sharing food, tea or coffee, helping out in the house).
- Looking after a baby or child.
- Fishing: salmon and lake fishing, methods, gear, fish, actions, places.
- Hunting: deer, moose, elk, small animals.
- Trapping: in some First Nations communities (e.g. in Northern BC), trapping continues to be an important and valued skill and occupation.
- Fishing: ocean, river, lake fishing, technology, actions.
- Plants and plant gathering: berries, root plants, vegetables, nuts and seeds, cambium, gathering seaweed, eel grass.
- Gathering and preparing medicines (consult with Elders as to what kind of medicines they feel are safe to share with students in class).
- Other seafood: shellfish, seaweed, ooligans.

- Traditional ecological knowledge: connections between animals, plants, seasons, sustainable ways to harvest foods, paying respect to everything on the land.
- Traditional skills and crafts: tanning hides, making moccasins, butchering animals, weaving a basket or a hat, other weaving (wool, Indian hemp, sage...), making a drum, carving a pole, making a canoe.
- Modes of transportation: going somewhere by car, parts of a vehicle, railway.
- Canoes and canoe travel: parts of a canoe, types of canoe for different functions, travelling by canoe, making a canoe, paddling a canoe, rowing a boat (for example, in Xaad Kil lessons, Grade 4 children learned the actions for rowing, which was a great way of learning the instrumental prefixes sk̓u- “motion of pushing out from oneself with fists” and d̓áng- = “motion of pulling something towards oneself”.)
- Travelling by plane to a location, or getting visitors by plane (the Sm’algyax curriculum includes a story that can be acted out about having visitors from Tak’waan, New Metlakatla, and taking them around Kxeen, Prince Rupert, for sightseeing and entertainment).
- Fishing boats and other modern water-craft.
- Learning and saying a prayer: mealtime, opening a meeting, a thank-you prayer.
- Songs and music: repertoire of various songs, including traditional songs and translated songs (from English nursery or other tunes).
- Making a speech/oratory: can be covered at different stages, from a very short rote-memorized speech to thank people at a gathering, to a longer, improvised, occasion-specific speech where information is shared.
- Communication at ceremonies and planning a feast: give-away, potlatch. (For example the Sm’algyax Grade 10 and 11 curricula include a feast (luulg̓it) unit about preparing for a feast, inviting people, organizing tasks and carrying out a feast, culminating in the class giving a feast to the school).
- Dating, friendship, marriage (for older youth).
- Counting: different counting systems, counting money, rote number counting, word math problems in the First Nation language, traditional units of measurement.

- Colours: best integrated into lessons that teach adjectives (clothes, things in the room).
- Relations in space: on top, under, in, besides etc. (can also be used in conjunction with other topics above, e.g. in the house/dwelling, describing where people etc. are).
- Holidays: Christmas, Easter, Valentine's, Remembrance Day, Birthday.

For a further listing of essential themes or topics in learning a language, see also Hinton (1994).

A4

SAMPLE SYLLABI AND ORGANIZATIONS CHARTS

FROM: THE BREATH OF OUR ANCESTORS, FNESC, 2012

Sample Cultural Content Chart

	Place, Land, Nature & Living Things			
Place, Land, Nature & Living Things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tides, winds seasons, weather, moons hunting/fishing grounds different types of hunting & fishing gathering outdoor education (horticulture, sea, land) how to live off the land campgrounds (where, what, who) ... 	Identity through Language 	Family & Community Relationships 	Stories, Songs, Dance, Art, & Ceremonies 
Identity through Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cedar tree of life; environmentalism, science, & medicines technologies for all aspects of life stewardship & conservation expressing gratitude prayer words for plants and animals beliefs and teachings re hunting and fishing ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> language as a source of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> motivation to learn confidence leadership in community language (words, structures) as expressing relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> social (e.g., inclusion) with the natural world (e.g., seasonal calendar) ... 		
Family & Community Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> traditional cooking and food preservation multigenerational learning trade connections transportation methods cultural exchanges (land use and animals from diff territories) sharing of resources (vs. colonial concept of ownership) family-specific fishing & gathering locations ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> chieftainship (head of house) connection with the spiritual world responsibility for revitalizing the language specificity of roles encourages mastery in community (treasuring each child's special gifts) ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> beliefs re child rearing resolving issues, healing activities and systems that bring us together societal rights & responsibilities individual and community responsibilities family kinship ... 	
Stories, Songs, Dance, Art, & Ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how dances and songs are tied to the land history of the people seasonal celebration place names, history, teachings re land (names tied to locations) vocab for describing relationships & kinship, including relation with spiritual ancestral names & ceremonial rights crests and symbols related to the land ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowing stories and traditions connects students to who they are values and beliefs, as expressed in rituals; oral teachings re morality ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> public speaking (students taking a role in ceremony) ceremony, celebration, feasting (naming, marriage, death etc.) – participation & witnessing ownership of dances & song (kinship) regalia representing houses, families, ... place oral history systems & protocols (acknowledging sources of info) ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> traditional dance contemporary songs and dance composing new other arts (carving, visual, dramatization) student-generated work beliefs learned from creation stories (origin stories) learning to tell stories types of songs (seasonal, prayer, etc.) ...
Common Throughout				
Values – the “pillars” of learning (e.g., responsibility, roles, respect, reciprocity, but also humility, gratitude, etc.).				

