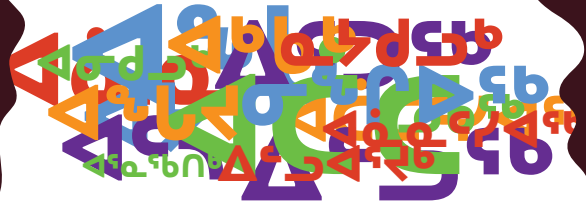
Our Primary Concern:
Inuit Language
in Nunavut



2009/10 ANNUAL REPORT

The State of Inuit
Culture and Society

Our Primary Concern:
Inuit Language in Nunavut
2009/2010 Annual Report on the
State of Inuit Culture and Society

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Letter of Transmittal

Hon. Premier Eva Aariak
Government of Nunavut

Hon. Minister John Duncan
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
Government of Canada

Sept. 15, 2011

Dear Premier Eva Aariak and Minister John Duncan,

Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement calls for the establishment of the Nunavut Social Development Council. Article 32.3.4 requires that council to:

"Prepare and submit an annual report on the state of Inuit culture and society in the Nunavut Settlement Area to the Leader of the Territorial Government for tabling in the Legislative Assembly, as well as to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for tabling in the House of Commons."

In addition to our obligations under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the council, through Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., is committed to improving the lives of Inuit in Nunavut, especially in regards to Inuit society and culture.

Pursuant to Article 32.3.4, and in keeping with the importance of Inuit social and cultural issues, we are pleased to submit this Annual Report on the State of Inuit Culture and Society, entitled Our Primary Concern: Inuit Language in Nunavut. This annual report covers the fiscal year 2009/10.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Nunavut Social Development Council

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Courtesy of Piqqusilirivvik Inuit Cultural Learning Facility-Piqqusilirivvik lead instructor Elijah Paliituq guides a student toward Aarruja Qinngua to fish.

Executive Summary

09/10

There is perhaps no issue of greater significance to Inuit in Nunavut and with wider political implications than the future of the Inuit language. The expectation by Inuit that the creation of Nunavut in 1999 would provide new opportunities and resources for the promotion and protection of the Inuit language has historical merit. The desire to safeguard language and culture was foundational to national and territorial Inuit political mobilization. "If we do not form an organization amongst ourselves," Noah Qumak warned at the founding meeting of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) in 1971, "our ways, lives, culture and language will disappear and we will have no control over it in a very short time."[1]

Nunavut's founders saw the creation of a new territory through a comprehensive Aboriginal land claims agreement as pivotal to safeguarding a language and culture under assault. "That's the whole reason why the land claims took place, because we were losing our language," former Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) president and *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* (NLCA) signatory Paul Quassa stated in 2003. "I think that's part of the whole land claims process. Once you have the languages the culture is strong."[2] In her Oct., 2008, bid for the Iqaluit East Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) seat, current Nunavut Premier Eva Aariak made a similar statement. "Language and culture is very important to us," she said at a public forum in Iqaluit. "That is the reason that Nunavut was created. Sometimes we forget why Nunavut was created."[3]

In the words of political scientist William Safran, language serves as an important instrument for protecting collective identity and communal cohesion because it, "Marks the 'at-homeness' of a people threatened by cultural homogenization."[4] It is also the central symbolic and cultural tool of human societies, enabling people to, "Connect with others, to represent and communicate about experiences, and in the process, to declare their own identities as participants in their worlds."[5]

In Nunavut, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun are vital to the intergenerational transfer of Inuit knowledge, history and philosophy, and are in many cases the only means of communication available to Elders. As the language spoken most often in the home, the Inuit language is the preferred mode of communication for a majority of Nunavut residents and thus the most appropriate and effective language of educational instruction. The Inuit language provides access to the distinct worldview of our people and an entire way of life: its use adds a layer of meaning and context to the world we live in and in doing so, reinforces the cultural, geographic, and ethnic identities and ties that make us unique.

The objective of this report is to provide a comprehensive framework outlining what stakeholders must accomplish in the immediate future if the Inuit language is to survive and evolve with supported growth in all sectors of society. The vision for Inuit language bilingualism and resilience provided in this report is of a constantly evolving language used in innovative ways to provide full access to modern opportunities: it is of a society in which the Inuit language has become, "Standard, scientific, and state idioms through compulsory education, media, and conscious public policy."[6] Three obstacles have been identified that must be overcome in order to begin working toward these ends. They are:

1. Raising the status of the Inuit language in society from the perspective of

Nunavummiut in the immediate future, particularly youth.

2. Promoting language learning and use in the home.

3. Development of a bilingual education system and the capabilities of bilingual post-secondary school graduates.

Presenting the Inuit language in ways that appeal to young people is essential for use and transmission in informal settings. Unless the language is seen as socially affirming – colloquially speaking, cool – English will continue to overshadow Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun as the single language of status, power, and opportunity. If Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun are to function as mediums of communication in the home, school, and workplace, literacy abilities of stakeholders, written materials, and available media require enormous human and economic investment. Parents will have to become more involved in this process by contributing to language acquisition in the home. While there may be wide social awareness of language as the vessel of Inuit culture as a result of language activism in communities, more support from the Government of Nunavut (GN) and Inuit organizations can help encourage language use through education campaigns focusing on the benefits of Inuit language bilingualism, provisioning of language materials, and suggestions to parents and community language planners.

Formal bilingual education, starting in Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs all the way through to post-secondary, must play a greater role in language transmission, literacy development, and language quality within the home, and to help cultivate the necessary knowledge base needed for use of the Inuit language in meaningful ways all of the time. Meeting this challenge will require addressing the glaring inadequacies of the current education system while phasing in bilingual programs, all while attempting to retain or simultaneously create, post-secondary Inuit language speaking graduates who are capable of replacing unilingual English speaking southern teachers and administrators.

Despite the Inuit language being the first language of majority in Nunavut, its use in the home is steadily declining. The ambitious goals and protections set out in the 2008 *Inuit Language Protection Act, Education Act*, and *Official Languages Act* are meant to provide public and private sector support for the Inuit language. In order for the new provisions to be effective, a wider range of community-level programs addressing the challenge of intergenerational transmission and maintenance of Inuktitut, and the revitalization of Inuinnaqtun, must be put in place and owned by community members. The steps that must be taken to achieve these outcomes have been identified based on analysis of existing social and educational policy realities with respect to major differences in language strength between communities. Recommendations seriously consider what has worked and is working for Inuit and other Indigenous Peoples elsewhere.

Introduction

The Inuit language is comprised of an unbroken dialect chain stretching from Little Diomede Island, Alaska, in the middle of Bering Strait to Ittoqqortoormiit, eastern Greenland. Taken as a whole, the Inuit language and culture spans half the globe and is geographically the largest in the world. While speakers of dialects separated by great distance may have difficulty understanding one another, the grammatical rules, words, and pronunciations between dialects are not different enough for them to stand alone as languages. In this report, Inuit language is the term used to describe the two major dialects and six regional sub-dialects spoken in Nunavut's 25 communities.

In Nunavut, two writing systems are used to distinguish between the two major dialects spoken. Inuinnaqtun is the dialect spoken in the western Kitikmeot region in Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay. This dialect is written in roman orthography or script, while Inuktitut dialects in the remaining 23 communities use a syllabic writing system. This system, in which individual syllables of a word are represented by symbols, became widespread in the eastern Arctic after 1876 when Anglican missionary Edmund Peck used them to translate church literature into Inuktitut. Syllabics had already been adapted for Inuktitut by two English missionaries (John Horden and E.A. Watkins) who saw the success of the Cree syllabic writing system devised by Robert Evans. Prior to the introduction of this dual writing system within what is now Nunavut, information was transmitted orally. Preference for roman or syllabic orthography is therefore largely based on custom and historical use and exposure to religious texts and later within the education system.

There are six regional dialects of the Inuit language spoken in Nunavut, which are further divided into individual community sub-dialects (Fig. 1).

Although a large number of Inuit language speakers remain in Nunavut, frequency of use in the home has declined to dangerously low levels within some dialect regions and communities. The home is the most important site for the preservation and intergenerational transmission of language. When the transmission of a language from parent to child is switched from one language to another simultaneously across many home environments within a community, a process of language shift may occur whereby entire generations of children do not inherit their heritage language, generating a cycle that may lead to language extinction if drastic measures are not taken.

Figure 1. Inuit dialects and sub-dialects in Nunavut by community

Inuinnaqtun	Natsilingmiutut	Kivalliq	North Baffin	South Baffin	Aivilik	Nunavik
Kugluktuk	Taloyoak	Baker Lake	Resolute Bay	Qikiqtarjuaq	Rankin Inlet	Sanikiluaq
Cambridge Bay	Kuugaruk	Whale Cove	Grise Fiord	Pangnirtung	Chesterfield Inlet	
	Gjoa Haven	Arviat	Arctic Bay	Iqaluit	Coral Harbor	
			Pond Inlet	Kimmirut		
			Clyde River	Cape Dorset		
			Igloolik			
			Hall Beach			

Quantifying Language Strength

In 2006, the median age for Inuit in Nunavut was 20 years old (compared with 39 years old for Canadians as a whole) with nearly 60 per cent of the population under the age of 25,[7] and in 2006, Nunavut's population growth was twice the national average due to a fertility rate double the national average.[8] The fact that the majority of Inuit in Nunavut are young and having children of their own has enormous implications for language use in the territory. If the Inuit language is to remain viable, this age group must assume responsibility for maintaining or learning the language while simultaneously pursuing academic and professional development opportunities. Without an expanding cadre of educated, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun speaking professionals possessing the requisite skills needed to implement the provisions of the *Inuit Language Protection Act, Education Act,* and the *Official Languages Act*, and the recommendations of this report, the bilingual society envisioned by Nunavut stakeholders will not materialize. At the same time, this age group must be targeted in development of modern opportunities for Inuit language conveyance and consumption. It will be essential to increase production of Inuit language children's books, comic books and novels for adults and adolescents, and to create radio and television programs dealing with complex subject matter, including youth issues that are complemented by Internet resources that do the same. The GN's ambitious goal to institute bilingual education by 2019 – even if accomplished – will be fruitless unless the language thrives outside of the classroom.

In 2006, the Inuit language was the first language of 83 per cent of Inuit or 70 per cent of the territory as a whole.[9] In the same year, 91 per cent of Inuit reported being able to hold a conversation in the language, down from 94 per cent in 1996.[10] In contrast, only 12 per cent or 290 of 2,345 Inuit

Franco Buscemi

The late Jose Kusugak received the Elijah Menarik award from CBC in Iqaluit. From left: Annie Ford, Jonah Kelly, Jose Kusugak, Whit Fraser, Joanna Awa and William Tagoona

living in Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk cited Inuinnaqtun as a first language, signaling the dangerous erosion and possible extinction of that dialect if drastic measures are not taken now.

The Inuit language is clearly the first language of majority in Nunavut, however it is not being spoken in the home as often as one might expect.

Between 2001-06, the proportion of Nunavummiut who reported using Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun most often at home declined from 57 per cent to 54 per cent, and while 26 per cent of Nunavummiut identified English as their only mother tongue in 2006, it was the language spoken most often at home by 44 per cent of the population.[11] In the same year, the language spoken most often at home had a high degree of variance by region, with 13 per cent of residents using the Inuit language as the first language of the home in the Kitikmeot, 59 per cent in the Kivalliq and 65 per cent in the Qikiqtaaluk region (down from 18 per cent, 62 per cent and 68 per cent respectively in 2001).[12]

The home is the primary site of intergenerational transmission of language and is therefore most important. It is possible to approximate dialect strength with reference to frequency of use within the home although these numbers should be taken with extreme caution as they assume dialect speakers populate their respective dialect regions. Transience is high in Nunavut and speakers who grew up speaking one dialect may now live in a different dialect region. A significant number of Inuit have moved to Iqaluit and other larger communities from across Nunavut, making it a diverse dialect domain.

Sanikiluaq is not included, as it stands alone as the only Nunavik dialect speaking community in Nunavut. In Sanikiluaq, approximately 92 per cent of 2006 Census respondents reported using Inuktitut-only in the home. The North Baffin and South Baffin dialects were approximately equivalent in terms of language strength in the home. The communities in both dialect regions averaged 76 per cent of individuals claiming to speak Inuktitut-only at home. The two Kivalliq communities averaged 88 per cent, the four Aivilik communities 64 per cent, the three Natsilingmiutut communities 19 per cent, and just 2 per cent for Inuinnaqtun.

The fact that Inuinnaqtun was the dialect spoken most often at home by only 1.4 per cent and 1.9 per cent of Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk residents respectively in 2006 – or approximately 77 individuals total – highlights the urgent need for strategies, programs and resources in those communities that match the enormous scope of work required to strengthen this critically endangered dialect.[13] Language shift in Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk are particularly severe, however several Inuktitut speaking communities are also experiencing linguistic weakening. In Gjoa Haven, for example, Inuktitut is the mother tongue of 42 per cent of the population, yet it is the language spoken most often at home by only 14.2 per cent of the population.[14] Taloyoak, Kugaaruk, Baker Lake, Iqaluit, and Rankin Inlet are in a similar disposition as far as language use in the home

Figure 2. Approximate percentages of Inuit language-only homes by region

Inuinnaqtun	Natsilingmiutut	Kivalliq	North Baffin	South Baffin	Aivilik
2%	19%	88%	76%	76%	64%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population, Catalogue #94-577-XCB2006001; File prepared by Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, December 18, 2007

is concerned. These communities in particular require stable funding for the creation of language resources and learning materials as well as a higher degree of community and Elder participation in dialect revitalization efforts.

The English language is becoming more pervasive in Nunavut at the expense of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun for a number of interrelated reasons.

The choices Inuit make about language use in different settings are deeply complex and sometimes unpredictable; no conclusive data exists supporting a single solution that would guarantee language use outside of the home per se, though there are many steps that can be taken to increase the number of opportunities available for the language to flourish. English is a colonial, settler language; it is the language of power, economic opportunity, technology, and North American popular culture. In the absence of robust Inuit language services, literature, media and education programs in Nunavut, English is the key that opens doors to what many perceive as success, power, and social and economic equality. The *Inuit Language Protection Act* and the *Education Act* appear to take steps toward reversing this in favour of a society that provides equal opportunities for Inuit language speakers. These laws raise urgent questions and leave room for improvement however, and are discussed in detail in the following pages.

