ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES IRP

B.C. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE

A review of the development and implementation of Ministry approved First Nations second language Integrated Resource Packages (IRP) within public school districts and First Nations communities

ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES IRP REVIEW REPORT 2016

REVIEW DESCRIPTION

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the British Columbia Ministry of Education (MEd) are committed to supporting First Nations language revitalization. We believe that First Nations language education programs are a crucial element of a quality education for First Nations learners.

As a part of our efforts to support First Nations language education, FNESC and MEd have agreed to work collaboratively to conduct a research project regarding the development and implementation of Ministry-approved Aboriginal second language Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs) within public school districts and First Nations communities.

The project will seek key information regarding:

- The IRP development process
- IRP and language program implementation
- The identification of critical success factors and challenges for First Nations language education
- Recommendations for supporting curriculum and program development for First Nations language education.

NQWALUT ENKALHA

"you don't teach a language, you live a language; you don't teach a culture, you live a culture. A Hul'qu'umi'num' teaching is really through the heart"

Ruby Peter

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RESEARCH TEAM

The research team was led by Dr. Lorna Wanosts'a7 Williams, Professor Emerita at the University of Victoria, and supported by Jesse Fairley, FNESC Manager of Languages and Culture, and Britt Thorburn, Graduate student in Indigenous Language Revitalization at the University of Victoria.

REVIEW METHODOLOGY

The research team:

 a. Developed and distributed a survey to all IRP site Aboriginal language education program directors, Aboriginal language teachers, district administrators and curriculum developers. The purpose of this survey was to learn about the experiences of communities in developing a Ministry approved IRP, and whether the IRP has met community goals and expectation for language teaching and training. The research team collated the responses provided.

b. Eight IRP teams were interviewed by the researchers on site as a part of gathering information for the review report. Team members comprised of district staff – superintendents and district principals and trustees, Aboriginal language teachers and elder language experts, parents, students, community members, school staff – teachers, principals, and cultural support workers.

c. A literature scan was conducted to review what is taking place in other locations working with Indigenous language revitalization.

WHAT IS AN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE IRP?

The Integrated Resource Package (IRP) for second-language curriculum supports schools and teachers in developing provincially approved language programming. The Ministry of Education states in *The Languages 5 to 12 Template: Development Package* that, "the Government of British Columbia recognizes that all students, particularly those of Aboriginal ancestry, should have the opportunity to learn an Aboriginal language whenever possible and should do so with the support of the Aboriginal community" (2003, p. 3). The second-language IRP was developed for second language programs in 1997. It provided a framework for First Nations in creating provincially prescribed curriculum that meets government requirements for second-language education that also provides students with a language course that is recognized as a post-secondary entrance credit where the post secondary institution recognizes the credit. Learning First Nations languages in school enables students to gain communicative proficiency in their First Nations language while also gaining insights into their own culture and developing an awareness of cultural diversity (IRP Introduction Template, n.d.). The Ministry of Education acknowledges the rights of First Nations communities retain rights to their language samples used within IRP documents as intellectual property of the community partner that

worked with the School district and Ministry to develop the language IRP particular to that community (Kell, 2014, p. 62).

The Languages Template Development Package may be used by districts to guide and inform the development and implementation of a First Nations language IRP and is based on existing second-language IRPs for French in B.C. schools. The template is organized using four areas that determine the prescribed learning outcomes, suggested instructional strategies, suggested assessment strategies and recommended learning resources. The IRP includes an Introductory Grade 11 second-language course template for students who have not studied the First Nations language in grades 5 to 10. This intensive learning course was developed to provide students entering the language program in the later secondary grades with an introduction to the target language and culture and a foundation for further study of the language in grades 11 and 12 (Ministry of Education, 2003). Learning outcomes and instructional and assessment strategies included in the grades 5 to 10 IRP should be addressed and adapted by taking into account the interests at the level of senior secondary students.

B.C.'s current legislation has a mandate that all students must study a second language from grades 5 to 8. The policy has remained consistent with today's second language programming, even though language acquisition research suggests that languages are acquired more easily by babies and young children (Chambers, 2014, p. 9; Rowland, 2014; Stiles, 1997, p. 260). In support of this research, second language instruction should begin in Kindergarten in order to foster language learning during the years of natural language acquisition (Kell, 2014, p. 62; Chambers, 2014, p. 9). Language policy that supports second-language learning from Kindergarten to grade 12 would also better support the success of Aboriginal students by providing them with consistent language programming. There are many cases where language programs are only offered in middle and high school, causing students to miss out on even more of their informative language learning years in their own ancestral language (Kell, 2014, p.63).

The IRP is intended to guide public School Districts and First Nations communities in developing second language education that reflects their community needs. Locally developed curriculum must meet provincial second-language requirements and be presented in the IRP format in order to be approved by the ministry (Ministry of Education, 2003). Despite the intention of the IRP to be adaptable to fit the needs of First Nations communities and their cultures, the model and requirements of the IRP prevents First Nations communities from fully addressing the unique needs and context for their language. There is no provision for incorporating the knowledge, language patterns, values and cultural use of the language from an Indigenous perspective.

IRP SITES

School District		Language	
#33 Chilliwack	✓	Halq'eméylem	
#46 Sunshine Coast		Shashishalhem	✗
#52 Prince Rupert	✓	Sm'algyax̱	✗
#53 Okanagan Similkameen		Nsíylxcen	✗
#58 Nicola-Similkameen		Nɬeʔkepemxcin	
#63 Saanich	✓	SENĆOŦEN	✗
#68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith		Hul'q'umi'num'	✗
#70 Alberni	✓	Nuu-chah-nulth	✗
#72 Campbell River		Liqwala/Kwak'wala	
#73 Kamloops/Thompson		Secwepemctsin	✗
#74 Gold Trail		Upper St'at'imc	✗
#79 Cowichan Valley	✓	Hul'q'umi'num'	✗
#82 Coast Mountains	✓	Gitxsan	✗
#84 Vancouver Island West		Nuu-chah-nulth	
#85 Vancouver Island North		Kwak'wala	
#92 Nisga'a	✓	Sim'algyax̱hl Nisga'a	✗

Independent School		Language	
Lalme' Iwesawtexw (Seabird Island Community School)		Halq'eméylem	✗
Bella Bella Community School		Heiltsuk	
W̱SÁNEĆ School Board	✓	SENĆOŦEN	✗
Aatse Davie School		Tseḱene	

✓ site visit and interviews   ✗ survey received

IRP Site Descriptions

1. Shashishalhem (Sechelt Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Shashishalhem 11

She shashishalhem is a Coast Salish language and is the language of the Shishalh people in Sechelt, B.C. The IRP was developed in 2001 and language classes are offered in School District #46.

2. Sm'algya̱x 5 to 12 and Introductory Sm'algya̱x 11

Sm'algya̱x is part of the Tsimshianic language family and is spoken on the north coast of B.C. The IRP was developed in 2000 by the Ts'mysyeen Sm'algyax Authority and is implemented in Prince Rupert through School District #52.

3. Nsíylxcen 5 to 12 and Introductory Nsíylxcen 11

Nsíylxcen is an Interior Salish language that is spoken in the Okanagan, B.C. The IRP was created in 1999 and is offered in School District #53.

4. Nɬeʔkepemxcin 5 to 12 and Introductory 11

Nɬeʔkepmxcín is an Interior Salish language and is often referred to as the language of the Thompson people. The IRP was developed in 2008 and is offered in Nicola-Similkameen schools through School District #58.

5.SENĆOŦEN 5 to 12 and Introductory SENĆOŦEN 11

SENĆOŦEN is a dialect of the Northern Straits Salish languages belonging to the Coast Salish language family. The IRP was developed in 2012 through a collaboration between School District #63 and the W̱SÁNEĆ School Board. The IRP is implemented at Bayside Middle School (School District #63) and the ŁÁU, WELṈEW̱ Tribal School in W̱SÁNEĆ, B.C.