Sample Age-Appropriate Learning Related to Culture Topics

With your Culture Topics identified, you will need to elaborate on what you focus on at each level. The two charts provided here illustrate by distinguishing four levels that span the entire K-12 range. Depending on how new your program is and how many students at differing ages you intend to serve, your own curriculum may need to have more levels and/or you might opt to reduce the range of ages/grades covered.

LEVEL	CULTURAL CONTENT RE PLACE, LAND, NATURE, & LIVING THINGS
ADVANCED (ages 16 & up)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: significant social and cultural teachings (including laws) that relate to these; as taught through stories; the water cycle (e.g., changing levels in lakes and waterways) - see Connecting Culture and Language Topics • seasons, weather, moons: phases of the moon; advanced biology and chemistry associated with seasonal animals, plants, foods; ceremonies and other cultural expressions of respect for the natural world • hunting/fishing grounds; different types of hunting & fishing; gathering (those who participate can share their experiences) • outdoor education (horticulture, sea, land): the planning component <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to live off the land (survival); stories of resourcefulness; mapping the traditional territories; landmarks and finding your way; water safety (esp. re travel on water); more practical knowledge of the properties of plants for food, medicine, creating technologies (shelter & other types) - campgrounds - stories and knowledge related to traditional territory • cedar tree of life; environmentalism, science (chemistry, biology) & medicines
LATE INTERMEDIATE (ages 12-16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: names, attributes/characteristics, and stories/songs/dances related to these; also relationships among them; as aspects of weather and climate - see Connecting Culture and Language Topics • seasons, weather, moons: gathering and preparing seasonal foods, rituals and observances related to these activities and the seasons; science associated with weather & seasons; conservation; traditional and contemporary ways of acknowledging the seasons and natural world • hunting/fishing grounds; different types of hunting & fishing; gathering: health considerations related to handling and preparing game/fish/plants; using entire parts of killed animals • outdoor education (horticulture, sea, land): reflection and personal connection with the land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to “live off the land” (survival): modifying activities to allow for personal conditions (e.g., girls during menstruation) - safety in the wild; this also relates to community customs - campgrounds - fire creation, management • cedar tree of life; environmentalism - science (ecosystems & interdependence) & medicines
EARLY INTERMEDIATE (ages 8-12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: effects on harvesting and travel & celebrations - see Connecting Culture and Language Topics • seasons, weather, moons: characteristics and indicators of each season; dangers and opportunities, including social responsibilities associated with the seasons; as told in stories/songs/dances; concepts of time; science associated with seasonal plants and animals - their life cycles; recognition and respect • hunting/fishing grounds; different types of hunting & fishing; gathering: techniques (including protocols) & technologies for gathering, catching, trapping food plants and animals; the significance and meaning of particular place names • outdoor education (horticulture, water & land); safety (buddy systems; not wandering alone) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to “live off the land” (survival): bringing only what you need; sources of food and shelter - campgrounds (where, what, who) • cedar tree of life; environmentalism - why & how to practice: respect (clean up after; minimal footprint; leave as you find it)
BASIC (ages 4-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: staying safe near water - see Connecting Culture and Language Topics • seasons, weather: what they are, common activities associated with each season; choosing the right clothing for the weather & staying safe; seasonal plants & animals - habitats & characteristics; respect for themselves & the natural world • different types of hunting & fishing; gathering: learning to identify some tracks & signs of animals; where foods come from; place names for nearby, frequently visited places; creation & teaching stories featuring animals • outdoor education (horticulture, sea, land) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - campgrounds (where, what, who) • cedar tree of life: identifying, knowing some uses of, and having respect for key plant and animal species