The Inuit language is one of only three Aboriginal languages in Canada spoken by a large enough population base that long-term survival is likely.[15] Long-term survival is increasingly less likely if communities continue to be inundated by English language without Inuit language alternatives. English is the language of television, books, magazines, movies, music and electronic correspondence. It is the language used by teachers from southern Canada, who constitute the vast majority of all teachers, to link students to an imaginary world of knowledge, opportunity, success, and power within the territory. Inuktitut's use as the primary language of the home, on television, radio and within the school system and workplace is increasingly variable or limited while in comparison, English is overwhelming and pervasive. The absence of data documenting attitudes toward the Inuit language makes speculation difficult, however the fact that the number of Inuit capable of speaking the language is significantly greater than those who report using it as the primary language of the home suggests increasing preference for English.

Figure 3.
Nunavut communities and regions by original name and dialect

Source: Courtesy of the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut

Part 1

Promises and Practices

"Our language is who and what we are and the health of our language lies at the core of our wellbeing."

Mary Simon, President, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
2008 Arctic Indigenous Language Symposium, Tromso, Norway.

Language and culture have always been central to Inuit political organization. In 1974, the minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) funded ITC to establish an Inuit Language Commission to operate under the existing ITC Inuit Cultural Institute to, among other things, "Study the present state of the written language and recommend changes for the future."[16] In a 1976 *Inuttituut* magazine interview, Inuit Language Commission coordinator Alex Stevenson explained that after visiting approximately 50 Canadian Inuit communities to hear language concerns, the commission found that:

> There is general alarm...at the threats to [the Inuit language] from the powerful southern culture that is moving into the north, and fears that the Inuit language might be supplanted. But the optimistic view is that it can survive if certain actions are taken...Inuit Tapirisat has a vital and responsible role in assisting all Canadian Inuit in their right to full participation in all aspects of the society...and that includes language.[17]

The commission undertook a comprehensive review of the benefits and drawbacks of the syllabic and roman orthographies in consultation with six Arctic regional representatives. In 1976, the commission, "Recognizing the strong feelings that various groups of Inuit have for either syllabic or roman writing," decided in favor of the standardized, dual orthography writing system still in use today.[18] This decision was made with the caveat that the system, "Should be reviewed after five or ten years of use to measure its effectiveness and to make revisions where necessary."[19] The commission also recommended more Inuit language use on the radio and establishment of a language institute under ITC to facilitate teaching material development for language education.

Between Mar. 24–28, 1998, the Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC) convened a conference of approximately 60 language stakeholders in Iqaluit to decide what place the Inuit language would have in the future of the territory. NIC's 1996 *Footprints 2* document recommended that the three parties (Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, Government of Canada, Government of the Northwest Territories) to the *Nunavut Political Accord* assemble, "A special Developing a Language Policy Conference, as a necessary step in pulling together an adequate societal consensus on the desired place of language in the future of Nunavut, with particular attention to the preservation and promotion of the Inuit language".[20] The meeting was expansive and topics ranged from the benefits and drawbacks of the

syllabic and roman orthographies to the role of future language legislation. Fifty recommendations from delegates are published in the conference report, most notably that:

- A permanent language school should be established so that language courses can be delivered on an ongoing basis.
- Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun must be used and taught more in schools. This use should be defined in concrete terms to ensure that it is completely and clearly understood by everyone in the school system as well as by parents and students.
- Public servants should be encouraged to learn the language of the Nunavut community in which they serve.
- GN employees must be able to use Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun in their place of work, and this should be encouraged and guaranteed through legislation. These rights, as well as the rights of the public, must be clearly defined.
- Funding must be made available for language materials to be published and distributed once they are developed.
- More funding must be made available to provide for TV and radio programs and interesting reading materials, like magazines and newspapers, in Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun.
- Language preservation, promotion, and use must be given a very high priority in all areas of the new government.
- If a language commission is established, it must be given the authority to explore all language issues and alternatives without restraint in order to ensure that all matters are properly and thoroughly examined.[21]

This meeting is significant for three reasons. First, it illustrates that language concerns were widespread, predate the creation of the territory, and figured into the formal planning process of the commission. Second, with few exceptions the recommendations made by conference delegates – many of them pragmatic – remain unaddressed 13 years later. Third, the recommendations provide a clear mandate to government, articulating what specific actions Inuit wanted and expected the government to take in safeguarding language.

That language and culture protections were an important part of fulfilling Inuit expectations for Nunavut is an understatement. Prior to Apr. 1, 1999, an overwhelming majority of Inuit believed that the new government would have the largest positive impact on Inuit language and culture. The 1999 NWT Labour Force Survey (Expectations of Nunavut) found that:

- 80 per cent of Inuit respondents believed the new territory would improve respect for Inuit values.
- 77 per cent of Inuit respondents believed the new territory would improve the teaching of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun.
- 71 per cent of Inuit respondents believed the new territory would lead to improvements for the Inuit language generally.[22]

Education programs (69 per cent), economic development (63 per cent), and environment (65 per cent) were the next three areas of expected improvement for Inuit.

On Oct. 21, 1999, the GN unveiled the *Bathurst Mandate*, a statement of priorities for the first five years of governance developed in a series of workshops held by cabinet. The document declares that in 2020, "Inuktitut, in all its forms, is the working language of the Government of Nunavut."[23] This goal is also re-emphesized in the GN's *Pinasuaqtavut* mandate.

However in both cases, no steps are outlined enumerating what steps must be taken to achieve this end, nor were there steps taken to address this specific issue. In 2009, the GN contracted North Sky Consulting Group to undertake a comprehensive review (*Qanukkaniq?: The GN Report Card*) of the effectiveness of government programs and services. Consultants visited Nunavut's 25 communities and heard feedback from 2,100 Nunavummiut. In regard to language, North Sky reported that:

> Despite a powerful mandate that captures Nunavummiut's cultural vision, and recent initiatives that include the Official Languages Act and Inuit Language Protection Act, the public perceives almost zero delivery by the GN. Across Nunavut, the fear of language and culture loss resonates with families, communities, and schools. People are frustrated at not being able to interact with their government in Inuktitut. Nunavummiut made it clear that preservation and promotion of Inuit language and culture is a priority. Nunavummiut are aware that each generation not immersed in the language grows further away from the Inuit culture and from self-reliance.[24]

It is clear that despite documented community-level concern about language shift since at least 1976, no significant measures have been taken to ameliorate the situation. The findings of the 2009 report card constitute a severe indictment of how government has approached language and issues related to language in the last decade. This severe breach of confidence between the GN and its constituency may have long-term, detrimental implications drawing the legitimacy of government into question. In Dec. 2009, the GN tabled *Tamapta*, which contains several commitments that address the aforementioned discrepancy. They include:

- Comprehensive language training for GN employees.
- Increasing Inuktitut speaking staff at all levels, with focus on public relations.
- Greater support for the production, publishing and distribution of publications, film and online content in the Inuit language.
- Promotion of community-level initiatives for the use, teaching, development, promotion and preservation of the Inuit language.[25]

No explanation is given enumerating what specific steps will be taken to achieve these outcomes.

Courtesy of Piqqusilirivvik

A Piqqusilirivvik instructor demonstrated the different techniques and methods used to secure the qamutik down a hill, Apr., 2010.

Courtesy of Piqqusilirivvik

(L)Bob Konana and (R) Joshua Aggavak provide Louise Flaherty traditional place names and hunting/camping grounds near Gjoa Haven, May, 2009.

Saving Inuinnaqtun from Extinction

The Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut dialects of the Inuit language are unequal in strength and speaker numbers. It is important to understand that while the policy discussions in this report focus on the Inuit language as a whole, the dialects require vastly different levels of support over different durations in order to flourish. Any negotiations between Inuit, the GN or the Government of Canada with regard to community planning, funding language revitalization and promotion or specific community language initiatives must take into consideration the enormous discrepancy between Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut language strength, due in large part to the nature and histories of colonial encounter in the Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, and Qikiqtaaluk regions of Nunavut.

Inuinnaqtun is recognized as a distinct dialect apart from Inuktitut under the 1988 Northwest Territories' (NT) *Official Languages Act*, which is still the official language law in Nunavut, even though the 2008 made-in-Nunavut *Official Languages Act* is widely assumed to be the current legislation. To date, Nunavut's *Official Languages Act* has not come into force.

All GN documents are translated into Inuinnaqtun. Inuit organizations also translate documents into Inuinnaqtun even though the dialect is spoken by significant numbers of people only in Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay and to a lesser degree in Gjoa Haven. Outside Nunavut, the dialect is indigenous to Ulukhaktok, NT. Like the Iñupiatun, Inuvialuktun, and Inuttut dialects spoken in Alaska, NT, and Labrador, Inuinnaqtun is written in roman orthography while syllabics remain the most common way of writing Inuktitut in Nunavut and Nunavik. Subsequent sections of this report discuss some of the benefits and drawbacks associated with standardizing Inuit language orthography and dialect in written publication. Special consideration must be made for Inuinnaqtun in these important conversations because neglecting the specific needs of the Inuinnaqtun speaking community is anathema to the new opportunities for cultural self-determination and resilience Inuit believed we were conferred in 1999. The Inuinnaqtun speaking community must be involved in adapting Inuit language policy considerations for the unique status of their dialect. The following is a statistical profile of the Inuinnaqtun dialect from the 1996 Census:

- In 1996, Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun was the language spoken most often in the home by only 12.5 per cent or 150 individuals in Kugluktuk and 10 per cent or 135 individuals in Cambridge Bay.[26]

- Census data from 2006 differentiates between the two dialects, but in that year Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun was the language spoken most often in the home by 7.5 per cent (110) of individuals in Cambridge Bay and 30 per cent (115) in Kugluktuk.

- The same year, Inuinnaqtun-only was the language spoken most often in the home by only 1.4 per cent or 20 individuals in Cambridge Bay and by 1.9 per cent (25) in Kugluktuk.

- Inuinnaqtun was the mother tongue of 140 (9.5 per cent of the community population) and 150 (11.5 per cent of the community population) individuals in Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk respectively.[27]

- Inuinnaqtun is the mother tongue of 1 per cent of Nunavut's total population, although a larger number of individuals may have achieved some proficiency in the language as a second language.

- There are slightly more Inuktitut than Inuinnaqtun speakers in both communities, but as a whole, Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk are linguistically the weakest communities in Nunavut for either dialect.

The number of Inuit using Inuinnaqtun most often in the home nearly halved between 1996 and 2006 in Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk, and if patterns of erosion continue at the same pace, the dialect may be a handful of speakers away from extinction within the next two decades. Inuinnaqtun data from the NT Bureau of Statistics is scarce, but in 2009, 60 per cent or 187 individuals over the age of 15 reported speaking an Aboriginal language in Ulukhaktok, NT – presumably Inuinnaqtun.[28] The exact language proficiency of these speakers is unknown, as are the number of mother tongue speakers in that community. According to Inuinnaqtun advocate and executive director of Kitikmeot School Operations Millie Kuliktana, the majority of fluent Inuinnaqtun speakers in Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk are over the age of 50 and even those who do speak rarely do so in casual settings.[29]

Inuinnaqtun may be part of the Inuit language family, but the dialect has a history of its own and links speakers to cultural customs in western Nunavut unique to that region. In the words of sociolinguist Joshua A. Fishman, "The loss of a dialect is as much a loss of authenticity as the loss of a language...There are never just dialect differences. They go along with differences in customs, and those differences also get lost."[30] Inuinnaqtun may be severely weakened, but its speakers are determined to revive their dialect and eventually see it flourish.

Serious Inuinnaqtun revitalization efforts in Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay are fairly recent. In 2006, the Tahiuqtiit Society was formed as a model program under the rural secretariat to develop local solutions to local challenges. The mandate of the federally-funded society was to build community capacity through the delivery of training and educational programs providing new opportunities to people who historically were underserved in the community. That year, the society organized an Inuinnaqtun conference in Kugluktuk. Ten representatives from each Inuinnaqtun speaking community met to

Courtesy of Piqqusilirivvik

Piqqusilirivvik participant catches caribou outside Igloolik, 2008.

assess the status of Inuinnaqtun and to discuss future actions leading to its revitalization.

Since 2006, three major initiatives were introduced in Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk. First, primary and secondary schools in both communities now utilize the total physical response (TPR) language teaching method, which relies on language immersion coupled with physical examples to simulate early childhood learning. Inuinnaqtun immersion programs are in place for Kindergarten and Grade 1 in both communities where possible and higher-level Inuinnaqtun language courses utilize TPR as well. Second, a master-apprentice program was introduced in both communities following linguist Leanne Hinton's research at the University of California Berkeley, which indicates that, "By the end of three years, apprentices will be at least conversationally proficient in their language and ready to be language teachers to other people."[31] The master-apprentice program is geared toward mature language learners who select their own Inuinnaqtun speaking masters to work with toward language proficiency. Masters are often relatives, family friends or mentors with whom apprentices interact individually in every day settings for 10 hours of contact per week over the course of four or five months each year for three years. There are currently eight high school students enrolled in Tahiuqtiit's master-apprentice program in Cambridge Bay and 13 in Kugluktuk, as well as 23 Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP) students enrolled in the program. Because it was only recently introduced, the first group of apprentices has not completed the program. Third, the Tahiuqtiit Society is working with Inuinnaqtun language activists, educators, and government employees to initiate participation in the University of Victoria Aboriginal Language Revitalization Certificate Program. The program is designed to enable individuals concerned with language loss, maintenance, and recovery to develop both knowledge and practical strategies for language revitalization activities through six core courses and three electives spanning between one and two years.

Inuinnaqtun language revitalization planning is still in its infant stages, and language activists in Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay must contend with challenges such as raising community awareness and participation in the revival process. In the closing words of the *2009 Report of the Tahuiqtiit Society:*

> It is important to move quickly, given the pressing nature of language loss in Kugluktuk, but also to move forward strategically. The success of this new direction for the society will depend very much on the way the society is able to bring the various community partners into the projects as meaningful partners, and the extent to which it can motivate the community to move collectively towards language revitalization…There may be some in the community who view Inuinnaqtun as a heritage language rather than a dynamic, living language of the community and culture. It will be important to encourage an understanding of the link between Inuinnaqtun and the collective cultural identity of the community and the people. Since identity is critical to concepts of personal and community wellness, engaging the active wellness service program in the community as partners may be an important first step.[32]

This is perhaps the greatest challenge Inuinnaqtun (as well as Inuktitut) activists face: raising the consciousness of community members and mobilizing community action. In the words of linguist Michael Krauss, "You cannot from outside inculcate into people the will to revive or maintain their languages. That has to come from them, themselves."[33] The GN and the Government of Canada can assist communities with language revitalization planning by helping to provide access to financial resources and expertise, but responsibility for the outcome of languages ultimately rests with their speakers. Other similarly endangered languages have experienced remarkable revival in recent years in large part because language

communities understood the cultural implications of continued language erosion and were effectively galvanized into action by community planners.