6.Hul'q'umi'num' 5 to 12 and Introductory Hul'q'umi'num' 11

Hul'q'umi'num is one of three in a group of related dialects and belongs to the Coast Salish language family. The IRP was developed in 2007 in partnership with the Hul'q'umi'num Language Stakeholders group. IRP approved language classes are offered in Nanaimo-Ladysmith (School District #68) and Cowichan Valley (School District #79) on Vancouver Island, B.C. Language instruction is offered at John Barsby, Ladysmith Secondary, Bayview Elementary, and Georgia Avenue Elementary.

7. Nuu-chah-nulth 5 to 12 and Introductory Nuu-chah-nulth 11

Nuu-chah-nulth is spoken on the west coast of Vancouver Island and is part of the Wakashan language family. The IRP was developed in 2009 and is implemented in Port Alberni, B.C. (School District #70) and Golden River, B.C. (School District #84).

8. Liqwala/Kwak'wala 5 to 12 and Introductory Liqwala/Kwak'wala 11

Kwak'wala is part of the Wakashan language family with the Likwala dialect being spoken in the Campbell River, B.C. area. The IRP was developed in 2008 by the local First Nations community and language organization, and School District #72.

9. Secwepemctsin (Shuswap Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Secwepemctsin 11

Secwepemctsin is an Interior Salish language spoken in the Kamloops/Thompson Okanagan area. The IRP was developed in 1999 by the First Nations community, school and language organization, the Aboriginal Education Council and School District #73.

10. Upper St'at'imcets 5 to 12 and Introductory Upper St'at'imcets 11

Upper St'at'imc is a dialect of Statimcets from the Interior Salish language family. The IRP was developed in 1998 and is implemented in School District #74 in Lillooet, B.C.

11. Gitxsan 5-12

Gitsenimx̱ is a Tsimshianic language that is spoken by the Gixtsan Nation in Northwestern B.C. The IRP development was a collaborative effort between the seven Gixtsan Nation bands, the Language Authority, local communities and School District #82. The IRP is meant to deliver language lessons to youth that reflect the First Peoples ways of learning and knowing.

12. Kwak'wala 5 to 12 and Introductory Kwak'wala 11

Kwak'wala is part of the Wakashan language family. The IRP was created in 2010 in Port Hardy, School District #85, on Northern Vancouver Island.

13. Sim'algya̱xhl Nisga'a 5 to 12 and Introductory Sim'algya̱xhl Nisga'a 11

Sm̓algya̱x is part of the Tsimshianic language family and is spoken on the north coast of B.C. The IRP is implemented in School District #92 in the Nass Valley of the Nisga'a Nation.

14. Halq'eméylem 5 to 12 and Introductory 11

Halq'eméylem is one of three in a group of related dialects that belong to the Coast Salish language family. It represents the upriver dialect. The IRP was created in 2007 and is implemented at the Lalme' Iwesawtex Seabird Island Community School in Agassiz, B.C. The development of the IRP was made possible by the collaborative efforts of the community, the education committee and council, local post-secondary institutions, language teachers and school staff. Lalme' Iwesawtex Seabird Island Community School developed curriculum outside of what is supported in the K-12 IRP curriculum and extended their language programs to include all grades, from

Kindergarten to grade 12. Knowledge and appreciation of the Halq'em**é**ylem and Sto:lo people supported the development and implementation of the IRP. School District #33 Chilliwack also uses this IRP.

15.Heiltsuk 5 to 12 and Introductory Helitsuk 11

Heiltsuk is a dialect of Hailhzaqvla and comes from the Wakashan language family. The IRP was developed in 2002 by the Bella Bella Community School Society in Bella Bella, B.C. The Bella Bella Community School is an independent school.

16. Tsek'ene 5 to 12 and Introductory Tsek'ene 11

Tsek'ene is a Dene/Athabaskan language that is spoken in Northeastern B.C.. The IRP was developed in 2006 and language classes are offered at the First Nations independent Aatse Davie School in Kwadacha, B.C.

CONTEXT: FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia is home to many of the Aboriginal languages found in Canada (Gessner, Herbert, Parker, Thorburn & Wadsworth, 2014, p. 5). There are 203 First Nations communities and 34 First Nations languages in B.C., which is 60% of the First Nations languages that are spoken in Canada. The First Peoples' Cultural Council's (FPCC) *Report on the Status of BC First Nations Languages 2014* indicates that all of the First Nations languages in B.C. continue to face challenges with creating and sustaining language vitality (Gessner, Herbert, Parker, Thorburn & Wadsworth, 2014, p. 5). First Nations language loss in Canada and B.C. is a result of a long history of colonial abuse and control, and is not due to the intrinsic properties of the languages (Ignace & Ignace, 2008, p. 418). The field of language revitalization recognizes the practices and policies of colonization in past history as significant causes for Indigenous language decline in Canada (Rosborough, 2012, p. ii). The primary cause for such drastic language loss is due to mandated residential schooling for all Aboriginal children from the 1880's to the 1990's in Canada where First Nations children were removed from their families and punished for speaking their languages (Gessner, Herbert, Parker, Thorburn & Wadsworth, 2014, p. 7). These colonial acts have prevented the intergenerational transmission of First Nations languages and have effectively stripped First Nations peoples of the important symbolic and practical functions that their languages provide to a Nation and a community. The loss of these functions hinder every day use of language as a communicative function as well as the symbolic function of language as a marker of identity, culture, and traditional knowledge (Ignace & Ignace, 2008, p. 417).

FPCC suggests in their report that language classes offered in schools are the only opportunity for many First Nations children in B.C. to hear and learn their languages (2014, p. 6) and advise that full immersion is the ideal method of instruction for language learning. However, the average hours spent on language instruction is only 5.73 hours per week per school. Language programs where 50% of all content is taught in the target language is also an effective method, but anything less than 50% is not likely to provide enough exposure to develop functional fluency in the language (p. 6). FPCC argues that "education in one's own Indigenous language is a right protected under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (2014, p. 6-7) and that Canada and B.C.'s current education policies are not supporting First Nations children in exercising this right. This is further supported in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Report (2015):

"The Supreme Court of Canada has interpreted section 35 of the Canadian Constitution (which recognizes Aboriginal and Treaty Rights) as protecting those Aboriginal rights that "were integral to the distinctive culture of the specific aboriginal group" prior to European contact. There can be no doubt that Aboriginal languages and cultural practices fall within the scope of such constitutional protections. The practice of Aboriginal languages was a pre-existing, distinctive, and continuous practice that should be recognized as an existing Aboriginal right under section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982." (p.113).

Government approved Aboriginal language programs are taught using a provincially approved second-language framework that was designed for teaching French and other international languages as a second-language (Kell, 2014, p. 61). The complex linguistic structures of First Nations languages require different methods of instruction than the dominant international and English as a Second Language (ESL) approaches present in education today. Kell (2014) supports the need for different approaches to First Nations second-language teaching because of the critical state of the languages, the fact that many language teachers are learners themselves, and that there are fewer resources available for sources of language input (p. 4). The delivery of First Nations languages through formal education needs to acknowledge the political, social and emotional contexts that language learning takes place in. Language instruction should come from an Indigenous perspective that supports the values, beliefs and worldviews associated with learning and teaching languages. Language reflects the intrinsic properties of a culture, and together they play a significant role in the identity formation of today's First Nations youth. The Gitxsan Language Authority & Coast Mountains Board of Education (2014) reflects this notion in their statement that, "an important goal for Indigenous language and culture programs is to help Indigenous students to develop firm understandings of their own identities and the place of their communities in B.C.'s past, present, and future" (p. 8; in Kell, 2014, p. 6).