LEVEL	CULTURAL CONTENT RE FAMILY & COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS	
ADVANCED (ages 16 & up)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beliefs re child rearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsibilities of establishing a family - traditional and contemporary approaches to teaching and learning • resolving issues, healing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - restorative justice and consequences for violation of customs, laws - the legacy of colonialism (e.g., residential schooling) - decolonization - appropriate and effective ways of effecting change • activities and systems that bring us together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expressing respect for responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • societal rights & responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rights of indigenous peoples, worldwide (e.g., UN declaration) - ownership and systems of mutual support within communities - treaty and other legal rights and responsibilities - traditional and contemporary governance systems • family kinship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - roles of extended family members (aunties, uncles) in specific situations - disciplinary, et al - roles of Elders in communities (part of expanding spiral of understanding)
LATE INTERMEDIATE (ages 12-16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beliefs re child rearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reasons underlying community practices • resolving issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evolving peer relationships - conflicts; healthy and unhealthy responses to challenges/disappointment - personal planning (balance and healthy lifestyles) • activities and systems that bring us together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organizing and carrying out feasts and celebrations - mentoring relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • societal rights & responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being helpful; increasing (new) roles in the family and community (chores, activities) - participation in ceremonies (initiations, roles) - resources for youth in trouble • family kinship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - other peoples' places and roles in the extended family - family trees (part of expanding spiral of understanding) - crests or other family "symbols" - similarities and differences among families
EARLY INTERMEDIATE (ages 8-12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beliefs re child rearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - puberty rites - tasks associated with looking after children • resolving issues, (peers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - friends (what is a good friend, how to be a good friend), including boyfriend/girlfriend - self-care and health - bullying, racism, respectful gender relations - respecting differences • activities and systems that bring us together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - technology - symbols, images; places for gathering - community events (feasts, memorials, birthdays,...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • societal rights & responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being helpful; increasing (new) roles in the family and community (chores, activities) - participation in ceremonies (initiations, roles) - resources for youth in trouble • family kinship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - other peoples' places and roles in the extended family - family trees (part of expanding spiral of understanding) - crests or other family "symbols" - similarities and differences among families
BASIC (ages 4-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beliefs re child rearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who looks after children? - How/when did you get your name? - expectations for siblings in a family - nurturing a child's special qualities (what are yours?) • resolving issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-care and health - What are "rules" for behaviour in class? ...in family? ...in public situations (e.g., big house)? - empathy, courtesy, respect • activities and systems that bring us together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do families stay in touch? (e.g., computer e-mail, telephone, Skype, family/community events) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activities and systems that bring us together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do families stay in touch? (e.g., computer e-mail, telephone, Skype, family/community events) • societal rights & responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the name of your "house"/clan/tribe/society? Can you give an example of a "house"/clan/tribe/society? - Who is the chief, ...the matriarch? • family kinship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who are your relatives? - Who you are (identity) is tied to your family (part of expanding spiral of understanding) - understanding of self, family, community, nation, world)

Connecting Culture Topics and Language Skills

A good selection of age-appropriate culture topics provides a valuable base for setting out the language skills you want learners to acquire, since the culture topics are mostly what will be discussed in the language – by the teachers, the supporting language speakers (e.g., fluent Elders), and soon, the learners themselves. Eventually, as learners mature and as their language skills develop, the culture topics will be what they read about, write about, and otherwise learn about by viewing and/or producing audio-visual works using the language. Now when it comes to generating ideas about which aspects of the language to introduce first and then build on, as curriculum developers you can proceed in any one of three ways:

- a) **Begin by thinking about communicative tasks –what students need to be able to say and understand (and later read or write) in the language in order to deal with the culture topics you have itemized. Follow up by identifying the language structures – sounds, word-building patterns, sentence-building patterns, and language protocols (prayers, speeches, conversation patterns, etc.) – needed to accomplish these communicative tasks.**

This approach – identifying communicative tasks and then structures – extends nicely from the work of identifying culture topics, and can be tackled systematically by using the organizers & levels you have established for culture topics. If your curriculum team doesn't include members with much linguistics expertise or experience developing a language curriculum, however, the somewhat formal & theoretical demands of this approach (i.e., having to formulate communicative tasks and define structures using "grammar" language) may make it less congenial for your group. In this event, consider beginning with something a bit more practical and specific, as suggested in approach (b).

For an illustration of how you might connect communicative tasks and learning activity ideas to a specific culture topic, check out sample 6x on the ensuing pages. Then see the three samples 6y for illustrations of how specific language structures might be identified and described. The three samples include examples of structures from differing languages (Hul'q'umi'num', Kwak'wala, and Sm'algyax), since there can be significant variation among languages in terms of structures. They also include examples from differing levels (i.e., Basic and Advanced).

- b) **Simply brainstorm specific words and phrases students are likely to need at particular levels**

If your development team includes many fluent speakers (e.g., Elders) with limited teaching experience, brainstorming a collection of specific age-appropriate words and phrases may be a good way to start building the language component of your curriculum. Try to build the same number of levels as for your Culture topics, remembering that you can expect students at each level to be able to use all the language learned at an earlier level. Once you have lists of specific age-appropriate words and phrases, you can cross-check their fit with your culture topics (remember that for beginners in the language, lots of functional vocabulary and phrases for routine classroom activities such as storing outerwear, greeting each other, following simple directions, etc. will be needed at the start).

For an illustration of how you might connect specific words and phrases with communicative tasks and learning activity ideas, if you begin with this type of broad-spectrum brainstorm, see sample 6z on the ensuing pages.

c) Begin by imagining activities that can be conducted to help students at the various levels learn about the itemized culture topics, using the language.

For classroom teachers, this is sometimes the easiest place to start, since this is the “stuff” of daily instructional planning, and finding ways to engage students is essential if any learning whatsoever is to occur. Remember, however, that many activity ideas focus as much on HOW to engage students (pedagogy) as on WHAT they are to learn (curriculum). So it remains important to compile lists of words, phrases, and other language structures that get covered in the course of the imagined activities. Again, see samples 6x, 6y, and 6z on the ensuing pages for examples of how activities can help tie culture topics to specific vocabulary and grammar structures you want students to learn.