According to Galla (2009), there were approximately 1,000 Native Hawaiian language speakers in 1980, half of them Elders.[34] Concerned about the future of their language, Native Hawaiian parents initiated the Pūnana Leo Hawaiian language preschool movement in 1984, modeled after New Zealand's Kōhanga Reo (language nest) program (discussed in Part 2 of this report). Pūnana Leo was the first Indigenous language immersion program in the United States and, like its New Zealand counterpart, was initially operated under the auspices of a grassroots organization funded by parent tuition, private foundation grants, and parent fundraising.[35] The program was part of a larger Hawaiian cultural renaissance, which included a weekly Hawaiian language radio talk show, a newsletter, student and teacher organizations, the promotion of Hawaiian street names and Hawaiian-only camping trips to traditional areas, as well as the Kūpuna (Elders) Program, which allowed Hawaiian Elders to teach the language in public schools.[36] The parents of children enrolled in Pūnana Leo schools were required to take language courses and assist in school maintenance. By 1993, there were 162 students enrolled at Pūnana Leo schools in Hawaii, and in order to insure vertical linguistic growth, the language nest program expanded into the Hawaiian public school system, largely as a result of parent activism and lobbying. Today, there are 11 Pūnana Leo family-based language nests in the state of Hawaii that serve three and four-year-old children along with their families on the islands of Hawai'i, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu and Kaua'i.[37]

By 1999, approximately 1,600 students participated in Hawaiian language immersion within the public school system and 11 students graduated from the state's two Hawaiian immersion high schools, the first students in over a century to be educated entirely in Hawaiian.

By 2000, enrolment in Hawaiian language high school and university courses had skyrocketed, with approximately 2,500 students studying Hawaiian as a second language at each level – a 500 per cent increase in 10 years. In 1997, the Hawaiian legislature approved the establishment of a Hawaiian language college at the University of Hawaii, Hilo, and in 1998, the college admitted nine students for the degree of master of arts in Native Hawaiian language and literature, the first graduate program in an Indigenous language in the United States.

Native Hawaiian language revitalization was successful in large part because parents internalized the idea that allowing language shift to continue would devastate Native Hawaiian culture. Responses to language shift had to be urgent in order to begin a process of revitalization and cultural renewal, requiring community cooperation, personal investment and sacrifice. Parents and language activists struggled for gains made at the community and legislative level. In 1994, for example, parents in Kaua'i boycotted public schools when their request for Hawaiian medium education through the sixth grade was denied. Native Hawaiian is significantly healthier today than it was two decades ago, but revitalization has taken unceasing work on the part of community members who believe that language must come first. Inuinnaqtun revitalization is undoubtedly possible, but its speakers and stakeholders must come to consensus about which crucial decisions must be made now in order to insure the dialect's future. The Native Hawaiians have broken trail for the global Indigenous community and provide an awe-inspiring example as the Inuinnaqtun community works through the initial stages of the community language planning process.

Pirurvik Centre and Inuktitut Second Language Training

Based in Iqaluit, the Pirurvik Centre is the GN contract holder for Inuktitut language training in the Qikiqtaaluk region. Pirurvik was founded as a private organization in 2003 to deliver a range of specialized services, programs and productions grounded in the Inuktitut language and the Inuit way of life. Pirurvik began delivering Inuktitut as a second language (ISL) courses in 2006 to train GN deputy ministers, and extended programming to private citizens shortly afterward. The organization also offers Inuktitut first language courses, which apart from developing literacy skills and typing and computing abilities, focus on transmission of knowledge related to Inuit values and leadership practices. The organization offers two to three language training courses per semester, two semesters a year.

GN employees who sign up for ISL classes do so voluntarily: in 2011, Inuktitut language training is still not a requirement for GN employees and there are currently no financial or career incentives in place that would motivate enrolment in courses. What this means for Pirurvik is that while most of the organization's clients are GN employees with course costs covered by their respective departments, there is no financial guarantee from government that the cost of providing professional development services will be covered each semester. Without a steady stream of self-motivated, interested clients, it would be financially unfeasible for Pirurvik to offer this service.

Courses are of two kinds: a) 12 weeks, three hours per week, split into two 1.5 hour classes or b) three hours per day for two full weeks. ISL class sizes are restricted to approximately eight students to guarantee intimacy, and Pirurvik conducts evaluation of students' achievements at the end of programs to provide students with feedback

Courtesy of Piqqusilirivvik

Louise Flaherty discusses traditional camps and routes with Bob Konana near Gjoa Haven, May, 2009.

and to assess teaching effectiveness. According to Gavin Nesbitt, Pirurvik's director of operations, three levels of ISL training are available with advancement at each stage. At the third level of training, students are typically able to have basic conversations, but are by no means fluent. Nesbitt sees Inuit language ability as a necessary prerequisite for government employees working on behalf of Inuit in Nunavut:

> I think you find people who move to Iqaluit or Nunavut in general typically come with a positive attitude. They're interested in coming here; they want to learn something about Inuit, they want to learn Inuktitut. And within the first two years I think the pattern of what their life is going to be gets set, and if they don't have access to training immediately, they get set into a pattern where it's not possible for them to learn... When [language training reaches] people immediately in their jobs or even before they start their jobs ideally, it changes how they perceive what they're doing here, it changes their understanding – I think – of Inuit in Nunavut. I think they have a better appreciation of what's going on, both in the work place as well as among the people they're supposedly providing services for.[38]

Nesbitt expressed Pirurvik's near-future plan to extend its ISL training to a fourth level, but stressed that learning Inuktitut to the point of proficiency within a short period of time is realistically a full-time, daily commitment over the course of many months. He also emphasized the necessity of developing the abilities of existing speakers:

> We want to push it and we want to see more opportunities for people to continue learning and develop more resources. But I think right now, the bigger emphasis for us and I think for Inuit organizations or the government needs to be on Inuit and people who already have language skills, and how do they develop and improve their language skills, or Inuit who don't have the language skills yet and how do they improve and develop.[39]

In an interview for this report in Apr., 2010, Premier Eva Aariak signaled that Inuit language training for GN employees remains a noncommittal if not nonexistent goal. When asked what steps were being taken right now to insure that the Inuit language is used as the working language of government pursuant to the *Bathurst Mandate, Pinasuaqtavut,* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act,* the premier's answer was unclear:

> The [government Inuit language training] plan was not long-term and it's basically more voluntary than anything else. So, the initiatives that have been carried out to date have been more on sporadic basis without much of a long-term plan, which is crucial if we want to make sure that language learning takes place consistently and so on. And I believe the Inuktitut Protection Act [sic] and the Education Act will help to make us realize that.[40]

Aariak did not indicate when such a long-term plan would be developed. When pressed to discuss specific employee training opportunities, Aariak's answer was equally vague. "The Inuktitut language courses are offered through various means – through Pirurvik and through the Arctic College. I don't know – I don't think they are mandated to individual level of employees yet."[41]

Early Childhood Education

Evidence is mounting that high quality ECE programs and care can bring significant long-term benefits – from improved school performance and higher earnings to a reduced likelihood of involvement in crime.[42] Economist James J. Heckman reports that investment in high quality, ECE programs is vital for governments because children who participate, "Are more likely to complete school and much less likely to require welfare benefits, become teen parents or participate in criminal activities."[43] UNICEF estimates that

for every dollar invested in early childhood intervention, the return can be as high as $8. This is a greater return than investment made in the primary education system, adult education, training or policing.[44] In Nunavut, the Canadian jurisdiction with the highest birthrate and the greatest percentage of teenage mothers, the availability of quality childcare programs impacts the adult workforce and young parents pursuing primary and post-secondary studies.

In addition to helping form a stable foundation for lifelong learning, ECE programs are important sites for Indigenous language immersion and revitalization. That is because language acquisition is easiest at the earliest stages of cognitive development, when the grammatical rules of speech are learned subconsciously through aural, visual, and kinesthetic observation rather than as coded systems. Without having to deconstruct grammar, children know how to produce meaning through the arrangement of words and sounds in systematic, highly complex ways.[45] As demonstrated in Hawaii and New Zealand, early childhood education immersion programs are educational experiences for parents seeking to strengthen Aboriginal language use in the home and community.

Empirical evidence supports the notion that reading and writing in the mother tongue should precede literacy in a second language in order for greater levels of cognitive development to take place, and that bilingual speakers are more cognitively advanced than their monolingual peers.[46] The 1962 research of Peal and Lambert in Canada showed that bilingual speakers not only achieved higher test scores in subject matter areas, but also performed better on both verbal and non-verbal tests of intelligence.[47] There is also evidence of a positive correlation between bilingualism and concept formation, cognitive flexibility, and divergent thinking.[48]

Advocates of bilingual education commonly argue that mother tongue minority language instruction is essential to the self-esteem and subsequent educational outcomes of language-minority children.[49] Structured Inuit language immersion ECE programs can play a critical role in Nunavut by helping to ground children in Inuit language literacy in addition to stimulating cognitive and personal development before children enter the education system. Effective ECE programs follow a predetermined curriculum with built-in assessments specifically designed to induce cognitive and personal development in children. ECE programs differ from daycare in that the latter is essentially a service designed to remove the burden of childcare from working parents and is not supplemented by a curriculum. An ECE curriculum is generally divided into stages of development identified by educators, each containing age-appropriate lesson plans and pre-determined benchmarks for student learning. An ECE curriculum is thus an important tool that establishes a framework for teaching and contains the rubric by which student progress is measured. In addition to honing math, reading and writing abilities, effective ECE programs teach children appropriate classroom conduct such as how to interact with peers and teachers in a respectful manner, and can help cultivate the positive self-perception students need in order to succeed from an early age.

Assessment is an essential component of effective ECE programs for three primary reasons: a) because monitoring assists in identifying curriculum area weaknesses and developing more responsive teaching methods and lesson plans; b) assessment helps educators identify children with special needs who may require additional resources and assistance; and c) assessments are an instrument used to chart progress and address learning area weaknesses. The Canadian Language

& Literacy Research Network cautions that such programs, rather than being based on an assumption that, "European heritage languages and literacies are normative and ideal," require new approaches based on, "Aboriginal languages, literacies, parenting styles, and pedagogies in order to produce optimal developmental outcomes for Aboriginal children."[50] The majority of childcare programs in Nunavut are Inuit culture specific, yet care does not optimize on the opportunity to develop skills that would better prepare children for success in elementary school.

In Oct., 2009, and Feb., 2010, NTI conducted a telephone-based survey of licensed ECE programs registered with the GN's Department of Education. NTI staff spoke with educators from 46 different childcare centres and ascertained that none were using a curriculum or focusing on childhood development per se, although most incorporated skill development such as Inuktitut syllabic recognition and on the land activities. Of these schools, 41 of 46 include Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun instruction, the majority of which operate in Inuktitut most or all of the time, two were French language programs located in Iqaluit, and three were English-only programs. Nearly all respondents told us that the chronic shortage of childcare options for parents in Nunavut, poor infrastructure, inadequate Inuit language reading materials, and the absence of core funding and government support for programs made delivery of high quality programs incredibly difficult. The high cost of operating childcare centres can make securing funding streams burdensome for program staff. Licensed childcare programs include child daycare, Aboriginal Head Start, part-time preschool, parents and tots, and family resource centres. According to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), the current situation is such that Inuit organizations in Nunavut and NT operate with funding provided through the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement that provides less than what is needed to adequately operate existing ECE services.[51] Furthermore, there are no qualification requirements for childcare staff in Nunavut, and a scarcity of professional development opportunities that would enhance the quality of program delivery.

Courtesy of Franco Buscemi

Iqaluit's Tujjaiju Buscemi plays with Inuktitut syllabics blocks.

Nikaitchuat Ilisagviat

Nikaitchuat Ilisagviat Iñupiatun language immersion school in Kotzebue, Alaska, serves as an appropriate model for Inuit ECE. The private school was opened in 1998 in response to what a small cadre of concerned community members saw as the absence of cultural pride among students in the public school system. Community members founded the language immersion preschool and worked with educators to develop a curriculum based on Iñupiaq values and way of life. The program's 20 students are immersed in an Iñupiatun language environment in which Iñupiat values are part of the teaching practice. Nikaitchuat is financially supported by parent tuition, the tribe, the Northwest Arctic Borough (the regional government), and the regional *Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act* land claims corporation. Students are addressed and address each other by their Iñupiaq names in a learning environment characterized by love, respect, and encouragement.

Over the course of the last decade, Nikaitchuat has developed its own curriculum encompassing each of three age group levels with Level IV currently in production:

- Level I: Preschool, 3-5 years.
- Level II: Kindergarten-Grade 1, 5-7 years.
- Level III: Grade 2-3, 7-8 years.

Each level is divided into sub-sections that correspond to the four seasons and associated subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering activities practiced in the region. Through TPR learning, students utilize their five senses to learn about new subjects through the Iñupiatun language and regularly partake in on-the-land activities. In the spring, students may learn about bearded seal hunting and related vocabulary, for example, and then about seal anatomy, cooperation, and sharing by dissecting, harvesting, and distributing the meat to local Elders. In the fall, students learn the names of the different local berries while berry picking and may assist community members in taking in fishing nets and processing fish. What a 5-7-year-old learns about harvesting bearded seal or cleaning salmon may differ in the level of detail from the information a 3-5-year-old is exposed to, however. Knowledge about a broad range of topics is learned in incremental stages that instructors assess as students move through each level, section, and sub-section of the curriculum, which enables staff members to work more closely with students on areas of weakness. Most importantly, the school is community-based: local hunters donate country food and parents, Elders and other community members volunteer to assist staff when students go on field-trips. Each month, students and their families have a potluck at the school, which in addition to fostering cohesion between the school and community, allows parents to interact with staff, and see and experience what and how their children are learning. Because Iñupiatun is critically endangered in the region, the school published a phrase book that parents can use as a reference with their children in addition to which is a forthcoming Iñupiatun grammar book for adult language learners. The grammar book is being developed in cooperation with a linguist at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska's Native Language Center.