Role of Schools in the Revitalization and the Maintenance of First Nations Languages

"Just as education had been used in the past to destroy First Nations cultures and languages, education can now be used to build, restore and revive First Nations cultures and languages" (Faries, 2004, p. 3). Euro-centric schooling has played an undisputed role in the decline of Indigenous languages in Canada and British Columbia. Schools are a major site for the formation of knowledge that informs both language and culture (Scarino, 2014, p. 290) and the implementation of colonially mandated residential schools is the primary influence that has lead to the current status of First Nations languages in B.C. today. The government is now faced with an obligation to make amends for the actions that have caused extensive damage to the language, culture, and overall well-being of First Nations peoples, families and communities. McCarty, Nicholas & Wyman suggest that while school-based language programs are not the only solution to reclaiming Indigenous languages, they do play an important role and bear a responsibility to become catalysts in the reclamation of Indigenous languages (2015, p. 246). This responsibility involves supporting Aboriginal languages in B.C. through grassroots efforts and sustained collaborations between First Nations communities and multi-level policy makers (McCarty, Nicholas & Wyman, 2015, p. 246).

The field of Indigenous language education is currently an area of on-going uncertainty and exploration because there is a lack of structure to support bringing Indigenous knowledge into Euro-centric education (Battiste, 1998, p. 20; De Korne, 2010, p. 116). More research is needed to develop

successful school-based Indigenous language programs to meet the needs and goals of B.C. First Nations language communities and to determine how these programs can be effectively implemented into a dominant Euro-centric education system. Post-residential school generations have received mixed messages about the value of their language (McCarty & Nicholas, 2014, p. 128) and it is essential that Indigenous languages are present in education to affirm their value and importance (Delaine, 2010, p. 71). First Nations students with the opportunity to learn their ancestral language in formal education will encourage them to view their language as modern and relevant to their every day lives (Lee, 2007, p. 20). De Korne emphasizes that implementing an immersion approach that uses language as the medium of instruction, rather than the object of education, and community control in the development and implementation of language programming are two important elements of Indigenous language education (2010, p. 17). These elements reflect the recent recommendations and calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). The TRC emphasizes the importance of reconciliation through education and calls on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples (TRC, 2015, p. 2). This call includes incorporating principles of developing culturally appropriate curricula, protecting the right to Aboriginal languages through teaching them in schools as credit courses, and enabling First Nations community responsibility, control and accountability to their children's education (TRC, 2015, p. 2).

The Issues

Aboriginal languages in British Columbia were purposefully and actively damaged through education policies in recent history. The colonization and discrimination against Indigenous peoples of Canada and B.C. has severed communication between generations and has separated Aboriginal peoples from the land, the language and each other. Aboriginal peoples of Canada are in the process of recovering their languages, and this process is directly linked to the recovery of their identities as Aboriginal peoples. The issues generated from history now presents limitations to teaching and learning Aboriginal languages in education. It is imperative that culturally relevant curriculum be developed and delivered to students through pedagogies that are relevant to their Aboriginal language and culture. Canada's history of colonialism has prevented the transfer of language, culture, and traditional ways between generations because the majority of the past generation was deprived of that knowledge themselves (Faries, 2004, p.12). It is now the responsibility of the government and education to create partnerships with Aboriginal communities to support the delivery of these important knowledges to future generations. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal recognizes the transmission of indigenous languages and cultures is a generic Aboriginal right possessed by all First Nations children and their families and those rights are protected by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 (paragraph 106, p. 34).

The rights of First Nations peoples to their ancestral languages are now recognized through the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) 2007, but Indigenous language policies in Canada are needed to support and guide the development of First Nations language learning, curriculum and programs but continue to be absent. This absence means that there are no official rights in Canada for Indigenous languages (De Korne, 2010, p.116), and a lack of language policy prevents creating space for Indigenous languages in education. Liddicoat & Curnow (2014) determine that,

"language policies construct the role and function of languages in complex ways, and policies and their discourses are an important part of the context in which language education occurs" (p. 274). Similar to Liddicoat & Curnow's assessment of language education in Australia, Aboriginal languages are beginning to gain space in education curriculum, but their success is constrained due to limited hours of language instruction, the dominant language hierarchy that gives precedence to official languages as designated by language policies, and the euro-centric framework within which programs are expected to operate (2014, p. 284).

The above-mentioned lack of policies and support for Aboriginal languages has resulted in their needs being categorized based on second-language education models. It is argued that models of second-language learning have characteristics that do not apply to Native American language learning circumstances (White, 2006, p. 91) and that they are "the least effective method for creating new speakers because they are catered to teaching foreign languages" (White, 2006, in Kelly, 2015, p. 4). Classifying Aboriginal languages as second languages in education programs drives the way that curriculum is being designed and implemented, and determines what resources are available to support curriculum development and classroom instruction. Research strongly recommends the need for community-based models of immersion programs within education (Kelly, 2015, p.19; O'Shannessy, 2015, p. 10; Kinzel, 2015, p. 23; Stiles, 1997, p. 256). Educators should look to community-based models of language learning, such as the Mentor-Apprentice and Language Nest methods, to inform curriculum and instruction that is relevant to First Nations languages. Kelly recommends that Indigenous language education models should focus on language use and not instruction, teach the language through application and participation, provide language instruction for language use in every day activities, and focus on language learning in a natural setting (Kelly, 2015, p. 19).

There is a lack of appropriate support and resources required for effectively teaching and learning Aboriginal languages. "An Indigenous language does not have a homeland full of speakers and language resources to fall back on or re-learn language through" (Shields, 2014, p.1), and Aboriginal languages do not exist outside of their own place of origin or community. The purposes for learning and teaching First Nations languages are for language and cultural revitalization, intergenerational language transmission, and overall language sustainability for future generations. The motivations that drive these purposes for language learning are significantly different from second-language learning of the world's more dominant languages, and the feelings that students associate with learning their ancestral language may be different than feelings toward learning a second-language for interest, travel, or occupation (Kelly, 2015, p. 5; Kell, 2015, p. 4). Research from Ontario's Indigenous language curriculum raises the issue that there is little research in regards to First Nations specific language-

based curriculum (Hill, 2004, p. 16), forcing communities to operate under government standards and expectations for language curriculum that is based on teaching European languages and English as a Second Language (ESL). Due to the critical state of B.C. Indigenous languages it is important to acknowledge that methods of language instruction that have been successful for widely-spoken languages in the world may not be successful in the context of language revitalization (Kell, 2014, p. 4).

The difference in purpose and motivation that drive teaching and learning Aboriginal languages requires specific teaching strategies and program frameworks for optimal support. The main difference between culturally relevant pedagogy and mainstream instruction is the context within which the language is taught (Goulet & Goulet, 2014, p. 16). Aboriginal languages need to be taught following a curriculum framework that is built upon perspectives and worldviews that influence the language skills developed by a cultural group (Western Canadian Protocol, 2000, p. 16). The IRP recommends using the Communicative-Experiential method of instruction for First Nations second-language programs, but teachers' needs for professional development in this type of language instruction is an issue that has been identified (Kell, 2014, p.46). Indigenous languages and the context within which they are used is what conveys knowledge and ways of being and relating to the world. Research supports the need to "teach from a perspective that embodies cultural and practical knowledge in relation to students' lives in the present, remembering their collective ancestral past, and imagining a different cultural future" (Goulet & Goulet, 2014, p. 16).