Ultimately, a rich curriculum document will provide clarity about the content to be covered at each level (culture topics, language structures, and lots of examples of words and phrases), as well as a sense of purpose and focus (communicative tasks).

CULTURAL CONTENT	COMMUNICATIVE TASKS	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES, TEACHER CUES
<p>ADVANCED (ages 16 & up)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: significant social and cultural teachings (including laws) that relate to these; as taught through stories; the water cycle (e.g., changing levels in lakes and waterways) 	<p>All the earlier level language capacities + new capacities such as the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding more extended and complex discourse delivered at a normal rate of speech • using abstract and technical terms related to weather, climate, waterways • recognizing and responding to humour • performing ceremonies used to express gratitude and respect for natural bounty, including songs and ritual phrases (in the language) • dramatizing stories related to the tides, winds, waterways (involving rehearsed use of the language) • formulating a sequence of events as a narrative • conversing with an Elder or non-classroom speaker • writing (composing) personal stories in their own words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more extended presentations to the class • science experiments, demonstrations, and explanations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the carbon cycle and water cycle - weathering and erosion - water chemistry and effects of pollution on biological organisms • undertaking water ecosystem restoration or care activities • using information technology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (apps) to communicate via text messages - audio and video recording to document and archive information, traditions, and stories from Elders re weather, climate, and water (or to retrieve and analyse) - presentation software to create image and word presentations related to language
<p>LATE INTERMEDIATE (ages 12-16)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: names, attributes/ characteristics, and stories/ songs/dances related to these; also relationships among them; as aspects of weather and climate 	<p>All the earlier level language capacities + new capacities such as the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding, speaking, reading, and writing concrete and some abstract words (related to elements of climate and weather; to mood, attitude, and feelings, and to family relationships) • understanding simple utterances delivered at a normal rate of speech • creating and memorizing stories, songs, dances involving the winds and waterways • narrating actions and events in increasingly complex terms • recognizing and being able to identify words in written forms of the language • responding appropriately to simple, closed questions • formulating more complex and socially sensitive personal observations about the environment • recognizing and responding to humour • regularly combining simple language structures into sequences or more complex forms • able to make themselves understood even if errors of usage are present • beginning to self-correct • summarizing key ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having students make a video of performed stories, songs, or dances • Having students use presentation software to create image and word presentations • conducting science experiments and demonstrations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cyclonic action - recording data (weather, climate measurements) - observing gathered water samples for micro-organisms • undertaking water ecosystem restoration or care activities • Having students retell stories for younger children, with and without use of pictures • using circumlocutions, repetition, gestures, and pictures rather than translation to discuss topics

CULTURAL CONTENT	COMMUNICATIVE TASKS	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES, TEACHER CUES
<p>EARLY INTERMEDIATE (ages 8-12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: effects on harvesting and travel & celebrations 	<p>All the Basic level language capacities + new capacities such as the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding and speaking concrete terms (e.g., for gear, paddles, or other tools, directions, steering and manoeuvring, balancing, parts of watercraft, various aquatic animals, colours, clouds, weather conditions) • understanding and repeating phrases such as "stay low," "don't stand up," "low tide," "flooding tide," "slack tide," "upstream," "downstream" • understanding short sequences spoken slowly • recognizing and responding to protocol expressions (e.g., blessings, expressions of thanks) spoken slowly • describing actions and events in simple terms • responding appropriately to simple, closed questions, with assistance • formulating personal observations about the winds, waterways, weather (with teacher support), using two or three-word phrases • beginning to use more than one tense • beginning to combine simple language structures into sequences or more complex forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guest speakers (Elders) • educational exchanges with other, dissimilar communities • exposing students to water travel (boats) • weather awareness (safety on or in the water) • taking students to a beach or watercourse and engaging in harvesting activities (seaweeds, shellfish, freshwater fish, tules,) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discussing restrictions on harvesting (seasonal concerns re red tide/PSP or other micro-organisms) • building and operating model water craft • visiting fishery enhancement facilities and discussing the salmon (fish) life cycle; growing activities • modeling using stream tables, water tanks, stationary pools • recognizing places to avoid (safety considerations) • demonstrating ceremonies used to express gratitude and respect for natural bounty, including songs and ritual phrases (in the language) • picture creation and analysis (using the language) • using repetition, gestures, and pictures rather than translation to discuss topics
<p>BASIC (ages 4-8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: staying safe near water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding and speaking words for clothing, water, objects in the environment, respect (for the environment), buddy, group, walk, come, go • understanding phrases such as "everybody be careful," "stop and listen," "go," • understanding and using (repeating) command expressions or greetings used in groups (e.g., warnings, "look at what I found") • following simple instructions • using simple questions such as "what is this [called]?" from a learned set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking students to a beach or watercourse and playing running, "finding," or other games (e.g., skipping rocks) with talk about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rules for games - things to look for - good gear (clothing) for the situation - "rules" for staying safe • pointing out natural sounds in the environment (wind, animal calls) and how they are captured, imitated, or reflected in the words or speech sounds • repetition of key utterances and speech sounds • using gesture and body language to help convey and reinforce meanings • slowing down the rate of speech • picture examination and discussion of representations

In filling out the Language Structures column, our developer(s)

- read through the list in the Communicative Tasks column (from sample x)
- brainstormed a list of sentences that students would need to accomplish those tasks
- thought about what grammatical features (command words, singular/plural, demonstratives, etc.)
- could be highlighted from those sentences
- organized them that way in the Language Structures column.