The ongoing development of Nikaitchuat's curriculum is a community-driven process that requires time, patience, and enormous human and financial resources. Knowledge must be gathered from multiple male and female sources from different geographic areas (river and coastal communities) in order to reflect the cultural diversity of the region. Between three to six Elders have convened at a time in Kotzebue from surrounding villages to provide detailed insight about land

skills and knowledge over the course of several years. Men and women have different roles in Inuit society and thus different areas of expertise. A small group of men may meet to discuss topics related to caribou hunting, while women may meet separately to describe the process of sewing seal skins together to cover an umiaq (sealskin boat). Men and women meet in workshops together to discuss issues of broader concern such as the integration of spirituality and values. Nikaitchuat Ilisagviat staff members record this feedback and Elders proofread transcripts of lessons at subsequent in-service days before the information is integrated into the curriculum.

GN commitments to Inuit language rights have not been followed by action despite Inuit language and culture being the largest in-kind support government receives from Inuit in the territory. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction in Canada with a majority Aboriginal population. The richness of Inuit language and culture is consistently evoked by territorial and federal officials, art houses, private businesses, tourism agencies, and visiting scholars, novelists, and filmmakers to emphasize why Nunavut is unique, exotic, fascinating, or valuable. Inuit language films such as *Atanarjuat* and *The Journals of Knud Rasmussen* have brought international attention to Nunavut, and publications meant to draw visitors such as the *Nunavut Handbook* largely focus on the cultural nuances, language, history, arts and crafts of our people. The GN's *Tamapta* explicitly draws on this support, stating that, "Nunavut's unique cultural identity, with strong Inuit traditions, language and culture, needs to be understood on the world stage," alluding to the strong role Inuit play in shaping the identity of a public territorial government. These contributions have remained largely unreciprocated by sound government policy or practice, however.[52]

The fact that the Inuit language is used as much as it is, despite the absence of widespread support or encouragement to do so within schools, the workplace and home, is remarkable. Recent trends for Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun use are nonetheless alarming.

As Inuktitut slides toward endangerment and Inuinnaqtun approaches extinction, it is particularly important that in the interest of time, future measures taken to reverse these trends are community-based and cost and results effective.

Renowned social linguist Joshua A. Fishman warns that for societies to attempt to control language transmission within such social domains as the education system, media, workplace,

Figure 4. Percent of Inuit aged 15 and over that reported using the Inuit language "all of the time" by language domain and region

Region	Household	School	Workplace
Total Nunavut	48%	2%	14%
Qikiqtani	59%	2%	16%
Kivalliq	45%	3%	15%
Kitikmeot	20%	X	5%

Source: Statistics Canada, Aboriginal People's Survey (APS adults), 2006
Note:
1. Total respondents: 15,250
X Suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

and government without securing its place in the home first, "Is equivalent to constantly blowing air into a tire that still has a puncture."[53] It is of primary importance, he argues, that existing speakers' abilities be nurtured, cultivated or revitalized within their intimate, sheltered settings in order to safeguard language at its source. This is because revitalization efforts that begin outside of these intimate settings are contingent on financial resources that can always be cut off. Fishman maintains that in struggling languages, consciousness of personal responsibility for the language, "Needs to be developed early and stressed repeatedly," so that, "the inherent *right* to continue, the *duty* to continue, the privilege of continuing the language-in-culture association," becomes part of everyday community discourse, leading to conscious and informed language decisions by community members.[54] As has been done in New Zealand, ECE programs can help develop a critical consciousness toward language choice and use by encouraging parents who do not speak the Inuit language to learn and use it with their children at home. Responsibility for language transmission and use rests first and foremost with individuals, their families and communities, but speakers – especially young Inuit parents – need to understand the critical state of the Inuit language and how it can be maintained within intimate family settings because that is the first line of defense against language shift. The reality is that Inuit face a host of health, social, and economic challenges that can draw focus away from issues such as language maintenance and retention. In 2011, Nunavut has the highest incidence of violent crime and suicide in Canada per capita, and the lowest rate of educational attainment. In 2008, seven in ten (70 per cent) Inuit children aged 3 to 5 in 16 Nunavut communities were living in food insecure homes.[55] Inuit can benefit from government and organizational assistance with language planning in our communities.

The Inuit language is the language spoken most often in the home by 54 per cent of the population. Excluding Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay, most Inuit have access to fluent language speakers within the immediate family. In 2006, 84 per cent of young Inuit children under the age of six had at least one parent with the Inuit language as their mother tongue.[56] Inuit organizations and government can work more closely with the communities to provide information about the quantitative and qualitative status of the Inuit language, recognize language activists and role models in communities, and by assisting with community planning. Fishman cautions that securing this first line of defense is an essential part of community policy before, "Slowly building outward from the primary to the secondary institutions of inter-generational other-tongue continuity."[57] Language policy by itself cannot reverse current language trends unless individuals and communities secure the permanent linguistic foundation needed to carry it out.

The linguistic term diglossia is used to describe communities requiring two or more languages of unequal social stature in order to function. In the context of the Inuit language, linguist Louis-Jacques Dorais writes that conflict between Inuit and settler languages, "Is the linguistic consequence of unequal social relations between Aboriginal and Euro-American societies."[58] Diglossia commonly occurs within colonial settings, where the colonial language is imposed and reinforced at the expense of an Indigenous language. In diglossic societies, the high status language of the colonizer provides access to opportunities such as education, employment, governance, and literature and is therefore funded and promoted accordingly. It is the language most often written while lesser

speech forms are restricted primarily to informal oral communication with a scarcity of written material. Nunavut communities may therefore be described as diglossic. English and the Inuit language are both needed, but English and to a lesser degree French, are treated as gateways to opportunity disproportionate to the number of Inuit language speakers.

As a concept, diglossia helps explain prevailing attitudes toward the Inuit language by the Government of Canada and within government institutions in Nunavut, including the education system. It explains why only the French and English versions of the NLCA are official documents interpreted as law, while the Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun versions are symbolic translations without Constitutional protection. It explains why – despite declarations to the contrary since 1999 – only an inconsequential minority of GN employees from southern Canada ever attempt to learn the Inuit language and are not required to do so as part of their job descriptions, even though Inuktitut is the first language of the overwhelming majority of the government's constituency. Within a diglossic society such as Nunavut, government rhetoric about the importance of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun may obscure underlying feelings of impartiality toward the language that could explain why Inuit language of instruction within the education system remains a vague and unachieved goal, despite documented community-level desire for such a system for the past three decades.

Only by viewing the Inuit language as powerless, for example, can the Government of Canada justify conferring a tiny minority of French speakers with no ancestral or cultural ties to Nunavut communities, with more funding, support, and control over the destiny of their language and culture than residents who have lived within the boundaries of what is now Nunavut for thousands of years.

To put the following federal allocations for promotion of French and Inuit language use in Nunavut into perspective, only 370 respondents cited French-only as a mother tongue in the 2006 Census, compared with 20,480 for Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun.[59] To put these numbers into an even larger perspective, French is the 8th most widespread language in the world, with approximately 125 million speakers with official language status in 25 countries,[60] whereas there are fewer than 90,000 speakers of the Inuit language, three-quarters of them in Greenland. [61]

According to these numbers and using the 2006 Census as a population reference, each French mother tongue speaker is funded at $4,460 to meet his or her language needs compared to $53.71 per Inuit language mother tongue speaker per year. The latter number lowers to $44.30 per Inuk when factoring in the total number of self-identifying Inuit in Nunavut. Many of these individuals may not have learned Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun as a first language as a direct result of experiences within Canada's residential schools system, for which Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized in 2008, acknowledging that, "First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages and cultural practices were prohibited in these schools."[62]

If federal French and Inuit language promotion allocations were based on the same funding formula, and without taking the specific needs of Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut revitalization into consideration, 20,480 mother tongue speakers would require $91,340,800 per annum to meet its language promotion needs.

Ottawa's monetary allocations for the promotion of French have appreciated considerably while funding for Inuktitut and

Figure 5. Canada-Nunavut General Agreement on the Promotion of French and Inuktitut Languages
Fiscal year allocations: 2005 – 2009.[63]

Fiscal year	Inuit language	French
2005-06	$1,100,000	$1,450,000
2006-07	$1,100,000	$1,550,000
2007-08	$1,100,000	$1,650,000
2008-09	$1,100,000	$1,650,000

Inuinnaqtun remain stagnant, despite the increasing endangerment of the language. What is more, the funding for French language promotion is used within the territorial government to ensure that services are made available in French to Nunavut's francophone community. Federal government funding for the promotion, protection, and preservation of the Inuit language cannot be used by the GN for this purpose.[64]

The GN's Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth is responsible for administering federal Inuktitut promotion allocations. According to Stéphane Cloutier, the GN's director of official languages, federal funding proportionate to the number of Inuit in Nunavut and accessible to the territorial government is required to help organize and develop community language strategies involving language stakeholders.[65] If these monies were available, federal funds could be used to improve the quality of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun language services provided by government, including adult literacy and translator training. The education system would also benefit from development of Inuit language materials and teacher capacity, as well as early childhood development programs. Inuit language books, music production, and on the land programs could also be financially supported.[66] The provision of Inuit language services by government is currently a matter of accommodation and appeasement: the GN works within its annual budget to provide language services to the extent that it is able or considers necessary. In contrast, French has guaranteed sources of funding for government language promotion, in addition to basic French language rights flowing from the 1969 *Canada Official Languages Act.*

The point here is not to detract from French language rights in Nunavut, enshrined as they are under Sections 16 and 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,* but to criticize the stunning discrepancy in financial support that characterizes the language situation in Nunavut, to question the underlying racial and cultural assumptions and biases for this discrepancy, and to contemplate the possible effectiveness of Nunavut's *Inuit Language Protection Act*, *Education Act* and *Official Languages Act* in reversing language shift in the case of Inuktitut and averting language loss for Inuinnaqtun.

If federal funding for French language promotion for several hundred francophone residents exceeds that for more than 25,000 Inuit, and no core funding exists for the exclusive protections and promotion of Inuit language rights within government, one wonders: a) how far existing dollars can realistically be stretched in a climate of linguistic endangerment; and b) whether Inuit can realistically expect the GN to fulfill stated mandates and new legal obligations surrounding language use and protection.

Bilingual Education

The education system can be an essential site for Inuit language transmission and revitalization if measures are taken to strengthen oral instruction and literacy, improve teacher training, and produce a wide-range of teaching and general reading material. As with any modern language, it is necessary that strong Inuit language speaking ability be complemented by literacy, defined for our purposes as the ability to read, write, comprehend, and convey information accurately and articulately. According to the Nunavut Literacy Council, "Research supports the idea that individuals will be most successful acquiring advanced language skills, such as literacy, when they have the opportunity to do so first in their mother tongue, then in a second language."[67] It is therefore a matter of deep concern that Inuit do not have the opportunity to become firmly grounded in our first language before abruptly transitioning to full English immersion.

The difference between language of instruction (LOI) and language as subject is that in LOI settings, a language is the medium through which information is conveyed, not the focus of attention in and of itself. Under the current system, students in most schools' Inuit language stream typically make an abrupt switch to English LOI following Grade 4, because the only LOI available thereafter is English with Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun taught infrequently as subjects. This practice remains prevalent in Nunavut schools, despite a report commissioned by the GN's Department of Education in 2000 by linguist Ian Martin, who found that such an "early-exit" strategy is, "Not a true bilingual system; it replaces the child's first language with an imperfectly learned second language, and rather than allowing both languages to develop to a high level, too often neither language develops to its full potential."[68] Martin argues that, "Policies which fall short of providing substantial exposure to the Inuit language as the principal language of instruction in Nunavut schools will be inadequate," to achieving truly bilingual graduates and that the proportional

Courtesy of Piqqusilirivvik

Piqqusilirivvik camping trip near Kugluktuk. (L-R) Julia Carpenter, Kevin Ongahak, Darcy Havioyak and James Bolt, Mar., 2011.

allocation of Inuit language and English LOI in the education system should lie in the realm of 80:20.[69] In trilingual settings, mother tongue LOI remains dominant throughout primary and secondary school. In the Faroe Islands, students learn Faroese, Danish, and English. Students are immersed in Faroese in Grade 1-2, but by Grade 3, Danish accounts for 25 per cent of LOI supplemented by English the following year. Faroese, the mother tongue language of majority, remains the dominant LOI until Grade 10, after which Faroese and English reach parity and Danish LOI decreases during the final year of secondary school.[70] Bilingualism and in some cases, trilingualism is normative for most of the world population, but in each case mother tongue LOI predominates.

In 1980, the United States' Department of Education released the findings of an eight-year study designed to investigate the effectiveness of bilingual education programs for Spanish mother tongue Latino students. That study – known as the Ramírez Report – is the, "Only research report that both opponents and proponents of bilingual education accept as methodologically valid,"[71] in the United States debate over the effectiveness of bilingual education. In a summary analysis of Ramírez, linguist James Cummins (1992) found that the academic performance of students participating in late-exit Spanish immersion, "Refute the argument that there is a direct relation between the amount of time spent through English instruction and academic development in English."[72] In his words, the overall implication of these data, "Is that bilingual programs that strongly promote minority students' L1 literacy skills are viable means to promote academic development in English," and that further, the, "Positive results of programs that continue to promote literacy in L1 throughout elementary school can be attributed to the combined effects of reinforcing students' cultural identity and their conceptual growth as well as to the greater likelihood of parental involvement in such programs." [73] The Ramírez Report itself concludes that:

> As in mathematics and English language, it seems that those students in site E, who received the strongest opportunity to develop their primary language skills, realized a growth in their English reading skills that was greater than that of the norming population used in this study. If sustained, in time these students would be expected to catch up and approximate the average achievement level of this norming population.[74]

These findings support Martin's contention that any bilingual program should be late-exit, with students developing literacy abilities through Inuit language of instruction with gradual transition to English LOI over time. In his 2002 study of language use in three Baffin Island communities – the region where Inuktitut is strongest – linguist Louis-Jacques Dorais demonstrates how Inuktitut reading and writing ability rapidly diminishes after Grade 4. To take a small sample from Igloolik as an example:

- 100 per cent (4/4) of children in Grade 1-3 were more at ease reading and writing in their first language – Inuktitut – than English.
- In Grade 4-6, 58 per cent (7/12) of children were more at ease reading and 66.5 per cent (8/12) at writing in English.
- By Grade 10-12, 70 per cent (7/10) of surveyed Igloolik students reported greater ease in reading and writing in English.[75]

Similar results in Kimmirut and Iqaluit support the conclusion that formal education as it is now administered in Nunavut is detrimental to literacy as a whole. The absence of standardized benchmark assessments in Nunavut schools and

quantitative data since 2001 makes empirical English or Inuit language literacy assessment impossible, but with just 25.6 per cent of Nunavut high school students graduating in the 2002/03 academic year, and probably even fewer Inuit, high literacy rates in either Inuktitut or English are not likely.[76] In 2003, the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey tested more than 23,000 Canadians for English or French language proficiency in four domains: prose, literacy, document literacy, numeracy and problem-solving, with proficiency rated on the basis of levels one to five with one being lowest. In Nunavut, 88 per cent of Inuit scored below Level 3 on the prose literacy scale, "The desired threshold for coping with the increasing skill demands of a knowledge society."[77] This compared with 45 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population of Manitoba, and 39 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population of Saskatchewan.[78] If Inuit are not gaining literacy skills in English, the dominant language of instruction within the education system, then literacy is certainly not being developed in the Inuit language.