Program development and language teaching pedagogies need to be built using a framework that is harmonious and less disruptive to traditional Aboriginal cultures (Agbo, 2004, p. 4). Teaching the language through an English lens or Euro-centric context can result in losing the complex and relational meanings of some words in Indigenous languages that do not translate fluidly into English (Rosborough, 2012, p. 29). This notion supports the importance of teaching Indigenous languages from the perspective of the culture to which it belongs. Research suggests that Aboriginal languages can enhance and support children's self-identity and self-esteem as an Aboriginal individual if the language receives the same credibility as other subjects within the school curriculum (Agbo, 2004, p. 17). Children would learn to respect Elders who are first language speakers if they learned in their Aboriginal language in school and that their language is part of the modern world that they live in (ibid). McCarty & Lee (2015) indicate that strong Indigenous language and culture programs are associated with eliminating educational inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and strive to enhance educational relevancy, family and community involvement, and cultural identity (p. 350).

Indigenous languages throughout the world are consistent in their struggles with language revitalization and language education within the school. Research of successful Indigenous language programs that span from Canada to Norway to New Zealand identifies common challenges, including a lack of trained and fluent speakers for teaching the language, and the need for time to create quality resources for teaching First Nations languages as second languages (Hill, 2004, p. 14; Stiles, 1997, p. 256; O'Dowd, 2015, p. 202). A common purpose across programs is to revalue education using language and culture. Communities are having to take on the challenge of creating language education opportunities to fit their needs because Indigenous language programs cannot be imported from the dominant outside culture. Communities require support from the larger society and government with consistent funding, research, linguistic knowledge and appropriate pedagogical training (Stiles, 1997, p. 268). The philosophy of the community must inform the language program and curriculum framework and the IRP should be

developed to support effective language learning through culturally relevant instruction for First Nations languages. This involves using pedagogical methods and purposes that are valued by the cultural community so that students learn to value and understand the language knowledge that develops respectful relationships between themselves, the community and the land (Manitoba, 2007, p. 10).

Curriculum development for B.C. Indigenous languages has relied heavily on existing curricula for French and international second languages, and IRPs that have been developed so far are only beginning to touch on the complex features of First Nations languages (Kell, 2014, p. 61). The unique situation and context of B.C. First Nations languages requires different curricula than dominant international languages, and the Ministry of Education needs to be open to different approaches to curriculum (March 19, 2014 interview with Rosborough, in Kell, 2014, p. 61). Externally imposed education systems have damaged the sense of identity among First Nations people for too long (Faries, 2004, p.12) and stepping outside of the IRP template would be beneficial for communities in determining what curriculum format works for the context of their own language, and to address the factors that make their language different for instruction at a local level. The accreditation of the IRP is valuable and can provide the support needed to build revitalization through the school domain, but flexibility in how the IRP is structured is needed to fully support community and language variation.

WHAT WE HEARD, SAW AND LEARNED FROM SURVEYS, SITE VISITS AND INTERVIEWS

A. The IRP development process

A.1. PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE IRP

- The First Nations community, public school or School District most often initiated development of the IRP. Participation occurred on multiple levels and most often involved First Nations communities, school districts, First Nations language organizations and First Nations education councils. Local post-secondary institutions, Tribal Councils and Language Authorities were also identified as part of the planning and development process with varying levels of involvement. In some districts linguists and curriculum contractors were part of the team. In one case the same linguist was involved in the development of both the IRP and the K – 4; and Grade 11, 12 curriculum guide.
- In the sites where an individual in the district initiated the IRP, the language communities didn't feel as included in the process even when the district personnel made an effort to include the members of the language community. When the district member moved on to another position in another part of the district, or moved on with their career, often there was no one to step in to continue to support the implementation. Initiating and carrying out the IRP development required

a committed individual who had some institutional power to take the lead and to make it happen. For example it was often a District Principal, a School Principal working alongside a committed person or group in the language community that developed the IRP.

A.2. COMMUNITY CONCERNS THAT IMPACT IRP DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Internal community politics made it difficult to obtain language examples necessary for the IRP because it was a challenge to explain the IRP framework and process with the elder fluent speakers; the issue of ownership came up frequently, who owns the language and the curriculum when it is developed was a question the development group constantly had to deal with. Often the language community members did not feel involved in the development process in a meaningful way. They felt that the IRP framework did not represent the people or their language. The feeling was that the IRP belonged more to the Ministry instead of the community. Putting the language on paper is still problematic to some Elders.
- The lack of support from the government – in terms of identified funds for development and guidance for using the template are consistent challenges that teams faced when developing and implementing the IRP. Educational positions in the district and communities were often inconsistent and changing, which made IRP implementation difficult.

A.3. HOW DID THE IRP TEMPLATE HELP THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR IRP?

- Overall the second-language template was an effective curriculum development tool for the IRP language program project. The template provided a path toward consultation to the process as well as guidelines for what was required. However, communities also developed their own templates or required hiring a consultant to confer with language teachers. The second-language template provided teachers with a guide for language programs and helped determine what existing resources were available, and what resources needed to be developed. The principles of learning provided in the template offered guidance, but most communities relied on principles and lessons that reflected First Peoples' ways of learning and knowing. Cultural ways of being and principles of respect guided the principles for language learning and acknowledged the right that students have to learn their own language. It was important to structure the curriculum around the traditional ways and worldviews of the community so that they had a place to be taught in the school. The IRP development process was used to guide conversations about goals and visions, what to teach and solidifying common goals for the language and in other classes.
- The IRP provided accreditation of language in the public school system and opportunities for it to be learned in the school. The IRP legitimized First Nations languages by enabling them to be taught in public schools and the First Nations language gained credibility when it was offered as a course for university entrance.

- Having a language course "Makes students feel good about themselves and that they belong". Students did better in language classes than in other classes because the teaching process was culturally aligned and students liked learning about themselves. Availability of First Nations language classes to all students created positive relationships between First Nation and non-First Nation students by teaching respect for the language and the area of the language.
- The IRP development process promoted communication, relationship building and networking within the community, with partner groups, and with other developers and organizations involved. The process also presented a learning opportunity for teachers to learn from the work completed by other community members. The IRP development and implementation provided networking opportunities for teachers to learn from one another. The IRP represented a plan for teachers to follow and "gave an idea of what we could do as language teachers". It helped generate a list of available resources and a list of what resources were needed to carry out the IRP.

A.4. WHAT HELPED THE IRP DEVELOPMENT?

- Dedication and commitment to First Nations languages was a key indicator of success among development teams. A strong community with dedicated, and qualified, language teachers and administration can create an environment where people are passionate about the language and are willing to work hard, try new things and share ideas. Having a sufficient amount of people to make up the development team was also an important component of successful development and implementation of the IRP.
- Having access to fluent and experienced language teachers was a significant help, as well as having the support of elders and community members. Having fluent language teachers working alongside curriculum developers helped make the IRP more reflective of the language community. The IRP generated workshops and conferences with elders, fluent speakers, teachers and curriculum developers that resulted in providing guidance and permission for the development of the curriculum. It helped the community members to discuss the importance of language learning in the schools and community.
- It fostered a good working relationship amongst the school district, school, school board and the communities. It was also helpful in building relationships with other school districts doing the same work.

A.5. WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH THE IRP FRAMEWORK?

- The participants had the most to say about this topic. The majority of respondents felt the IRP framework did not support their language and culture, that it disconnected the language from the culture. The IRP distorts the Aboriginal worldview, has a framework that teaches the language out of context, and further creates a barrier between the community and school.

The format required language programs to be organized in a way that was not compatible with the language and the traditional ways of learning and teaching. "Students learn the language from an English perspective, understanding the language through English distorts the language and leads to misinterpretations and misuse of concepts." Culture needs to be supported within language programs because their teachings are intertwined. Creating curriculum that represents how and where language is used within the community will create language learning opportunities around these topics by integrating history and culture and language. Both the IRP framework and the curriculum materials developed to carry out the IRP need to represent the community and honour the way they use their language.