The words, sounds, and phrases cited in the Language Structures column are from the Hul'q'umi'num' language.

CULTURAL CONTENT	COMMUNICATIVE TASKS	LANGUAGE STRUCTURES	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES, TEACHER CUES
<p>BASIC (ages 4-8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: staying safe near water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding and speaking words for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clothing, water, objects in the environment, - respect (for the environment), buddy, group, walk, come, go • understanding phrases such as "everybody be careful," "stop and listen," "go," • understanding and using (repeating) command expressions or greetings used in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - groups (e.g., warnings, "look at what I found") - following simple instructions • using simple questions such as "what is this [called]?" from a learned set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizing and pronouncing the distinctive sounds of Hul'q'umi'num' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e.g., - hw, x, xw, lh, - ch', kw', p', q, qw, q', qw', t', tl', ts', tth, tth' • using and responding to commands with lhe - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Imush lhe! "Walk!" - Nem' lhe! "Go!" • showing respect for classmates with expressions of politeness - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tth'ihwum 'i' m'i ewu. "Please come here." - 'Uy' skweyul, si'em! "Good day, respected one!" • recognizing and using singular and plural pronouns in context - e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - La'lum'uthut ch! "You be careful!" - La'lum'uthut tseep! "You all be careful!" - 'li ch 'o' 'uy' 'ul'? "How are you?" - 'li tseep 'o' 'eli 'ul'? "How are you all?" • following instructions in short phrases - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Unuhw 'i' hwiyneem'. "Stop and listen." • using and responding to learned phrases and questions with tu'i and kwu'i <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e.g., - Lemut tu'i! "Look at this!" - Stem 'a'lu kwu'i? "What is that?" - Stem kwun's hun'ut tu'i? "What do you call this?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking students to a beach or watercourse and playing running, "finding," or other games (e.g., skipping rocks) with talk about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rules for games - things to look for - good gear (clothing) for the situation - "rules" for staying safe • pointing out natural sounds in the environment (wind, animal calls) and how they are captured, imitated, or reflected in the words or speech sounds • repetition of key utterances and speech sounds • using gesture and body language to help convey and reinforce meanings • slowing down the rate of speech • picture examination and discussion of representations

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The words, sounds, and phrases cited in the Language Structures column are from the Kwak'wala language.

There may be dialect variations. The example uses the U'mista Orthography, as this has been adopted by both the Kwak'wala/Bakwamk'ala Teacher Education Program and SD #85.

CULTURAL CONTENT	COMMUNICATIVE TASKS	LANGUAGE STRUCTURES	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES, TEACHER CUES
<p>BASIC (ages 4-8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: staying safe near water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding and speaking words for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clothing, water, objects in the environment, animals/ birds - respect (for the environment), buddy, group, walk, come, go • understanding phrases such as "everybody be careful," "stop and listen," "go," • understanding and using (repeating) command expressions or greetings used in groups (e.g., warnings, "look at what I found") • following simple instructions • using simple questions such as "what is this [called]?" from a learned set • rituals surrounding water: expressing gratitude for the provision of food; fish, seaweed, cleansing • observing different types of water flow e.g., High tide, very low tide, ebbing, ripe tide or swift current, slow current, river, stream • dialogues in Kwak'wala about water, expressing gratitude, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizing and pronouncing the distinctive sounds of Kwak'wala - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - m, g, gw, x, xw - Tl, t', ' , K', Kw' • using and responding to commands with da.ga' - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - K'waxida.ga' "Sit down" (now) - Ha.ga "Go!" • showing respect for classmates with expressions of politeness - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gila's wa'x_a "Please come here." - La'a.ms wa.xida "You've been most helpful" • recognizing and using singular and plural pronouns in context - e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a'ekakilala "be careful!" - a'ekakilaladaxwlas "You all be careful!" - Wiksas? "How are you?" - Wixsdaxwlas'? "How are you all?" • following instructions in short phrases - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wa'la, hutlilala "Stop and listen." • using and responding to learned phrases and questions - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dukwafata "Look at this!" - Matsaluxda? "What is that?" - Matsalixda? "What is this?" • progression for types of water flow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "High tide" - "low tide" - "Very low tide" - "ebbing tide" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking students to a beach or watercourse and playing, running, "finding," or other games (e.g., skipping rocks, scavenger hunt) with talk about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rules for games - things to look for - good gear (clothing) for the situation - "rules" for staying safe • pointing out natural sounds in the environment (wind, animal, bird calls) and how they are captured, imitated, or reflected in the words or speech sounds • repetition of key utterances and speech sounds • using gesture and body language to help convey and reinforce meanings • slowing down the rate of speech • picture examination and discussion of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - representations - found item art project • discussion re; respect for the environment, leaving things the way you found them/where you found them • participating in or observing first salmon ceremony, cleansing ritual • dramatization of legend/ story that pertains to water. le mink finds a wife. (married kelp woman)

In filling out the Language Structures column, our developer(s)

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- brainstormed a list of sentences that students would need to accomplish those tasks
- thought about what grammatical features (command words, singular/plural, demonstratives, etc.)
- could be highlighted from those sentences
- organized them that way in the Language Structures column.