The primary real-life outcome of the education system for Inuktitut language use is that, "Words and meanings that most individuals under thirty to thirty-five years of age have at their command for expressing contemporary life in a modern community are English, for the good reason that English is the language in which they were taught."[79] The gradual, intergenerational weakening of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun combined with the young age of Nunavut's population, an ever-increasing demand for Inuit language speaking teachers, and the abysmal high school graduation rate, create a perfect storm for continued language erosion.

In 2009/10, the GN anticipated total revenues of $1,256 billion in 2010/11, with over 90 per cent of GN revenues flowing from the federal government.[80] According to the 2009/10 GN budget, the last year in which these specific figures were available, the GN committed to making an $8.6 million preliminary investment to assist the implementation of the *Inuit Language Protection Act, Education Act* and the *Official Languages Act.*[81] Similarly, low financial commitment in the future may not be enough for the GN to meet its legal obligations under the terms of the current legislation. In 2006, Thomas R. Berger was appointed conciliator by the INAC minister in order to provide a new approach for the successful implementation of NLCA Article 23 (Inuit employment in government. Article 23 requires the GN, "To increase Inuit participation in government employment in the Nunavut Settlement Area to a representative level," or 85 per cent of the workforce. As of Mar., 2010, Inuit filled only 39 per cent of total government positions, working primarily as paraprofessionals (19 per cent) or in administrative support (10 per cent).[82] In his *Conciliator's Final Report* on implementing Article 23, Berger singled out implementation of an Inuit language bilingual education program as prerequisite to improving educational outcomes for Inuit and for simultaneously raising the number of NLCA Beneficiaries employed by the GN. Berger cites the failure of the current education system, which produces students who, "Cannot function properly in either English (because they never catch up with the English curriculum) or Inuktitut (because they learn only an immature version of their first language before switching to English)."[83] This is what Berger's proposed bilingual education model would look like:

- Every community has an Inuktitut, head-start type pre-school program.
- Grade K-3: 100 per cent Inuktitut with option of one English as a second language class per day.
- Grade 4-8: Inuktitut used for main academic subjects and English used for two

classes per day with a focus on developing conversational skills.

- Grade9-12: Inuktitut and English used for academic subjects. Students take a minimum of one language arts class and one other subject in each language.

- Variations of this program in Inuinnaqtun speaking communities and mixed population centres such as Iqaluit that have a significant non-Inuit minority and no more than half Inuit residents speak Inuktitut at home.

- Exact distribution of subjects and languages vary; each community adapts the system to its own situation and needs.[84]

Berger approximates the near-term cost of implementing this model to be $20 million per annum for student services such as community career counselors, a student GN internship program, and expansion of the summer student program, in addition to which would be the actual negotiated cost associated with developing and administering K-12 bilingual education. Berger contends and this report agrees that K-12 bilingual Inuit language and English education cannot be successfully developed without Ottawa's financial support.

Bilingualism and the *Education Act*

The 2008 *Education Act* states that education will be delivered in the Inuit language and either English or French in all grades by the 2019/20 school year. Students who graduate from high school at that time, the legislation reads, will be bilingual and, "Able to use both languages competently in academic and other contexts." [85] There are different degrees of bilingualism and while not explicitly defined, the law ostensibly means full bilingualism. In full bilingual education programs, two languages are used as media of instruction for all subjects and students are able to develop all skills in both languages in all domains with the result that they are capable of thinking and expressing themselves in either of two languages independently.[86] However, no measures, procedures, or institutional reforms are proposed in the law that will insure that all students will receive such an education, nor is there certainty that such statements will be given the weight of an enforceable obligation to insure that Inuit language bilingualism is an option for all students ten years from now.

Section 8(1) of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* provides that, "Every parent whose child is enrolled in the education program in Nunavut, including a child for whom an individual education plan has been proposed or implemented, has the right to have his or her child receive Inuit Language instruction." [87] A precise quantitative and qualitative definition of Inuit language instruction is not offered, however. In a classroom context, LOI differs from language instruction in that in the former scenario, a language is the medium through which information is conveyed rather than the subject matter itself. The cloudiness of such terminology may have negative implications for the future efficacy of any future Inuit language education program. Furthermore, the wording contained in these laws implies that the entire education system will function in the Inuit language without describing where Inuit language speaking teachers will come from or how they will be educated and trained to teach complex subject matter for which new terminology must be created.

Scepticism has basis in the fact that parents, community members, and educators will have little control, input, or meaningful participation in the implementation of *Inuit Language Protection Act.* Instead, the following responsibilities are vested in the GN Department of Education:

- Design and enable the education program to produce secondary school graduates fully proficient in the Inuit language, in both its spoken and written forms.

- Development and implementation of language competency targets and assessment measures.

- Develop and use measures of assessment, and maintain records concerning individual attainment and education program outcomes overall, in relation to the competency targets.

As this report has shown, language competency varies between communities and regions. Central oversight for Nunavut's 25 communities would be awkward and haphazard at best and disastrous at worst. Part 3 (School Program) of the *Eduction Act* bestows the minister of Education with complete responsibility for establishing the school curriculum, as well as the power to impose and enforce teaching standards through principal oversight. A district education authority may establish local programs modifying the curriculum, including additional or alternative courses and changes that, "Reflect the local dialect or local culture."[88] The minister must approve curriculum modifications and local programs, however, as do local teaching and learning materials.

By contrast, Section 168(1) of the *Education Act* defers these powers of the minister of Education to the director general of the *Commission scolaire francophone,* giving the francophone community separate and full control of their own education system. The act effectively creates a two-tiered, ethnically divided education system in which Inuit interests are treated as subordinate to those of the French community by virtue of the fact that the francophone community has exclusive control over French education while the Inuit community has no control.

By Emily Joanasie

Miriam Aglukkaq (right) and Winnie Owingayak gathered with other Elders in Clyde River for the grand opening of Piqqusilirivvik.

Responsibility for Inuit language education therefore rests squarely with the minister of Education of a public government that has never fulfilled promises to strengthen and promote the Inuit language since 1999. A monopoly of power therefore rests in the office of the minister of Education, whose control over the important functions of the education system ultimately compromises meaningful Inuit participation.

As of Mar., 2010, Inuit occupied only 2 of 18 (11.1 per cent) senior management positions and 31 of 110 (28 per cent) middle management positions within the Department of Education. Furthermore, only 139 of 544 (25 per cent) teachers in Nunavut were Inuit in 2009.[89] A majority of educators and Department of Education staff are therefore non-Inuit, presumably from southern Canada, who, as significant turnover rates strongly imply, very likely have little understanding of or interaction with Inuit culture, language, and society. It is these same individuals, in accordance with the 2008 *Education Act,* who are entrusted to make decisions about Inuit language education in Inuit communities.

In 2002, linguist Louis-Jacques Dorais argued that, "Bilingual education programs require community involvement to be successful,"[90] in reaction to Bill 1 – the first and ultimately rejected year 2000 version of the education act. The 2008 *Education Act* retained the same top-heavy ministerial powers and oversight criticized by Dorais, NTI, and other education stakeholders at the time. As in the decades leading up to the creation of Nunavut, non-Inuit currently control the education system, a fact that may be of great cost to Inuit language, culture, and student achievement in the coming years. Consolidation of such decision-making power is aberrant within the context of North American Aboriginal education, which in the last several decades, has trended toward greater Aboriginal community-based involvement and decision-making power as a matter of social and cultural equity and acknowledgement of Aboriginal Peoples' human right to cultural self-determination. The Assembly of First Nations has issued a National Call to Action on Education, grounded in the firm belief of First Nations control of First Nations education,[91] and the Province of British Columbia is in the process of transferring jurisdiction over K-12 education on-reserve to B.C. First Nations.[92]

Mahé v. Alberta

Ministerial oversight runs contrary to traditional Inuit consensus-based decision-making (as practiced in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly, among other places), as well as national Canadian education best practice. Nunavut is the only Canadian jurisdiction in which locally-elected school boards do not have quality control over the delivery of education through measures which may include curriculum development, teacher and principal hiring and firing, and the development of community-based programs. The outcome of the 1990 *Mahé v. Alberta* Supreme Court case is instructive. Respective of Section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,* the parents of approximately 3,750 French first-language children in the Edmonton metropolitan area (3 per cent of total school age children) were denied control of their own French school but guaranteed representation and special powers on an existing school board in order to help preserve and promote the French language and culture in accordance with federal law.[93] The case has relevance in Nunavut where, as already described, minimum parental control exists within a context in which language use is rapidly declining. Parents and communities need ownership of education initiatives if they are to be meaningful, effective, and most of all, accountable. Through its ruling, the Supreme Court of Canada has acknowledged that a modicum of guaranteed,

community-level control of the education system is required to safeguard the French language and culture for a tiny minority of stakeholders.

It therefore behooves Inuit in Nunavut to expect similar consideration from the GN, where Inuit constitute an 85 per cent ethnic and cultural majority but have fewer rights and economic resources available for cultural sustainability than our francophone and anglophone counterparts. The North Slope Borough School District in Alaska is similarly challenged to include its eight communities in the education planning process and delivery of community-based, culturally relevant programs. Drawing on an emerging body of scholarship documenting the effectiveness of culturally relevant education, the district is currently initiating reforms that will place greater emphasis on the richness of local knowledge in developing curricula in addition to professional development opportunities introducing teachers to culturally appropriate teaching methods, the history of the North Slope region, and the contemporary challenges facing Iñupiat communities. Between 2010-15, reforms will focus on development of culturally relevant curricula and the backwards learning teaching method, which encourages student learning through immediate community-based application of knowledge and concepts. The school district acknowledges that community control of and participation in the education of Inuit students and culturally relevant curricula and pedagogy are essential ingredients to a more equitable education system that is conducive to cultural continuity and Iñupiat self-determination. With only a small percentage of Inuit teachers and a high rate of teacher turnover, the district is concentrating its efforts on immediate educational reform as part of its long-term strategy to increase local hire. The district believes that an education system that is more viable and thus more engaging to students will attract greater numbers of Inuit to the profession. In the words of the North Slope Borough School District Iñupiaq Education Department:

> How communities define success, how and what it means to live well, and what knowledge and skills are essential for cultural continuity are issues of increasing concern within North Slope communities that must play a greater role in the education planning of the schools that serve them. As Iñupiat, we have successfully educated our children for millennia by teaching them the values and skills needed to maintain a distinct, self-reliant society, however greater partnership is needed between communities and schools in order to effectively combat the growing acculturative pressures within our communities and homes that threaten the survival of our culture and identity.[94]

Teacher capacity, not to mention delivery of high quality, community-based education is also a major hurdle in Nunavut. Nunavut Arctic College's NTEP has produced 224 Inuit teachers in its 30 years of existence, a proportion of whom – because of their qualifications and social promotion – are attracted to higher paying jobs within Inuit organizations and government.[95] The majority of NTEP graduates lack the qualifications needed to teach at the high school level and not all graduates speak Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun. The small dispersal of Inuit language speaking teachers therefore poses an enormous challenge to bilingual education, which will continue to compete with the GN and Inuit organizations for trained, Inuit language speaking staff members.

More problematic still, Part 12 (Administration) Section 123(1) of the *Education Act* states: "The Minister shall ensure that the student-educator ratio for

each education district for a school year is lower than the most recently published national student-educator ratio," after July 1, 2011, the date that the regulation comes into force. The legislation reads that, "Most recently published national student-educator ratio,"[96] means:

(a)The national student-educator ratio as set out in the report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program most recently published before the beginning of the school year; or

(b)Such a ratio as may be prescribed by the regulations.

According to the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program, between 1997/98 and 2004/05, the number of students per educator in Canada declined, with the student-educator ratio in public elementary-secondary schools falling from 16.6:1 to 15.9:1.[97] In 2004/05, Nunavut's student-educator ratio was slightly higher than the Canadian norm and was the fourth highest ratio in Canada, following British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario. Nunavut's population is the fastest growing in Canada. This means Nunavut will need more teachers if the proportion of students to educators is not less than the Canadian national average by July, 2011, while at the same time, the territory will need more Inuit language speaking teachers. At a time when Inuit language speaking educators are sorely needed and with relatively few Inuit language speaking educators graduating from NTEP, imposing student-teacher ratios in Nunavut will require importing educators from southern Canada.

This is largely an arbitrary policy decision. No comprehensive data from Nunavut suggests that reducing this ratio in Nunavut will lead to significant gains in Inuit student educational outcomes, but it may guarantee that bilingual Inuit language education remains unfeasible. The *Education Act* imposes one set of requirements that diminish the efficacy, spirit and intent of the law, which guarantees K-12 bilingual education in an environment based on Inuit societal values by the 2019/20 academic year while partially aligning the numerical determinants of educational success with those of Ottawa. The shortage of Inuit language speakers in Nunavut and the need for more teachers to meet Canadian norms are in conflict with one another under this law.