- The IRP format was challenging, overwhelming and not user-friendly. This format required extensive time and effort without appropriate support and guidance, " from the ministry and the school district". Working on the IRP required extensive time commitment and for teachers to work side-by-side, but without enough support for the work. Everyone worked beyond their job responsibilities, so the IRP was developed by volunteer labour.
- There were concerns that the levels and expectations in the IRP are unrealistic. Teachers do not always find that what is within the IRP standards for a certain grade is something that the students are ready for. There is no provision for teaching the language in K – 4 in public school. Many students are entering the language classes without any background in the language unless they've come from a Band Community school. A suggestion was made to base the performance standards on levels rather than grades. The template needs to be built around a language immersion program concept to better support language learning through conversational use of the language. An Aboriginal languages IRP template that can be adapted by communities in BC needs to be created.
- Dialectal differences amongst First Nations languages was also a barrier that created conflicts that took time to unravel and sort out.
- Districts that have multiple territorial, ancestral languages face additional costs, time and effort to develop and implement an IRP template, and often the conditions of each language is at a different stage of development of revitalization and recovery.
- Another concern, although not loudly voiced, is how to respectfully offer only the territorial language when there are First Nations and Metis and Inuit learners in the district who don't have access to their languages.

A.6. TIME

- Development - The development process required time spent working without compensation, making it challenging to find time to directly focus on the work.
- Implementation - Teachers do not receive the appropriate time or support in preparing for language classes. The IRP is a guide but to teach each class the teacher needs time to prepare lessons according to resources available and the level of students' knowledge.
- Scheduling - Integrating the program into the school district's scheduling was difficult and there was insufficient time available to establish an appropriate grading system. While the Principals

did keep the language classes on the time table, language teachers needed to constantly advocate to be allowed classroom time to teach the first Nations language and having the language classes included on the timetable. The time assigned for teaching the language in the block system is a challenge.

A.7 FUNDING

- The source of funding for IRP development lacked consistency, but was mostly provided through Aboriginal targeted funding from the school district or Aboriginal education councils contributed funds. In-kind contributions consisted of community involvement, elders, volunteer fundraising activities, and support from language teachers, post-secondary institutions and Language and Culture societies.
- Targeted funding was necessary in supporting the development of local resources and materials. Working with Elders and language advocates in the community to develop curriculum that was appropriate to the language and culture was an integral piece of successfully implementing the IRP.
- There is a current inequity between French, English and Aboriginal languages. Funding that is specifically for Aboriginal language programs is needed.
- Funding is needed for curriculum development for each grade; to manage the implementation of the IRP and all language classes necessary to support Aboriginal languages; to support professional development; to increase language fluency; to support teacher networking within the district and between districts.
- Funds are needed for on-going evaluation and assessment of each district's progress.

A.8. RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF IRP

- Although the work on the IRP initiated an identification and gathering of resources to support the development and implementation there was no guidance of how this needed to be carried out. Fluent speakers who could teach were identified and teaching materials were gathered to support the IRP. Resources are scattered across communities and Nations in lands claims offices, health, early childhood programs, and cultural programs - no one actually knows what a community or Nation has available. There are materials in Public schools and Band schools but they are not shared across jurisdictions. Countless linguists have worked with communities, but in most cases the communities don't have a record of what has been gathered or what they can access. There are documents in University, Museum and Government archives but they are not accessible to communities. There is no funding to help language developers identify and collect these materials and to convert them into teaching materials. Publishing costs and copyright laws were also very challenging to the resource development process. Copyright laws are based on a Euro-western concept of ownership, which is different from most Indigenous peoples' concept of ownership.

B. IRP and language program implementation

B.1. HAVE THE IRP PURPOSE AND GOALS BEEN MET?

- Implementation of the IRP met the stated purpose and goals for language program development either some or most of the time in that students are receiving a second language credential. Multiple challenges to achieving intended goals, purposes and learning outcomes were identified, such as the following: There is a general lack of language teachers who have received appropriate educational training and methods; Fluent Elders are aging or ill and many don't feel confident they can follow the IRP, and the younger generation of teachers who are training to take over are language learners themselves; There is limited time for teaching the language on school timetables and there are limited resources to use when teaching the language, making it challenging to find a place for the language in the schools.
- The goals and purpose of the IRP, which is based on a Second Language model (English or French as a Second Language), does not take into account the state of Aboriginal languages today, nor does it integrate culture, traditions, and community experience with the language learning. This makes using the IRP foreign to Aboriginal developers, teachers and learners.
- There is very little support for language learning at home because most parents do not know the language themselves, and some feel that the language is too difficult to learn or the language can hinder learning English adequately.
- Schools have not made a point of including Aboriginal language as part of the work of the schools. For example, school surveys sent to parents are often not inclusive of the language programs.
- One district put it eloquently; "it is important that the language team is honest with the community about the reality of the situation and how the current time allotted for language will NOT create fluent speakers, but it will teach the children their language, culture and give them a sense of who they are." It is important that the expectation of what can be achieved by the IRP template match the communities' expectation for their language efforts. The IRP is only one element of their vision.

B.2. WHAT WAS THE IMPACT ON LANGUAGE PROGRAM OFFERINGS IN SCHOOL AND DISTRICT?

- IRP implementation encouraged other schools and districts to offer their own second language programs and raised interest amongst other First Nations to develop traditional language programs in their communities.
- The implementation of the IRP has lead to classes being offered as graded and credited second-language programs that now count as a second-language entrance credit for B.C. post-secondary institutions.

- Language programs are expanding, and for many instruction is being developed for grades K-7, which indicates the need for the IRP to be reviewed and adapted to be inclusive of First Nations language learning starting in Kindergarten.
- Models used for language instruction are being transferred across language programs, both within schools and within communities.
- Language programs are beginning to showcase language learning and teachers are becoming more positive about the language programs.
- There is an increase of the overall focus on Aboriginal languages in schools as well as an increased credibility of the languages at levels of the school, district and community. However, multiple responses also indicated that there is no change in support and that use of the IRP amongst teachers is inconsistent. Reasons for fluctuating program support consists of the number of students enrolled in the program; changes within the local Language Authority; lack of sustainable funding; shifting support for the language in the district due to changing personnel – changes in district leadership, language champions and advocates, and language teachers; and change in school or district focus.

B.3. LEADERSHIP

- There is no assigned leader or central position for the development or implementation of the IRP. The leaders who have taken up the task of developing and implementing the IRP were those who had a personal passion, commitment, and motivation for its development. These individuals were in a school, a district and language communities. These leaders did the necessary work on their own, usually adding it to their other employment responsibilities. There was no active, organized institutional support for the Aboriginal IRP and very little recognition for the work carried out on behalf of the district's Aboriginal education plan. There was some awareness of the activity, but unless the leader knew how to motivate and elicit the resources they needed from the district or school, they worked in isolation. Those who participated in this project voiced the need to develop at least an Aboriginal language coordinator for each district who would be responsible for guidance and creating opportunities for the development of language and culture programs.

- One of the greatest challenges to the implementation of the IRP was the changing of personnel and participants throughout the process, which impacted the consistency of development. Creating an environment requires relationship building in order to have meaningful, trusting, respectful collaboration. When people leave it can lead to suspending the language program all together. For example, even an IRP that was recently approved was suspended when the district leader for its development left the district. In another district a full time language support position was created that was funded and supported from both the Aboriginal Education department/council and First Nations Language Authority, and it was a significant factor for success.

B.4. HOW WAS THE IRP IMPLEMENTATION FUNDED?