The words, sounds, and phrases cited in the Language Structures column are from the Sm’algyax language.

Example sentences have been selected or adapted from *Visible Grammar: Ts’msyen Sm’algyax Grammar Resources*, authored by Dr. Margaret Anderson, Dr. Marianne Ignace, and many fluent speakers of Sm’algyax. © Ts’msyen Sm’algyax Authority, 2008.

CULTURAL CONTENT	COMMUNICATIVE TASKS	LANGUAGE STRUCTURES	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES, TEACHER CUES
<p>ADVANCED (ages 16 & up)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tides, water flows, winds: significant social and cultural teachings (including laws) that relate to these; as taught through stories; the water cycle (e.g., changing levels in lakes and waterways) 	<p>All the earlier level language capacities + new capacities such as the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding more extended and complex discourse delivered at a normal rate of speech • using abstract and technical terms related to weather, climate, waterways • recognizing and responding to humour • performing ceremonies used to express gratitude and respect for natural bounty, including songs and ritual phrases (in the language) • dramatizing stories related to the tides, winds, waterways (involving rehearsed use of the language) • formulating a sequence of events as a narrative • conversing with an Elder or non-classroom speaker • writing (composing) personal stories in their own words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the Sm’algyax names of communities and Houses, recognizing their meanings and how the words are constructed – e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Git- prefix, as in Gits’ilaasü ‘People of the canyon’ – Waaps Niishaywaaxs ‘House of the North Wind’ • acknowledging all chiefs and matriarchs in the feast hall with their traditional names and House names • understanding and using Sm’algyax prayers – e.g., Gyigynwaxl, ‘Guidance Prayer’ • recognizing and using appropriate intonation patterns for prayers, storytelling, feast speeches, etc. • accurately expressing the time frame of sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – e.g., – Dm łimoomu nabiibu. – I am going to help my uncle. – Łimoomu nabiibut Clarence. – I helped my Uncle Clarence. • expressing weather conditions with ła – e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ła gyelx (‘It’s dark out.’) – ła maadm (‘It’s snowing.’) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more extended presentations to the class • science experiments, demonstrations, and explanations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the carbon cycle and water cycle – weathering and erosion – water chemistry and effects of pollution on biological organisms • undertaking water ecosystem restoration or care activities • using information technology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – (apps) to communicate via text messages – audio and video recording to document and archive information, traditions, and stories from Elders re: weather, climate, and water (or to retrieve and analyse) • presentation software to create image and word presentations related to language • reading adaawx (origin story) about the origin of the winds • scrambled sentence activities – putting words in the correct order • immersion activities with Elders – e.g., making nets

CULTURAL CONTENT	COMMUNICATIVE TASKS	LANGUAGE STRUCTURES	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES, TEACHER CUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using phrases with the preposition da - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eets'da hana'a misoo. (The woman fried the sockeye.) - Dzakwdis Bernard hoon a da gan. (Bernard killed the fish with a stick.) • using appropriate conjunctions (dis, diŋ) and verbal prefixes (sila) with common nouns and proper nouns to express actions done 'together' - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sihoon'nu diŋ k'abatgüük - I went fishing with the children. - Sihoon'nu dis nabiibu. - I went fishing with my Uncle. vNah sila sihoon'nmt John. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We went fishing with John. • expressing actions done for someone with da / das and common or proper nouns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e.g., - Dzabu ɬax'ask a da k'abatgüük. - I made seaweed for the children. - Nah güültu ɬax'ask das nooyu. - I harvested seaweed for my Mother. • expressing location and/ or direction with prepositions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e.g., vDm ɬimoomu nabiibu a lax boot. - I am going to help my uncle on the boat. • expressing reasons, introduced with the conjunction awil - e.g., <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deentga'nut Frank a na waabu awil ...sgeetga gyelx. - Frank guided me to my house ...because it was dark outside. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning House stories and how House names are constructed • memorizing, reciting, and using prayers • reading or listening to early Sm'algyax texts or recordings, and observing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - differences in style and mood among different speakers and texts - how the language has changed over time