Inuit students leaving the education system are doing so for a number of complicated reasons, not least of which is the quality of education they receive and the way it is delivered in Inuit communities. The *Education Act* does not address the need for professional development courses addressing the unique cultural experiences, knowledge, and challenges that students bring to classrooms, the need for meaningful culturally responsive curricula and pedagogy, or the socioeconomic deficits in Inuit communities influencing poor educational outcomes. Addressing these issues is of paramount concern to Inuit. Imposition of stringent student-educator ratios would be an arbitrary decision at this crucial juncture, magnifying challenges to the successful implementation of the *Education Act.*

Part 2

Case Studies, Empowerment and Progress

As efforts are undertaken to strengthen the Inuit language in Nunavut, best practices from jurisdictions facing similar challenges should be considered for practical application. A majority of Inuit may speak the language but there are few opportunities available for its use and appreciation in modern contexts such as television, film, and literature. Organizations such as the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC) and Isuma Productions, Inc. have laid a promising groundwork for continued promotion of Inuit language and culture through media, however much more can be done. For decades Inuit have witnessed the regressive effect English language television and other forms of media have had on language choice. As early as 1976, *Inuttituut* magazine (Television in the North) profiled community attitudes toward television in Baker Lake, three years after satellite transmission began in the North. Although individual reactions to television varied, the article's observations are significant:

> Where television programs are broadcast in the language of the local population there is no problem. Where another tongue is used, there lies danger. In the north, where Inuit children speak English in school most of the day, it is natural that they will watch television programs in English and that this will help them become fluent. It is also natural that parents will try to master English so they can better understand what they see. In many homes, the children get tired of having to use two different languages and insist on speaking English. Anxious parents, needing to communicate, find themselves also using English as the only way they can talk to their children...This situation exists today in parts of the Western Arctic. It can happen throughout the north unless parents take the lead, cherish their native tongue, and accept the responsibility of giving their children firm parental guidance.[98]

NIC's 1996 *Footprints* 2 document observed that, "A satisfactory and secure place for the Inuit language in Nunavut depends on weaving together a thoughtful, do-able and affordable combination of government, private sector and personal decisions and initiatives that address the use of the Inuit language in a wide range of relevant societal circumstances," including government offices, radio and television, and the home.[99] In addition to examining Nunavut's current language policy framework, this section focuses on some of these key societal language circumstances with reference to two countries in particular – New Zealand and Greenland – whose governments and Aboriginal populations and organizations are focused on raising the status and promoting the use of their respective languages in innovative ways. This section also examines how these projects are synchronized with the work of other institutions to produce optimal outcomes.

Te reo Māori is the Polynesian language spoken by Māori, the Indigenous Peoples of New Zealand. Kalaallisut is the name of the Inuit language dialect spoken by Inuit in western Greenland, where the vast majority

of that country's residents live. The Māori and Kalaallisut language situations differ significantly, and by comparison the Inuit language may be said to lie somewhere in the middle. Kalaallisut has been a written language for more than two centuries and is spoken by all age groups and supported within the home, formal education system, workplace, and within a variety of media. The Māori language, on the other hand, is in the midst of a revival after experiencing decades of severe erosion. The urgency and competency with which those efforts are being undertaken is remarkable, however accented as they are by a large degree of grassroots innovation. These two countries may therefore provide valuable guidance for policy makers in Nunavut, where enormous variance in language ability exists.

Greenland and Kalaallisut

Greenland has become well known in the Inuit world for language resilience. The country is a strikingly powerful example of a society that has largely succeeded at adapting the use of the Inuit language for modern contexts. Occupying the largest island in the world, Greenlanders (Kalaallit) negotiated expansion of self-governing powers within the Kingdom of Denmark in 2009 when 75 per cent of the population voted in favor of replacing Home Rule with Self Rule, conferring to Greenlanders the status of an autonomous people with the right to self-determination. With the new and exclusive right to natural resource development revenues, national independence will be an option when the country is able to double the $578 million Danish block grant that currently helps sustains it.[100]

Pursuant to the Greenland *Self Government Act,* Kalaallisut is the official medium of communication in Greenland, and a forthcoming language law will stipulate that all residents, whatever their origin, should speak it, provided this will not be detrimental to the rights of those whose principal language is Danish or another tongue.[101] In 2001, the Nunavut Office of the Languages Commissioner visited Greenland to gain a better understanding of language organizations, which the commission found to have obvious relevance because, "Language revitalization in Greenland has coincided with the development of self-government," which, "provides a wealth of experience for Nunavut to draw upon."[102]

In 2006, 89 per cent of Greenlanders were Inuit while 11 per cent were, "Danish or others."[103] In 2009, 56,194 people lived in Greenland,[104] and while more recent figures were unavailable for this report, as much as 97 per cent of the population spoke Kalaallisut in 1999.[105] Kalaallisut is therefore the language used most often in nearly all sectors of society by all age groups. Karen Lanngard, a professor within the University of Greenland's (Ilisimatusarfik) Department of Language, Literature and Media wrote in 2001 that, "Indeed for the time being the Greenlandic language is not in any acute danger at all, but it might soon encounter a new crisis simply because it has prevailed too much!"[106] The crisis referenced by Lanngard is, in her view, the challenge of consistently developing full bilingualism or in most cases trilingualism (Kalaallisut, Danish and English) for greater access to institutions of higher education.

The country's history and unique geopolitical circumstances have aided the development of a robust and impressively diverse Kalaallisut music scene, a publishing house that produces and translates domestic and foreign literature and learning materials into

Kalaallisut, and a television station featuring local programming, described in further detail below.

Kalaallisut has a relatively long history as a written language, which combined with the unique geopolitical circumstances of the country, has allowed for its evolution and adaptation for modern contexts and uses. Isolation has aided the maintenance of Kalaallisut. Early Danish authorities saw modernization of existing cultural expression and language in particular as key to maintaining Greenlanders' sense of identity and self-confidence, and as the means of participation in religious, political, and social affairs. Danish authorities did not always act out of benevolence, however. In Greenland, Danish authorities historically promoted the use of Kalaallisut and other cultural activities because they saw linguistic vitality as an isolating agent and therefore conducive to Denmark's lone economic exploitation of the island's people and natural resources.

In 1760, Lutheran minister Poul Egede published the first Greenlandic grammar, which was followed by a translation of the New Testament six years later.[107] By 1871, Greenland-born Moravian priest Samuel Kleinshmidt developed a standard Kalaallisut orthography which he used in the dictionary he published that year. It was roman orthography and remained in use until its reform in 1973. Because the western Greenlandic dialect stands as Greenland's official language, the reformed orthography and dialect are compulsory throughout the country, although local dialects are spoken.[108]

Since the founding of the *Atuagagdliutit* national magazine by Greenlanders in 1861, Kalaallisut has been widely appreciated as a modern, written language on the island. The magazine was apparently published annually in its first years and featured news and sociopolitical commentary, and in its first decade of publication, 80 per cent of content featured translated, popular European fiction such as Robinson Crusoe, Arabian Nights, Aladdin, and Robin Hood.[109]

By the middle of the 19th century, Danish missionaries had established a still existing teachers' college (Ilinniarfissuaq) in Nuuk to educate Greenlandic catechists and ministers, who in their capacity as literate, Kalaallisut speakers speeded the spread of Christianity and Kalaallisut literacy. In 1905, a rule stipulated that teaching should be conducted in Kalaallisut in elementary schools as well as at Nuuk's teacher training college, with Danish being introduced as a subject matter in 1925. By 1950, an education act allowed Danish to be used as a teaching medium for subjects such as geography, science, and mathematics.[110]

The use of Danish gradually increased with modernization and the induction of Greenland as a Danish territory in 1953. The Danification of Greenland eventually reached its tipping point in the 1970s, however, when Greenlanders sought greater political and cultural autonomy from Denmark, resulting in the establishment of the Greenland Home Rule government in 1979.

Inerisaavik and the Greenlandic Education System

In 1991, the Greenland Home Rule Government established Inerisaavik (Center for Pedagogical Development and In-service Training of Teachers) pursuant to the 1990 *School Act*.[111] The organization is research-oriented, has a five-member staff, and is governed by the University of

Greenland. Inerisaavik could be described as the official consultant for the Greenlandic education system, working closely with schools and teachers to provide the support desired by community members and delivering researched best practice recommendations in cases of academic shortcomings. Its main objectives are to contribute to the fulfillment of the *School Act*'s educational goals and to insure that teaching methods and practices will continue to develop in accordance with the development of society through:

- Development of educational methods to benefit the individual teacher and student.
- Implementation of developmental projects in the individual school.
- Development and testing of new educational material.
- Development of curricula.
- Preparation of educational guides for the various public school subjects.
- Coordination, planning, implementation and evaluation of in-service courses and further training for all educators and administrators in the public school system.[112]

According to Jens Jakobsen, director of Inerisaavik, the organization receives approximately $9 million annually from the Greenland government to carry out its mandate, about $1.7 million of which is used to produce a minimum of 70 articles of teaching material in both Kalaallisut and Danish each year.[113] Especially capable teachers may be approached to assist in this work. The Greenland Home Rule government initiated a school reform called Atuarfitsialak (the good school) that has been gradually phased in since 2003. Among other things, the reformed Greenlandic education system stresses school and teacher accountability, benchmark student assessment through standardized testing, and more stringent requirements for Kalaallisut language use. The organization works closely with schools, teachers, and community members to develop curricula, and acts as a soundboard for students' desires for changes in the delivery of education.

In order to accommodate teachers who are adapting to the new school reform, Inerisaavik has a budget to provide additional training through the University of Greenland. In recent years, the number of teachers born in Greenland has grown considerably while the number Danish teachers shrank. In 1998/99, there were 533 Greenlandic and 206 Danish teachers (32 Greenlandic and 30 Danish school principals). In 2007/08, there were 696 Greenlandic and 162 Danish teachers (46 Greenlandic and 13 Danish school principals).[114] According to Jakobsen, the number of Kalaallisut speaking teachers has risen in the public education system largely because teachers are paid well (on average, approximately $57,600) and are provided with further post-secondary school opportunities. In the past (as is currently the case in Nunavut), teachers were lured away from teaching positions by higher paying jobs.

Inerisaavik has worked with teachers to develop standardized tests administered in grades 3, 7, and 10. In Grade 3, students are tested for Kalaallisut and Danish comprehension, reading and writing ability and math. In Grade 7, students are tested for Kalaallisut, Danish, and English comprehension, reading and writing ability, and math. In Grade 10, students take a comprehensive test covering all subject areas. Prior to Atuarfitsialak, students were given a single test covering all subject areas in Grade 11.

Kalaallisut and Danish language streams do not exist: students are taught in Kalaallisut regardless of what their first language is.

The purpose of incremental standardized testing is to keep track of what stage of

development students are at in their learning so that schools can address weak subject areas immediately through extra courses or programs designed to help students catch up. If test results show weakness in certain subject areas, Inerisaavik can meet with students, teachers and principals to locate problems and recommend solutions in the form of written reports. Local school districts governed by school boards retain the power to hire and fire teachers throughout this process.

The number of hours of Kalaallisut language of instruction in the classroom is strictly regulated by the Greenland Self Rule government in cooperation with the University of Greenland and Inerisaavik. In Grade 1-3, schools must provide 700 hours of Kalaallisut instruction in all subject areas every year. Hours of required Kalaallisut language of instruction gradually increases in subsequent years:

- Grade 4-5: 920 hours per year.
- Grade 6-7: 970 hours per year.
- Grade 8: 980 hours per year.
- Grade 9: 910 hours per year.
- Grade 10: 920 hours per year.

The GN opted out of administering compulsory, cumulative standardized testing for all subjects in 2001 because the prescribed curriculum and tests were considered culturally irrelevant. Without accurate, incremental measurements of student progress, teachers and principals cannot be held accountable, with the result that this choice has helped insure low level student performance. The absence of alternative, culturally legitimate tests since 2001 virtually guarantees Inuit in Nunavut will remain among the least educated and therefore poorest, unhealthiest and socially dysfunctional demographics in North America.

The Urgent Need for Published Materials

As observed by the Nunavut Literacy Council, bilingual skills are dynamic, and as with any other skill, "Practice leads to improvement and lack of use leads to attrition."[115] The near total absence of interesting reading material printed in the Inuit language in Nunavut makes promotion of use prohibitive. In order to affect language choice, it is vital that stakeholders are able to access a wide-range of written material for classroom use and personal enjoyment. During the second half of the last century, southern educators treated Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun as primitive, powerless forms of communication impeding cognitive development and standing in the way of cultural assimilation. Similarly, the shortage of printed materials in Nunavut may reinforce the view that Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun do not have utility or relevance in everyday settings, especially from the perspective of young speakers who are constantly bombarded by English language media and popular culture. Nunavut's young population desperately needs entertaining, instructive reading materials written in the Inuit language with which to complement literacy in and outside of the classroom.

The Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) has worked diligently with the non-profit Nunavut Bilingual Education Society (NBES) and Inhabit Media, Inc. to produce at least eight publications. The GN has contributed funding for at least two of these publications. Founded in 2006 as a commercial publishing house in order to access funding not available to NBES, the organization has produced 12 publications total which include:

- *Kaakuluk* and *Pivut* magazines for children, in their third and second issues respectively, focusing primarily on the natural environment and related oral history.

- *Siku*, a beautifully illustrated comic book for adolescents featuring terrifying creatures and adventurous Inuit heroines rendered from oral histories.

- *Taiksumani: Inuit Myths and Legends*, a similarly fascinating, illustrated chronicle of legendary Arctic monsters interpreted from oral histories.

- *Unikkaaqtuat Qikiqtaniingaaqtut: Traditional Stories from the Qikiqtani Region,* a book for adolescents in its first volume with a focus on Arctic Bay and Igloolik.

All publications are printed in English and Inuktitut syllabics. According to Neil Christopher, president of NBES and Inhabit Media Inc., the largest barrier to publishing in Nunavut is the absence of guaranteed annual funding. In addition to bringing new projects to print, the organization must scramble to procure funds for developing projects. According to Christopher, the organization's publications have been embraced, and he claims to have been contacted by Inuit interested in selling their manuscripts.[116] NBES brought approximately 20 new publications to print in 2010. It is difficult to determine the extent to which these materials are being utilized or whether their rich, albeit Arctic-only themes are appreciated. Until a comprehensive language attitudes survey is conducted, efforts to determine what kinds of materials Inuit would most enjoy will remain purely speculative.