- Changes in funding levels of First Nations language programs after IRP implementation have been inconsistent. There is some targeted funding from Bands and Aboriginal Education but it is not enough to substantiate a large increase in program support. Funding has even decreased in some cases where programs are being cut due to Provincial and Federal budget changes. Participants indicated the desire to continue to support and grow their language programs in the district, but this requires consistent and sufficient funding. First Nations languages need to be given the same consideration as English and French language classes and receive similar funding and support at all levels.
- Funding for target language education remained the same for the most part, but it was often indicated that it depends on the number of students enrolled in the language programs. There is minimal funding available to teachers and this creates a need for negotiation with the Board of Education to support programs with the appropriate resources needed to be successful. The question is raised about how funding works for French as a second language programs and if their funding is also dependent on numbers of enrollment.

B.5. WHAT EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES WERE DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT THE IRP?

"**We are resource rich but lesson poor**" – "We have lots of raw resources but not enough time or capacity to create lessons from them" speaks volumes for the conditions in district and language communities.

- The lack of resources to support First Nations language programs is one of the reasons that teachers used the IRP inconsistently. Local community members and organizations, within schools and school districts, created resources that supported IRP implementation. These resources consisted of bulletin boards, local histories written by local authors, and culturally relevant teaching resources. Language resource binders were created in some programs and included dictionaries, storybooks and grammar resources, all based on traditional teachings of the language and culture. There is a vital need for increased funding specifically for supporting the development of relevant resources in order to support First Nations language programs.
- A Resource Centre for each language group to support teachers, students and overall community would be extremely helpful because existing resources are not easily accessible, and there is no system in place or a person in charge of collecting, documenting, archiving and distributing resources to language classes. An individual who knows how to work with archival material to make them useful to teachers is needed to support development and implementation.
- Human, financial and material resources have been identified as needed to support First Nations language education. These resources are interdependent on one another, and

therefore all are necessary in order to build and maintain an effective First Nations language education.

- There is a never-ending need for more language curriculum resources. Appropriate reading material is needed for each grade and/or level of language instruction; this could be achieved through developing apps, storybooks and workbooks in the language. Language resources need updating periodically, and constant training is needed to convert raw archival and language documents to be useful for instruction.

- Overall, we need to be working towards creating a Provincial repository of language materials and resources that can be adapted and shared amongst language programs. Creating this repository will support First Nations language programs by providing a way to share lesson plans, information and ideas. The diversity of languages in B.C. makes resource creation expensive; therefore, additional funding is needed to support the overall process of resource development.

- The need for more financial support and resources influences all aspects of First Nations language education. Increased funding is needed in order to support programs, resource development, and professional development for teachers and for those actively learning the language.

B.6. ROLE OF ELDERS AND FLUENT SPEAKERS

"Elders, fluent speakers, story tellers and traditional tool makers all played important roles in maintaining a successful language program".

- The greatest resource that districts and language communities identified is the Elders and fluent language speakers. They spoke of the importance for both teachers and students to learn the relationships and knowledge associated with the language and culture. They supply the deeper meaning of the language, connecting the language to the cultural world and wisdom.

- Elders and fluent speakers usually don't have formal training in school language teaching, linguistics, and curriculum development. It makes them reluctant to follow the IRP document. It is important to discuss this reluctance with each elder to find a way to resolve the discomfort. In some school districts elders and fluent speakers are paired with a credentialed teacher who develops the lesson plan, manages the class, and carries out the class instruction with the elder/fluent speaker offering the language and cultural knowledge. Although this strategy is commendable and thoughtful, caution is needed in that the lessons designed can be from the perspective of the English language and world.

- When elders and fluent speakers are invited to work in language programs in a school, it is important to remember that for many, their own school experiences were not positive. Their experiences with school learning were under a harsh, disciplinary environment where their use of their ancestral language was forbidden. It is also important to remember that there are

cultural rules that guide participation structures that are different from English and the social behaviour in classrooms.

- Elders, and many fluent speakers who are elderly, might not have access to transportation making their participation difficult if they are not in close proximity to the school. Respondents also pointed out that elders are often in poor health, and that they are often pulled in many directions. For example, when a linguist comes to the community to work on the language they can take this resource away from the school program.
- Elders and fluent speakers are needed to continue the work of new word development and teaching the traditional values, ceremonial practices and pronunciation.

B.7. STUDENTS

"We are speaking our language as a foreign language"

I want to learn how to speak in sentences, not just single words"

- Survey responses indicated that IRP implementation had a positive influence on First Nations language learning. It provided continuity of language instruction between teachers and the continuity in content enabled students to transfer their language knowledge between various language communities. There is now increased language instruction to include grades K-7, transference of models for language programs between schools, and language classes offered in both the school district and community. IRP implementation has made teaching First Nations languages in many schools a requirement and has increased language exposure to students. This increased exposure has provided a meaningful and relevant alternative to French as a second language classes for students and shows that First Nations languages are as valued as other languages taught in school.
- Language is regarded as an essential vehicle for cultural identity and teaches children who they are and where they come from, and it was important for the curriculum to support their language development appropriately.
- Language programs starting in Kindergarten have a skewed application of the IRP. For example, students in grade 3 are being taught using grade 5 outcomes, etc.
- There is a large gap between Kindergarten and grade 5 where they receive little to no language in between. Students will have a better chance of success if they have the opportunity to build a strong language foundation before grade 5. A compounding factor is when Aboriginal students from First Nations schools, where they have had greater exposure to their language, join public school students. When they join the public school learners at grade 5, they are studying with students who have not had a exposure to a language curriculum.
- Students from high schools mentor elementary school students for cultural events (eg. Knitting) and there should be a process in place for these older students to receive credits to support these mentorship and relationship building opportunities.
- Increased enrolment and participation in language classes indicates a growing demand for and interest in the language. General understanding of languages amongst students and their

increased exposure was noticed as a positive indication of growing language presence in the school. Language teachers are noticing greater fluency levels amongst their students.

- Racism and negative attitudes toward Aboriginal people and languages makes an impact on the implementation of the IRP. Students hear such comments as, "the First Nations language is only for First Nations, the First Nations language is dying, the First Nations language is not useful."

B.8. TEACHERS

- Fluent speakers were reluctant to teach because they felt they didn't have the background to teach what was in the IRP. The IRP doesn't give language teachers the tools they need to carry out what is outlined.
- Certified language teachers can be reluctant to take a position because they are offered only a .2 position. By the time they travel to the school, prepare the lesson and do the follow up they are working double or triple time for what they are compensated. For the .2 pay the teachers are also doing student supervision duties.
- Language teachers also spoke of being drawn away from their classes and preparation to support teachers who are required to include Indigenous knowledge in their subject areas. The language teachers are expected to do this work over and above their language teaching duties and offering support in curriculum subject areas that they are not familiar with.
- There are cases in which the school district offers new language teachers with mentoring and coaching from an experienced and fluent speaker. This is rare but extremely helpful to the development of the new language teacher. In some cases a non-Indigenous teacher acts as a teaching mentor, and although this arrangement is helpful especially to elderly fluent language teachers, it can change the language orientation towards a non-Indigenous language use.
- District hiring policies can limit hiring the best language teachers. For example, a district posts the position and waits for applications. People we spoke to would like the districts to work with the First Nations language community to identify and support language teachers to apply for the positions, so that they have language fluency, a web of support, access to resources, a curriculum to work with, a schedule, and space for teaching. They pointed out that when there is turn over of language staff it feels like hitting the re-set button every time. It interrupts the consistency of the program.
- It was also reported that in some districts language teachers are hired and then abandoned, without any support from the school or district. Schools continue to be alien and uncomfortable places for many First Nations people because of their past experiences with the school system. It makes it difficult to access what they need to make the best of their teaching time.
- In some school districts the elder fluent speaker is supported by classroom teachers who manage the class and prepare the lessons with the fluent speakers. It is a collaborative and shared model. Language teachers reported that they appreciated this model when there are disruptive students in a class.