**LEVEL-APPROPRIATE WORDS AND PHRASES, LANGUAGE SKILLS
AND POSSIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

LEVEL	SPECIFIC WORDS + PHRASES	BROAD DESCRIPTORS OF LANGUAGE SKILLS	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
<p>ADVANCED (e.g., ages 16 & up)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect yourself, respect each other, respect all things – (e.g., I am proud to be a member of... family, community, nation; this expresses my connection with... family, community, nation) – (e.g., I [welcome] thank ... for wisdom/teaching etc. I/ we acknowledge my/our responsibility for this wrong; I/we will make this right/make restitution by...) – (e.g., discharging responsibility: I have harvested/gathered... to share with you, ...may this help your family; It is only appropriate to harvest ... when... because...; our people believe that...) • You have caused harm. How can you make amends? How can you wipe away the tears of the person you have harmed? • What is the best way to make _____ feel better about this situation? • Our ancestors/Elders taught that ... I have been told that... • I [we] are gathering information about [this place/activity] to _____ • Are you comfortable, should we take a break, would you like... • Could you please explain [repeat]? • I don't understand. • How do you say _____ in the language? • Who lived there? Why did they live/go there? What did they do there? To whom did that belong? How often/when did they go there? • How did that work? Can you show me? • Is this what you meant? • May I use this recorder ...this camera? • Do you want me to slow down? Could you please slow it down for me? • mourning, celebrating, • Things to notice about this work include... • The meaning I take from this is... • This connects with... 	<p>Communicative Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expressing negation (e.g., via prefixes/suffixes, word order in sentences, use of specific words such as not, nor, ...) • communicating ideas that involve time relationships (time words, tenses, connectives, and changes to other words in a phrase) • spontaneously using appropriate greeting & leave taking expressions (e.g., formal vs. informal) • interacting with fluent speakers (language users) to undertake recording, documenting, and archiving of their language use (includes demonstrating awareness of the courtesies and sensitivities involved) • generating and responding to humour • elaborate/extended explanations of how a creative or other process works • using language to support or provide counsel to others • discussing roles and responsibilities • modeling appropriate usage; teaching younger students <p>Other Aspects of Language Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using slang and other idiomatic expressions appropriately • developing a sense of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – personal ability, contribution, role, and responsibility with respect to the community's/ nation's language revitalization effort – the parental role in language revitalization – options for advocacy re language revitalization – the distinction between acquiring the language, using the language, and learning about the language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organizing and hosting a feast • fabric designs and execution (e.g., symbols for nation, clan, crest) • regalia making • plan and teach procedures or crafts to younger students, using the language • creating contemporary songs, stories, poetry • exploring/analysing contemporary art (comparing art from differing nations and traditions such as Maori, Tsimshian, Secwepemc, ...)

**LEVEL-APPROPRIATE WORDS AND PHRASES, LANGUAGE SKILLS
AND POSSIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

LEVEL	SPECIFIC WORDS + PHRASES	BROAD DESCRIPTORS OF LANGUAGE SKILLS	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
LATE INTERMEDIATE (e.g., ages 12-16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect yourself, respect each other, words containing more complex, less commonly used sounds • “why” questions and “because” answers • respect yourself, respect each other, respect all things <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (e.g., look after your space, ... your belongings; get enough sleep; take responsibility... for your homework, actions, eating, etc.) - (e.g., you’ve been very helpful; let me help you/can I help? What can I bring you? Would you like some...? How can you make this better? excuse me - may I...?) - (e.g., please bless ...our food, this event; if we over-harvest, then there will be...; if we don’t look after our garbage...; stewardship) • I feel embarrassed/ashamed; I apologize for making you feel ... • Can you tell me about your [drawing, model, weaving,...]? • What do you think the artist might be trying to accomplish/say/communicate with this piece? • This [image, model] represents ... • The similarities [differences] in these [two] representations are... • This is interesting because... • The difference between this and a traditional [work] is... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correctly using transitive and intransitive verbs in sentence construction • distinguishing homonyms (words that sound the same, but have different meanings) • acquiring phonetic fluency: producing more complex, less commonly used sounds • deliberately using intonation (and gesture) to communicate meaning • using the language of conditionals & causality • producing written forms of simple sentences • generating (in written and oral form) an explanatory paragraph about their painting, carving, beadwork, models, ... • discussing techniques, tools, and materials associated with creative work (e.g., natural materials, pigments, carving or sewing tools; materials and techniques associated with building/fixing drums or other instruments) • naming different beats, rhythms, types of songs/music • answering the phone and having a short conversation on the phone in the language (also texting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysing traditional stories told by Elders or other fluent speakers • translating from English into the language • public speaking: original composed speeches • incorporation of music performance into public events (e.g., drumming) • creation of original work (music/ singing, dancing, painting, carving) • outdoor activities on land, on water (e.g., camping, fire building, gathering, building, paddling) • increased involvement in planning and decision-making re events, celebrations, etc.