Responsibility for the promotion of the Inuit language, including print media, rests with the minister of languages in accordance with *Inuit Language protection Act.* However, the allocation of funding for Inuit language publishers is not mentioned. Section 25(1) (Official Languages Promotion Fund) of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* may provide a future source of funding for publishers, but because the fund is aimed at, "Recognizing and advancing the equal status, rights and privileges," of French and English as well, it may not provide the viable funding streams needed.[117]

It is not a coincidence that the Inuit language is strongest in Greenland, where written materials are diverse and abundant, ranging from domestic titles to translated literature. All books, including school learning materials, are published in the western Greenlandic dialect of Kalaallisut, despite the fact that several dialects of Kalaallisut are spoken. In 2007, 120 books were published in Greenland, more than half (75) of which were educational books.[118] Attuakkiorfik is Greenland's oldest publishing house and has been publishing books in Kalaallisut since 1959. Manuscripts by Greenlandic authors are purchased on an annual basis by the government-funded organization from across the country, which in 2001, reported publishing 75 new learning titles and 30-40 articles of diverse, general interest material every year. There are other publishing houses in Greenland as well, such as Atuagkat – the largest – and Milik, a small, independent publishing house established in 2003. All publications are printed in Kalaallisut – the western Greenlandic dialect of the Inuit language.

The te reo Māori Renaissance in New Zealand

Māori are the Indigenous Peoples of New Zealand, who in 2006 numbered 565,326 (of a national population of about four million), nearly a quarter of whom report degrees of te reo Māori (the Māori language) ability.[119] Māori have succeeded in arresting the rapid loss of their language through the vigilant, grassroots efforts of Māori groups and communities. With the

support of the New Zealand government, Māori efforts have focused on raising the status of the Māori language within society as a precursor to affecting language choices. Using attitudinal surveys as reference points, Māori have developed a wide array of language supports that focus on radio and television broadcasting, language in the work place, and the education system. While still a work in progress, Māori have seen favorable outcomes as a result of their efforts within a relatively short amount of time. Although significant differences in context exist, many of the strategies currently in place for Māori language revitalization in New Zealand are suitable for potential application in Nunavut.

Māori Aboriginal rights flow from the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand's founding document and contract between the British Crown and about 540 Māori rangatira (chiefs) who agreed to partner with the British in nation building. The treaty was not meaningfully honored until the 1970s, however, but has since become – among other things – the basis for the Māori language's official national language status. As in Greenland, a form of standard Māori occurred as early as 1827 when the first Māori language scriptures were printed, functioning as the main source of written Māori language for over a decade. These scriptures were followed (from 1840s onward) with Māori newspapers, political and social musings by commentators and academics of the period.[120]

In the 1880s, English speaking colonial authorities banned the teaching or use of te reo Māori in Native schools, arguing that it was an impediment to, "National progress."[121] Although the language continued to be nurtured in the home for the next half-century, it was dealt a near fatal blow during and after World War II when many Māori relocated to urban cities. By the 1980s, less than 20 per cent of Māori knew enough te reo to be regarded as Native speakers.[122] The 1970s and 1980s saw a major resurgence of interest in the Māori language, however, which young, urban Māori activists succeeded in promoting as a fundamental right foundational to cultural identity and pride.

Māori language revitalization was largely driven by the Kōhanga Reo movement, a grassroots network of Māori language nests for preschool age children introduced by New Zealand's Ministry of Māori Affairs in 1982. With a focus on providing infants with a strong base of Māori language, language nests sprung up in community centres, church halls, and schools. They were instrumental in paving the way for primary school immersion programs and culturally responsive education opportunities, and continue to act as important sites for community and parent second language learning. The Kōhanga Reo movement nurtured a generation of bilingual Māori speakers, with alumni numbers estimated today at 60,000. In 1995, there were 800 Kōhanga Reo across New Zealand, catering to 14,000 children, and in 2008, one-quarter of all Māori children enrolled in early childhood programs were in Kōhanga Reo.[123]

In 1987, with passage of the Māori Language Act, te reo Māori became an official language of New Zealand, establishing a firm foundation for financial support. While only 23 per cent of Māori out of a total population of 565,326 reported being able to speak the language in 2006, the language has seen relatively significant gains.[124] According to the Ministry of Māori Development's report on the health of the Māori language in 2006:[125]

- 51 per cent of Māori adults had some level of speaking proficiency, up nine percentage points from 2001, and 66 per cent had some degree of listening proficiency, up 8 percentage points from 2001.

- 30 per cent of Māori adults used the Māori language as a significant language of communication with their pre-school children. This is an increase from 18 per cent in 2001.

- Māori adults reported high levels of uptake of Māori radio and television. Some 85 per cent tuned into Māori radio, while 56 per cent watched Māori language programs on television.

The first Māori television program began broadcasting in 1980, and in 1983, Te Reo-o-Poneke, the first Māori-owned Māori-language radio station went to air.[126] The Māori Television Service was established by the *Māori Television Service Act* of 2003 and went to air in 2004 with a stated mandate to: (a) be a high quality, cost-effective television provider which informs, educates and entertains; (b) broadcast mainly in reo Māori; and (c) have regard to the needs of children participating in immersion education and all people learning Māori.[127] This channel's 54 shows are broadcast for approximately eight hours every day. In 2008, a second channel was launched featuring programming exclusively in the Māori language with the stated intent to, "Better meet the needs of fluent Māori speakers, Māori language learners and to enable New Zealanders to have full immersion Māori language households."[128] In addition to expanding opportunities for language acquisition and use, radio and television programming are utilized to introduce new Māori words, as well as to provide a quality standard for language use. In 2006, 95 per cent of Māori indicated support for Māori television and radio programming.[129]

The Māori Language Commission and Te Kete Ipurangi

The Māori Language Commission was established pursuant to passage of the *Māori Language Act* in 1987 in order to promote the use of Māori as a living language and as an ordinary means of communication.[130] Key functions of the commission include administration of Māori language proficiency examinations for public sector organizations and leading advisory services on language planning.

Since the late 1980s, the Government Māori Language Allowance Scheme has provided an economic incentive for public servants to improve their Māori language proficiency, which most government agencies support. The commission is responsible for assessing government employees under this scheme, however assessment is not compulsory and agencies are free to use alternative forms of assessment.[131] The commission has developed Māori language proficiency examinations in cooperation with local and international specialists in language and testing. These include a general Māori language knowledge test, a set of sector-related Māori language proficiency tests, and a proficiency test framework. The Level Finder Examination is a test of Māori language knowledge and provides candidates with an overall assessment of their general Māori language ability.

- The Public Sector Māori is designed specifically for candidates who use Māori language in the public sector workplace.

- The Teaching Sector Māori is designed to assess the language ability of candidates who use Māori in the teaching sector including: teachers; teacher aides; kaiārahi reo; lecturers; and principals at all levels of the education system.

The commission's testing framework identifies five progressive levels of Māori language proficiency and each sector-related proficiency test fits within one of these levels.

Similar comprehensive quality control measures are essential to success in Nunavut, where language use must meet rigorous standards that uphold the integrity of language and subject matter if it is to be

delivered within the education system. As the Māori Language Commission has acknowledged, organizations, schools and individuals can benefit from language assessments, which allow individuals to measure, monitor, and set goals for language development.

Easily Accessible Resources

The Māori Language Commission provides an impressive array of information about language support initiatives on its website. Information related to the importance of community, private and public sector language planning, suggestions for increasing language use in the home, Māori language orthographic conventions, the latest additions to the Māori lexicon, and the commission's quarterly *He Muka* Māori language newsletter are all available to Māori language stakeholders online. Additionally, information regarding opportunities for aspiring language learners and fluent speakers, Māori language television programming, links to Māori language resource websites, and resources for promoting positive attitudes toward the Māori language in the classroom and workplace are provided.

The New Zealand Ministry of Education provides additional resources for language teachers and learners through its Te Kete Ipurangi online learning centre. This website provides a broad index of Māori education resources for teacher and language stakeholder use, including Māori language and cultural curriculum and pedagogy, classroom Māori language activities, traditional stories, and a broad range of other digital resources. The online availability of these and other materials helps reduce printing and distribution costs, and their easy accessibility means teachers can be held to a greater level of accountability for providing Māori-medium education.

Standardization of the Māori orthography in the 1980s has not precluded the use of mutually intelligible tribal dialects, and tribes are encouraged to develop their own curriculum-based resources. Accordingly, requirements for Māori language publications in schools are focused more on the education, curriculum, cultural and language competencies of the writers and editors of this material.

The proactive, highly visible nature of the Māori Language Commission and New Zealand Ministry of Education stand in contrast with the two departments responsible for language issues in Nunavut. The Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut's website provides little information or resources encouraging the use of the Inuit language, nor does the commissioner suggest where to find such resources.

The website for the GN's Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth is similarly silent about language promotion efforts or the intent to create them. Furthermore, as the department responsible for administering Heritage-Canada allocations for Inuit language promotion, the absence of information regarding community projects currently underway may preclude meaningful cooperation between communities. This is not

Courtesy of Piqqusilirivvik

Lead instructor Eliyah Palituq of Clyde River prepares teaching materials.

consistent with the GN's *Tamapta* priorities, which promise that:

- Information transfer within and outside the Government of Nunavut will be seamless and transparent, by utilizing system architectures that deliver needed information efficiently.

- Beginning immediately, the Government of Nunavut will develop a comprehensive, coordinated, communications strategy that is responsive to the needs of all audiences.[132]

Perplexingly, and despite the Inuit language provisions of the *Education Act*, no resources are provided by the GN's Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth that might assist teachers in promoting positive attitudes and increased use of Inuit language in the classroom. If these responsibilities fall within the jurisdiction of the GN's Department of Education, it is not apparent.

The Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut's oversight is problematic for several reasons. In its official capacity as language ombudsmen, the office has adopted a passive posture. With the passage of Inuit language legislation in 2008, the underlying assumption is that Inuit will take full advantage of new, Inuit language protection and promotion provisions, which combined with a bilingual education system, will enhance or revive language use. By requiring businesses, Inuit organizations and government to operate in the Inuit language, the new language laws and the services they create will surely be of benefit to Inuit who already use the language consistently. However, without strong programming in place, creating new speaker domains for the Inuit language that influence attitudes about the versatility of its use – such as radio and television shows, magazines and translated literature – its relevance will remain fairly limited from the perspective of young people, and therefore increasingly at risk.

By Emily Joanasie

Becky Kilabuk (left) of Iqaluit and Sarah Janke of Cambridge Bay prepare to throat sing at the grand opening of Piqqusilirivvik.

The office's scope of responsibility, which includes oversight for French and English language rights, is too broad to be of meaningful service to Inuit language speakers. As the examples from New Zealand and Greenland demonstrate, a language commissioner has the potential to positively impact a number of different areas in concert with the efforts of other language stakeholders. The Inuit language is severely disadvantaged in comparison to English and French in terms of resources and opportunities for casual use consumption and must be resourced and nurtured in proportion to the unique challenges it faces for survival.

Making a Case for Media

The *Inuit Language Protection Act* makes clear statements mandating the establishment of Inuit language media under the direction of the minister of languages. With respect to media, Part 3 (Responsibilities of the Minister of Languages) of the legislation states that the minister shall develop policies and programs intended to promote:

(a)the increased production and use in all sectors of Nunavut society of linguistic expression using all kinds of media, in the Inuit Language.

(b)the identification and development of the content and methods or technologies for Inuit Language media distribution or access, that have the greatest potential to promote the use or revitalization of the Inuit Language, including print, film, television, radio, digital audio or video, interactive or any other media.[133]

CBC Radio provides extensive Inuit language radio coverage, transmitting approximately 11 hours a day of local programming in Nunavut during an average work week, about 70 per cent of which is Inuit language programming from Nunavut and Nunavik. Programs are not youth-oriented and with more popular and accessible forms of media such as the Internet and television available, radio is likely a less effective stage for influencing language shift than the latter two.

A 2009 feasibility study of possible Nunavut television distribution options for the GN's Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth by Telesat (the satellite service operator currently providing Nunavut communities with access to CBC and Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN)) examines the possibility of creating a new television channel in Nunavut called Inuit TV to facilitate more language programming. The study observes that:

> In 2009, there are well over one hundred channels and other content available to Nunavut residents along with Internet distributed programming, exerting an overwhelming pressure on Inuit language and culture. While some Inuktitut programming is being produced and carried on CBC and APTN, there is no continuum of daily Inuktitut language programming to counter the influence of southern TV and Internet video. The majority of Inuktitut language shows on APTN are versioned and not generally available in prime time or audience appropriate timeslots.[134]

Telesat determined that creation of a new regional television service would be a realistic and relatively inexpensive project that could generate economic development opportunities within communities if training were put in place to build capacity. Such a service would ideally be publicly funded, free of charge to users, and available in Nunavut's 25 communities. Under the scenario recommended by Telesat, the satellite carrier used by the Nunavut Legislative Assembly to broadcast its sessions would be modified to allow more data throughput, allowing the same satellite to be used for separate programming. Content would be broadcast on a separate dedicated channel from the assembly and transmitted to the community cable systems with additional shared bandwidth to

assure a good quality signal. Programming could be distributed in each community at the time and in the dialect desired, as is the practice with Legislative Assembly broadcasts. Most importantly, the Telesat study names several dozen potential content providers whose services and skills would be needed to operate a Nunavut television channel and recommends bringing stakeholders from the television industry and others together to discuss the concept. The Ajjiit Nunavut Media Association and IBC are currently planning to convene a discussion about the future of the Inuit TV concept in 2011.[135]

There are two notable organizations that provide Inuit language television services to significant audiences. The first is IBC, formed in 1981 to provide television programming created for and by Inuit in the Inuit language. IBC currently produces three hours of original Inuit language programming every week. Episodes from the corporation's five original shows are broadcast on APTN throughout the day and reach Nunavut communities via satellite. Shows range from the storied puppet children's show *Takuginai to Niqitsiat*, a cooking show featuring the preparation and cooking of Inuit traditional foods in innovative ways. With few exceptions, however, these programs air in the morning and early afternoon, reaching a smaller audience than is possible or desired by IBC. Furthermore, some evidence suggests programming may not be sufficiently engaging. Summarizing conversations with nine bilingual Inuit in Igloolik, Louis-Jacques Dorais wrote in 1995 that, "All bilingual respondents...preferred to watch English television, which they deemed much more interesting than the few weekly hours of Inuktitut programming."[136]

Interviewed for this report, IBC President Okalik Eegeesiak made it clear the organization is aware of its own shortcomings and cites competition with other APTN programming as one reason for reduced airtime. In Eegeesiak's view, funding is the only obstacle blocking implementation of the recommendations made in the Telesat report. "The report has been at the government table, or government desk, with CLEY and the Premier's office for over a year. It's possible – the infrastructure is there, we just need the money to do it. One of the recommendations that we made is that we create a steering committee...to see how it could be implemented."[137] Eegeesiak is optimistic that new language legislation has the potential to positively impact Inuit language media if it is matched by significant funding. The organization produces its programming with equipment that is more than two decades old. According to Eegeesiak, government has been slow to react to the needs of her organization: "We have a building proposal that has been at the GN for over a year. We have had some commitment from them, but not enough to trigger federal government funding."[138]

The second service is IsumaTV, a website launched in 2008 by Igloolik Isuma Productions featuring an independent, interactive network of Inuit and Indigenous multimedia from around the world. Content can be freely uploaded to the website by interested parties, which has resulted in an impressive range of quality Inuit language documentary films and television shows. Because the website is interactive, programs tend to be diverse and range from a documentary about homeless Inuit living in Montreal (*Qallunajatut*) to a Greenlandic variety show (*Sofa Aappalaartoq)* for young people. Unfortunately, the potential impact of this service for Inuit is limited by the size of files and the variability of high-speed Internet access in Arctic communities. Nevertheless, the volume and quality of material showcased on IsumaTV is promising, signifying remarkable potential and desire for more Inuit language television content in Nunavut. IsumaTV is supported in part by The GN's Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth's Grants and Contributions program, which supports projects that protect promote, protect or preserve the culture, language, arts and heritage of Nunavut.