- In some school districts the classroom teacher attends and participates in the language class with their class. This is good for modeling learning a language, valuing the First Nations language and indicating the language is valued in the school. In other schools the language class is used as 'preparation' time for classroom teachers. Students are dropped off in the language class without participation of the classroom teacher. There is generally no provision for Lesson Preparation time for First Nations language teachers.
- All districts reported a lack of teachers with language proficiency. This will require additional support necessary to increase language fluency for any teachers hired by the district.
- Interviewees pointed out that there is a discrepancy between what is expected of language teachers and their actual capacity – there is lack of proficiency to teach what the IRP prescribes and they lack the strategies for teaching the curriculum. They also lack the capacity to modify the curriculum to suit the language proficiency of the students.
- Districts find it challenging to secure permanent or short-term language teachers for classes – many teachers don't have formal teacher training but they are proficient in the language.
- It was pointed out that First Nations Language teachers are not seen to be "real" teachers because they are not credentialed like classroom teachers. Language teachers are not included as part of the teacher team even when they do all the teacher duties such as recess and bus duty.
- Teachers are reluctant to take on classes due to lack of resources available for instruction.
- Many Language teachers do not have enough capacity to create continuous curriculum – students are receiving the same lessons from K - 12. There are no provisions to support the development of a K – 12 curriculum that is based on an Indigenous worldview or the way the Indigenous language is used and spoken. Having opportunities for communication amongst teachers to share what each is teaching can avoid repetition.
- Ongoing program evaluation would be valuable to know what is successful and what changes are necessary to improve the language program. Evaluation could be represented as a guideline for new teachers to follow and eventually expanded on to support the cultural aspects and needs of the language.
- A core of committed teachers and learners are essential to the success of First Nations language education. Community involvement was important and hiring community members as language teachers' created student-family connections and supported active community involvement within the school. Having qualified language teachers with experience made a big difference and professional development for less experienced teachers was a significant contributing factor of a successful language program.

B.9. TEACHER PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT

- Every IRP site shared the dire need for fluent, classroom prepared, certified teachers who can prepare the appropriate language lessons designed from an Indigenous perspective, and manage classroom behaviour in an Indigenous respectful way.
- Language teacher certification is needed that takes into account the work of the First Nations language teachers. There is a need for certified language teachers in the District who are able

to get students to fluency, and to develop a scope and sequence of language progressing from K-12.

- Support is needed for understanding differences between L1 and L2 acquisition and differences between adult and child language learning.
- Skills that language and culture teachers bring to the classroom need to be recognized and respected – the education system lacks the mechanism to properly recognize their knowledge and skills because they do not come from the traditional western oriented institutional training.
- Cultural TAs who support the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and language receive lower pay in relation to others in the district due to the perceptions of what education experience is (institution vs. lifetime of learning and teaching).
- Collaborative teaching models and work assignments need to be supported financially so that teams can work together for multiple years in order to grow language teachers and programs. This includes supporting the collaboration of Elders, Language teachers, classroom teachers and Cultural Teacher Assistants on a continual basis.
- Having Elders in the classroom to support language conversation, learning about cultural values and protocols is helpful not only to students but to the teachers as well. Everyone learns from the Elders and mentoring from Elders is a traditional way of teaching.

B.10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- The most helpful professional development opportunities offered courses to teachers on strategies for guiding their students in communicative language learning and how to create resources as supports to the students, teachers and the overall program. Collaborative development of resources supported program success, and sharing these resources within the school and with others shows the value of First Nations languages and the work that goes into teaching and learning them.
- There are not enough relevant opportunities for First Nations language teachers to participate in professional development that fits their needs and continually builds their knowledge and skills. For example, Pro-d days with Elders, whether they speak the language or not, for their input on how to integrate cultural knowledge into the IRP.
- A network of teachers to collaborate with for professional development opportunities would be helpful. Conversations with everyone working with language are important – to get ideas, concepts and curriculum and transfer to own context. Provide opportunities to collaborate with other districts – enable resource sharing and the creation of a network for FN language teachers in the public school system.
- Many First Nations language programs have taken it upon themselves to hold local language conferences or workshops by planning with others within the region, or by attending other language conferences available through organizations such as FNESC. Teacher retreats, TPR and "where are your keys?" training workshops, summer-immersion sessions, and monthly meetings between school districts for information and resource sharing are also utilized. Workshops with Stephen Greymorning were also common amongst communities. Information sharing between programs occurred through visiting other language programs and attending

district professional development events. Mentorship between fluent speakers and teachers was also a key form of professional development for teachers.

- The majority of support for professional development and learning resource development came from targeted funding. Most programs applied for additional grant and funding opportunities through FPCC, NRT and SSHRC in order to develop a sufficient amount of materials and to receive adequate teacher training. More sustainable and consistent funding is needed for professional development for teachers and to support resource development.
- Teacher capacity with adequate second language (L2) acquisition training remains a barrier to creating stronger First Nations language programs. Teachers have accumulated strategies to support L2 acquisition through games that were implemented and shared by other teachers. Some teachers received mentorship from other teachers that were L2 speakers themselves and utilized extra time with instructional support teachers when available. Workshops, courses, resources and language development were also utilized. School districts or post-secondary institutions sometimes provided support.
- FNESC summer language conferences provide opportunities for communication and knowledge sharing, need more conferences that focus on professional growth, however Pro-d allocation is not enough to cover cost of travel, accommodation, etc.
- Summer is a difficult time for conferences especially when families are involved in traditional food gathering and preparation – would be helpful to have one aligned with provincial/district pro-d days during the school year; or move around in terms of time and location.

B.11. INSTRUCTION

B.11.1. Teaching strategies

- Most communities relied on principles and lessons that reflected First Peoples' ways of learning and knowing.
- Implemented the IRP using cultural curriculum that the district had developed as the base
- Storytelling was used as a teaching strategy, but in some sites, European stories were translated, there is a need to make available the rich stories of the language, people and land where the language is situated.
- Need to create core learning strategies like games and TPR to keep language learning fun and have kids active – take the topics and develop levels of learning where one builds on the other. The recommendations from students were particularly clear on this point. They want to learn in an active, fun way that helps them to learn their identity, life and history.
- Land-based learning programs to address needs of specific students has been successful because learning is embedded in language and culture.
- Greymorning and TPR were frequently sited as two of the professional development opportunities they participated in where Interactive learning and integrating body movement were modeled.
- Neurolinguistic approach to language learning is also an area of professional development.
- It was also important that language learning was fun for students, and this was achieved through field trips, school concerts, and developing songs and games as primary activities used in the classroom.

B.11.2. Assessment
- Teachers are assessing students following the IRP assessment guidelines but many students are not meeting the prescribed expectations.
- This is an area that teachers want more assistance and support in, indicating there is a need for a culturally relevant form of assessment that is respectful of First Nations languages.
- Have keys in each curriculum to guide the teachers in testing.
- Test the students in TPR following a lesson.
- Observations, anecdotal reporting and implicit testing – students freeze and worry if they are told they are being tested.
- Aboriginal Education tracks the number of students enrolled in the language classes (becomes an elective after a certain grade).