**LEVEL-APPROPRIATE WORDS AND PHRASES, LANGUAGE SKILLS
AND POSSIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

LEVEL	SPECIFIC WORDS + PHRASES	BROAD DESCRIPTORS OF LANGUAGE SKILLS	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
EARLY INTERMEDIATE (e.g., ages 8-12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We, you, he, she, they • Give it to [him, her, us, them] • Who is this? Who is that? • now, later, soon, after, before, today, tomorrow, yesterday • Where are [is] ... • This is my ...mother’s mom [step-father, sister’s husband] • I like [don’t like]_____, because... • respect yourself (e.g., always come to school clean), respect each other (e.g., always greet an Elder; I’ve made a mistake and I’m sorry), respect all things (e.g., don’t waste, take only what you need, express gratitude) • think about sharing, I’m [you’re] sharing with,... • It [he, she] hurt me • sounds – loud, soft, high, low • move to the rhythm; move together • how does this [painting, song, carving, dance...] make you feel? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizing sound-letter associations as a precursor to literacy (how the alphabet captures sounds – with the emphasis on commonly used sounds) • reading age-appropriate and level-appropriate texts • distinguishing root words from prefixes and suffixes • using modifiers (prefixes, suffixes, adjectives, plurals) • using connecting words (and, or, with,...) • using basic phrases and vocabulary involving time relationships • using directional and positional vocabulary (above, below, on, beside,...) • names/rules/language of commonly played games in the community (e.g., Lahal, basketball) • discussing types, purposes of dances • creating new sentences using a few patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing themes (e.g., respect, camping, exploring different environments) • reenacting or retelling traditional stories • translating from the language into English • participating in community observances (funerals, memorials etc.) • introducing themselves, following appropriate conventions/protocols • harvesting of materials for arts and crafts; using them to create objects

**LEVEL-APPROPRIATE WORDS AND PHRASES, LANGUAGE SKILLS
AND POSSIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

LEVEL	SPECIFIC WORDS + PHRASES	BROAD DESCRIPTORS OF LANGUAGE SKILLS	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
BASIC (e.g., ages 4-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is my [brother, mother, auntie, jacket, family, friend, home...] • food [salmon, apple, corn, bread, berries,...] • head, hands, fingers, arms, legs, knees, feet, toes • stop, go, slow down, hurry up, wait, stand, sit, crawl, get down, get up • it's time to... • be careful, pay attention, listen, be quiet, • respect yourself (e.g., hang your coat up), respect each other (e.g., I'm sorry), respect all things • think about sharing, I'm [you're] sharing with,... • It [he, she] hurt me • What are you doing? • please, thank you, [other expressions of gratitude/ appreciation] • offer, offering (pay, payment) • good morning, hello, good-bye (see you later) • yes, no • happy, sad, angry, hungry, tired (sleepy), excited • Give it to me • colours, number names (to 10) • bigger, smaller, more, less (comparatives) • compare, is like, is the same as, is different from,... • I need to...[e.g., leave to use the washroom] • I can... • It is [sunny, raining, cloudy, windy, snowing] • walk [fly, crawl, run, swim, hop, climb] like a [bear, fish, rabbit, eagle, hummingbird...] • dance, sing, draw, paint, • Say it louder, ...again • Say it. • Say it in (speak) _____ [the language] • Point to _____ • Are you ready? Let's start. • We're finished now • Whose turn is it? It's my turn. • Let's play a game • Here are the rules. • That's cheating. • Are you having fun. I'm [We're] having fun. • He [she] is teasing me. • Watch me. Look. • Group 1 here. Group 2 there. • Tell me about... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurately repeating a phrase or word • reproducing sounds of the language (e.g., by using rhyming or memory songs that feature language sounds) • counting (to 10) • talking about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (days of the week - (seasons and seasonal activities - (weather - (clothing (including sports gear such as shoes) - (celebrations (feasts, birthdays, Christmas, seasonal, etc.) - (animal sounds (like a bear, cow, horse, eagle, chicken, crow...) - (names of children (traditional) - (crests or other significant family/community symbols - (self care - (sports activities - (art activities and crafts (lines, shapes, encouragement for creativity, attempting) • engaging in and sustaining short dialogues • following a simple short story or sequence of stories, entirely in the language, based on a picture or series of pictures • telling their own simple version of this story, also entirely in the language based on a picture or series of pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing themes (e.g., gatherings, fish, games, family, all about me) • listening to traditional stories • needs assessment (What backgrounds & prior experiences do students have? Can any special needs be identified?) • learning welcome or other songs with actions • participating in food-related ceremonial activities • involving learners in decision-making re events

**LEVEL-APPROPRIATE WORDS AND PHRASES, LANGUAGE SKILLS
AND POSSIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

LEVEL	SPECIFIC WORDS + PHRASES	BROAD DESCRIPTORS OF LANGUAGE SKILLS	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
BASIC (e.g., ages 4-8) (CONTINUED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • try, again • look for, find • toward, away from • and then... • What is this? • What do you want? • How are you? [fine,...] • Can you help me...? • What happened? What did you do? • That's good/beautiful; Good job. • You have worked very hard. • What is this supposed to be? What is it? • I liked how you... • Could you please make me another one with... • Could you add ; Could you try... • Try it yourself. I did it myself. 		

A5

A SIMPLE ASSESSMENT TEST

CHIEF MATTHEWS SCHOOL XAAD KIL GRADES 1 AND 2

Note: in the following example, comprehension and production (saying) of noun words is tested, however, this assessment tool can be set up to be used with verbs (commands, 3rd person, 1st person) or using possessives, and other forms.



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