B.12. CULTURAL ALIGNMENT, CULTURAL AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN IRP
- Teachers pointed out that there is a disconnection between the culture and language and the IRP template. They felt that the template does not support bringing the culture into the language program; there is a need to redesign the "box" to bring the language and culture together.
- The worldview is distorted when confined only to an institutional setting in a curriculum designed for exposure only. Because the curriculum is based on a Second Language template for learning English, the language is understood through English and leads to misinterpretations and misuse of concepts in the language. When students are asking for translations from English the language is learned from the English perspective.
- It is important for lessons that incorporate origin stories to support students in walking an Indigenous life. These stories will vary depending on age – it is important that students receive stories that are connected to the beliefs and values of their age. To increase their capacity for oral language, students need to learn how to tell the stories themselves. It is then their responsibility to pass these stories onto the next generation.
- Fluent speakers that are knowledgeable of the traditions and culture of the community are needed to teach others. Schools need to have the staff in the school learn a bit about the culture and some words in the language. District workers also need to learn about the language and culture too because they currently do not take the initiative to try and learn about the First Nations culture and community.
- It is important for learners to know their history and their language in order to instill pride, confidence and self-worth in their identities as First Nations, and this knowledge can be built into the curriculum.
- Traditional acknowledgements and respect for the territory can be seen as political acts and teachers and students need to understand the current context of language learning. For example, singing the Indigenous song honoring the territory because teacher isn't from there has received complaints from parents saying they don't want their children learning these "political" aspects.

B.13. DOMAINS AND COMMUNICATIVE SETTINGS

- When teaching the language, it is important to consider where the language will be used. Where will students hear the language? Do they have opportunities to use the language with their family or in the community? Where would they learn from speakers and elders in the community? Curriculum needs to be connected to real-life communicative settings, possibly by teaching in 'themes' such as language used for meal times, canoeing, and ceremonies.
- When designing lessons it is important to think about where language is heard in the community and create language learning topics around these spaces.

B.14. LAND-BASED LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- A Land-based learning program was implemented to address the needs of specific students, however the experience has shown how well it works for all learners. Land-based learning benefits all students because their learning is embedded in their language and culture.
- Land-based learning experiences should not be an 'add-on' to the curriculum. Instead, it should be made a practice in the curriculum because it provides opportunities to learn through a strong cultural lens.

B.15 SPIRITUALITY

- There are aspects of the language that require the belief systems surrounding that language to be built into the lesson in which they are being taught, such as acknowledging the ancestors and the land. This is not accepted in the public school but it is an important part of life.

B.16. COMMUNITY, PARENT PARTICIPATION

- Parents who attended the interview sessions spoke about their struggles to learn the language due to lack of opportunities for them to learn. They were embarrassed that their children knew more language than they did and they were sad that they couldn't help their children or support them in their learning. They want instruction and curriculum design to consider how to build in ways that families can learn the language together.

B.17. PROGRAM EVALUATION

- We need to develop meaningful ways for evaluation that maintains flexibility for what teachers feel their students need.
- Evaluating a language program can lead to the perception in the community that the language and culture are being evaluated. It is important to communicate with the community about goals of the evaluation.

B.18. TECHNOLOGY

- The use of technology to support language learning needs to be a part of the curriculum design. Part of the curriculum template can be on how to develop on-line resources to extend language learning and funds should be provided for technology to support instruction and learning. However, it is also important to always keep in mind the balance of contemporary and traditional ways of learning and using language.
- Having audio recording available and a digital dictionary is helpful to learning.
- Some schools made good use of the FirstVoices website on their language. We need more resources like the language apps, games, songs, stories, and dictionary.

- Teachers would like more IT support and to learn how to use 'smartboard' technology.
- Technology use, familiarity and access are not the same across the province. There are communities where their has been an effort to support IT in the family and schools but in other communities the access to the Internet is limited, even non-existent.
- Respondents also cautioned that the languages must be learned as much as possible in the natural setting and in a culturally respectful way. Technology can be used as a support while still respecting the natural face-to-face process of learning the language.
- Training is continually needed to familiarize language teachers with new developments in technology.
- Digitizing materials would make them more accessible to teachers as well as to students and community members.

B.19. RESEARCH NEEDED TO SUPPORT IRP

- On-going research is needed to inform the best delivery of language instruction in schools and community. This research should include new knowledge regarding revitalizing languages, and the relationship between learning ones language and building healthy identities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations support the development of a provincial collaborative, multi-year strategic plan for the revitalization and preservation of Aboriginal languages in British Columbia. This plan will require the involvement of all organizations that work within the Kindergarten to Grade 12 and Post-secondary education systems, as well as other organizations with a role to work towards reconciliation with BC's indigenous communities.

LEADERSHIP

1. Put into place a position at the Ministry of Education with the primary focus of working in partnership with other organizations such as FNESC, FNSA and FPCC in the leading, coordinating and management of Aboriginal Language Learning in the BC school systems to ensure that resources can be coordinated between the Federal and Provincial language strategies and programs.

2. Develop and implement a plan to counter the negative view of Aboriginal languages amongst school communities and Indigenous communities. For example, the belief that learning an Aboriginal language can impede learning English, and the belief that the Indigenous languages of Canada are not useful and important to Canada.

3. Each district will identify a leader in the district with the responsibility of the Aboriginal language program development and implementation. This will ensure long-range planning and consistent and continuous district leadership. This position will coordinate and collaborate with the First Nations schools and communities, early childhood programs and parents to make certain the public school is supporting the over all goal for the Aboriginal Language Program.

CURRICULUM DESIGN

4. Design the language template that guides the IRP development so that it is aligned with the Indigenous world-view, Indigenous language structures, Indigenous instructional patterns and Indigenous values and relationships within communities, land and ancestors. The goals and purpose of the curriculum must support Indigenous language revitalization, recovery and maintenance. The curriculum design must support and enhance language use amongst students, their families, and in the community and on the land. It needs to be recognized that each Indigenous language in the province is at a different stage of development in the design of the support provided for development and implementation.

5. Design and implement an Indigenous language program, guided by the appropriate policy and policy amendments, from Kindergarten to Grade 12 that supports program development and implementation to ensure that Indigenous language learning is accredited and recognized in all requisite institutions, particularly post-secondary institutions, with the goal of recovering, regenerating, revitalizing and maintaining the Indigenous languages of this land.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

6. Provide dedicated, sustainable and consistent funding for Aboriginal Language Learning programs from development to implementation. This should include funds to initiate and develop an IRP K - 12 and provide funding for teacher salaries that take into account preparation time for the teacher as well as teaching and giving advice to the school and district. Funding must be for resource development, curriculum development, lesson planning, and engagement with parents, families and community.

7. Increase funding to support a) resource development, language documentation, archiving, resource collection and coordination (there are multiple sites housing language resources that need to be identified and coordinated for use in language learning, b) community use of the language and increase parent language-learning to support their children, and c) connecting language learning to the land and multiple language domains. A collaboration with MARR who already supports these efforts with FPCC would be advisable.

8. Provide resources and support to those districts that have more than one Indigenous Ancestral language in its geographic area so that they may carry out their responsibility. Some districts also share a language with a neighboring district and structures are required to share language resources and teachers to avoid duplication and stress on the community to support two separate programs.

9. Provide support to assist districts and language communities to develop and manage resources needed for implementing the language curriculum. This support should minimize each district recreating resources and provide resources and time for teachers to prepare lessons and instructional materials for their classes.

TEACHER PREPARATION, DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATION

10. Develop a program in Post-Secondary Institutions to increase certified Aboriginal Language teachers who are fluent in their language, can read and write in their language, are knowledgeable in language instruction that is based on an Indigenous world-view and suitable for language recovery and revitalization, and are able to create language lessons from resources available to them. Work with certifying and credentialing bodies to ensure that the graduates' certifications are recognized equal to teachers in the province.

11. Each district with the support of the BC Principals and Vice Principals Association and guided by the provincial and district language leader will conduct professional development for their members on how to support the development and implementation of Aboriginal Languages in their schools.

12. Provide assistance and support for teachers to continually update their language fluency and language instruction. There should be opportunities for teachers to learn multiple culturally aligned instructional strategies for learning and relearning language.

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