In order for an Inuit language television service to be effective, a gallery of quality Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun programs would have to be developed for all age groups, similar to what has been accomplished in New Zealand and Greenland. Ideally, the target demographic of such programming would be the majority youth population. It is intuitive that in order to have the desired effect of encouraging language use, young people would have to play a major role in developing and starring in their own Inuit language programs. The highly fascinating NLCA *Staking the Claim* documentary, featuring four young Inuit on personal journeys to understand the sequence of events leading to Nunavut, is an example of the kind of modern, entertaining and educational Inuit language programming that could resonate with young Inuit.

If efforts are made to increase the quality and frequency of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun use through media, it is worth keeping in mind that a substantial amount of media experience is concentrated in nearby Nuuk, Greenland. The government administered KNR broadcasting corporation transmitted 2,455 hours of Kalallisut spoken broadcasts in 2006 (654 hours of Danish) and 265 hours of Kalallisut television programming (4,120 hours of other languages) the same year.[139] KNR's range of programing includes social affairs, youth programs, cultural material, entertainment, and domestic and international music and news. Domestic production in both the cultural and youth departments of television and radio mainly produce material in Greenlandic. Domestic production on both radio and TV are financed partly by TV advertisement earnings. This organization could be a potential partner for training, television content, and concept sharing.

Courtesy of Piqqusilirivvik

Piqqusilirivvik camping trip near Kugluktuk. (L-R) Darcy Havioyak, James Bolt, Katrina Hatogina and Julia Carpenter, Mar., 2011.

Part 3

Looking Toward the Future

Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit

In the past decade, three scenarios have been discussed more than others:

1. Orthographic standardization, in which the two orthographies in use are consolidated. This would involve phasing out one orthography – either syllabic or roman – in favor of the other. All dialects could be maintained in writing, but would all be represented using the same set of symbols.

2. Selection of a single dialect for publication. This scenario would require use of a single orthography to be cost-effective. It would be necessary to determine which stakeholders (government, Inuit organizations, the private sector, and private publishers, etc.) would be required to use the selected dialect.

3. Selection of a single dialect for publication as well as verbal communication in special circumstances, such as government delivery of services, public address, and delivery of education programs. This system would restrict the use of standard orthography, written and spoken dialect to certain domains without sacrificing community speech forms.

Section 15 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* established the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, the Inuit language authority, with a mandate to, "Expand knowledge and expertise with respect to the Inuit Language and make decisions about its use, development and standardization."[140] The authority's five members serve a three-year term and are appointed by cabinet. Appointees are selected from a list of public nominees. The authority's responsibilities are similar to Oqaasiliortut – the Greenland Language Council, and the Māori Language Commission in New Zealand. They include:

- Developing standard terminology and expressions for the Inuit language.
- Promoting the use of standard terminology and writing systems.
- Supporting businesses, government and other organizations in delivering quality services in the Inuit language.
- Establishing competency levels for writing and speaking the Inuit language.
- Documenting and preserving traditional terminology, dialects and expressions.
- Supporting research initiatives regarding the Inuit language and making research available to the public.
- Sharing information and cooperating with any organization in Nunavut or abroad, in order to strengthen the use of the Inuit language.

The authority's five appointees were selected from a list of more than 50 nominees in Nov., 2009. As of Mar, 2011, the authority has four full-time staff members and three vacancies. The authority's priorities are now focused on health, education, media and private sector

terminology, as well as standardization of the Inuit language to ensure effective communications across dialects, and development of competency levels in the Inuit language, and assessment tools.[141] New terminology developed for words that do not exist in the Inuit language will be distributed to the Nunavut private sector, government, and municipalities for distribution in public places, over the radio, through community television broadcasts, and on the authority's future website. Terminology will be standardized in the sense that certain words in use, such as government departments, will have uniformity within the government and private sectors. The authority held its first language standardization symposium during Nunavut's language week, Feb. 7-11, 2011.

The question of if and how to standardize the Inuit language as a whole is longstanding. With slight dialectical variation between communities within six dialect regions, it is generally accepted that compromises in the written and spoken language must be made if Inuktitut is to reach a wide audience. Rassi Nashalik, the host of the CBC News program *Igalaaq*, speaks the Pangnirtung dialect of Inuktitut, for example, despite the fact that viewers in the Canadian Arctic speak many dialects. Inuktitut material printed in syllabics, such as those produced by Inhabit Media, are printed in either the North Baffin or South Baffin dialects because that is where the Inuktitut translators for its publications are located. The same is true for government and Inuit organization publications.

Without a language standard, media and printed material in Nunavut thus reflect the dialect and language competency of those directly involved in producing or delivering materials and programs. This is not necessary problematic, as there is a high degree of understanding between dialect regions with minor differences in pronunciation and terminology. There is certainly more difference between Inuinnaqtun and the Inuktitut dialects, however to put dialect variance into perspective, skilled North Baffin and South Baffin translators were able to simultaneously translate an Inupiatun speaker's presentation at the 2010 Nunavut Language Summit, an Inuit language dialect spoken approximately 5,000 kilometres west of Iqaluit in northern Alaska.

If government documents and school materials were published in six dialects, it would be prohibitively expensive and generally unnecessary. With settlement, travel, and media, Inuit in Nunavut communities have had exposure to dialects other than their own for several decades and in some cases centuries, as speakers from different regions met and interacted. This point was raised by youth while discussing standardization at the 2010 Nunavut Language Summit, where one youth participant noted similar dialect exchanges taking place as a participant in the Nunavut Sivuniksavut post-secondary program in Ottawa:

> See, that's where compromises were made. Now compromises are not being made because there are small pockets of dialects that people want to preserve but we need to look at the big picture. An excellent example is NS. When we step back and we see what we have and what we don't have, and that's what we can accomplish with standardization.[142]

Individuals naturally prefer and cling to what is familiar to them. Nuances in speech patterns reflect where one is from and change is often seen as threatening. What this has meant in practical terms is that Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun language of instruction teachers have developed their own teaching materials in absence of an organization focusing on developing learning curriculum. If effective bilingual education is to be a realistic goal in Nunavut, development of education and supplementary reading materials must be robust, cost-effective, and streamlined. The

only realistic solution to delivering such materials while maintaining quality control is for government, the education system, and future publishers to choose a single dialect for use in printed materials. This would allow publication to be centralized and resourced accordingly, assuming the necessary infrastructure would be in place.

Two serious issues will have to be addressed before this process could begin, however. First, selection of a single dialect may put unrealistic strain on an already small translator base. Even if the dialect selected were one of the Qikiqtaaluk dialects, enormous investment would have to be made in training new translators and in publication, not to mention government employee language training in that dialect. Second, it is common for Inuit in Nunavut to use English as a bridging language when encountering speakers of another dialect and reading patterns tend to follow suit. Government and Inuit organizations must gain the perspectives of Inuit to understand under what condition Inuit language materials would most likely be accepted, consumed, and enjoyed. The success or failure of standardization thus depends on the way in which it is introduced, nurtured, promoted, and resourced.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Inuit language rights have ostensibly been formally acknowledged as inherent by the Canadian government with Ottawa's formal recognition of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on Nov.12, 2010.The declaration establishes important international standards for the treatment of Indigenous Peoples by extending specifically designated safeguards to areas of Indigenous life threatened by government policy. An INAC report states, "Canada reaffirms its commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples at home and abroad," and, "Reaffirms its commitment to build on a positive and productive relationship with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples to improve the well-being of Aboriginal Canadians, based on our shared history, respect, and a desire to move forward together."[143]

The declaration extends basic international human rights and fundamental freedoms to Indigenous Peoples, Article 13 of which states that, "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."[144] Article 14 declares that, "Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning."[145]

The declaration is a political tool Inuit and other Aboriginal Peoples in Canada can utilize to strengthen our position that the Canadian federal government played an active and deliberate role in silencing Aboriginal languages and thus has a responsibility to assist Aboriginal Peoples in reclaiming and strengthening them. Article 14 of the declaration lends weight to NTI's long-standing contention that Inuit community members, not a public government, should control education in Nunavut in keeping with international education best practices and newly recognized Indigenous human rights.

Conclusion

""The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the Aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper
Statement of Apology – to former students of Indian Residential Schools
June 2008

Few Canadian Aboriginal children speak their heritage language and if current trends continue, only a fraction of those who do will pass their language on to their children. Language shift and loss are certainly not inevitable nor has it ever been, but in Canada there is continued resistance to the notion that Aboriginal languages constitute vital contributions to the multicultural flavor of our country and deserve to be resourced to the extent needed to help insure longevity. On July 11, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada for the deliberate role residential schools played in Canada's program of attempted Aboriginal cultural extermination. "The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long," Harper said. "The burden is properly ours as a Government, and as a country. There is no place in Canada for the attitudes that inspired the Indian Residential Schools system to ever again prevail."[146] Yet the attitudes that inspired the Indian Residential Schools system continue to prevail, implicit in the absence of the full financial and political support Inuit and other Aboriginal Peoples need to begin reclaiming, revitalizing, sustaining, and promoting our diverse languages and strengthening our cultures.

Residential schools are responsible for introducing violent policies contributing to language shift in Inuit communities, and as the government responsible for those policies, the federal government has an ethical and moral responsibility to assist in supporting Inuit language initiatives in Nunavut. The Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established pursuant to the 2007 *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement* as a, "Positive step in forging a new relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians, a relationship based on the knowledge of our shared history, a respect for each other and a desire to move forward together with a renewed understanding that strong families, strong communities and vibrant cultures and traditions will contribute to a stronger Canada for all of us."[147] Part of truth and reconciliation for Inuit requires reclaiming and sustaining our threatened language, which at the present moment requires enormous investment in financial and human resources supporting language use at all levels of society. Vibrant Aboriginal cultures and traditions have historically been and continue to be oppressed in Canada as a result of egregious policy decisions in Ottawa and Iqaluit, and part of any meaningful reconciliation process must involve working with Inuit and other Aboriginal groups to address the social and cultural disparities resulting from centuries of overt colonization and oppression.

The outlook of this report is grim for justifiable reasons. The linguistic crisis in which Inuit in Nunavut find ourselves is being experienced by virtually all Aboriginal Peoples on the North American continent. In the overwhelming majority of cases where Indigenous languages are still

spoken, language shift is occurring and most Aboriginal languages in Canada have already become or are on the verge of extinction. Nunavut and Nunavik are the last strongholds in Canada for the Inuit language, which has suffered severe erosion in the Inuvialuit and Nunatsiavut regions. The erosion of the Inuit language is therefore not unique, and the experiences of Inuit and other Aboriginal Peoples with language loss can teach us a great deal, especially with regard to the sense of urgency needed to make important personal and policy decisions within a small timeframe in order to strengthen Inuktitut and completely revitalize Inuinnaqtun. Canada has the potential to become a world leader in supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal Peoples. Settlement of the NLCA in 1993 and the creation of Nunavut in 1999 were first steps in the ongoing process of Inuit self-determination and cultural renewal that Ottawa can, and in many cases, is obligated through the NLCA, to support.

There are few language revitalization success stories and while each case is different, policy and financial resources alone have never reversed language shift in an Aboriginal community. Language is not just a government responsibility: it is everybody's responsibility. In Nunavut, the Inuit language has reached a tipping point as then language spoken most often in the home and the nuances and richness of the language are weakening. In anthropologist Shelley Tulloch's words:

> Outside of the Kitikmeot region, most children are still learning to understand and speak the Inuit language 'very well or relatively well'. However, indicators from other regions suggest that action is needed now to build on and continue this strength, before any more Nunavummiut grow up without the opportunity to develop strong skills in their mother tongue and ancestral language.[148]

To borrow a metaphor from linguist Joshua A. Fishman, securing languages' place in the home, neighborhood and elementary school is equivalent to stopping the hemorrhaging of the main arteries of a dying hospital patient before addressing other injuries.[149] If the intergenerational transfer of language ceases within the home, language revitalization, maintenance and promotion become exponentially more difficult and eventually irrelevant if first language speakers are not created.

Policies must diligently support the resurgence and use of Inuktitut within the home now, as well as the relearning and use of Inuinnaqtun, which necessarily means identifying the multi-varied factors that influence language use. A language survey administered by Nunavut's Regional Inuit Associations would provide the GN with a clearer picture of the language services and resources Inuit desire most. Such a survey would also provide an opportunity to seriously address the idea of dialectical and orthographical standardization in publications for the first time, an issue that may determine the future survival of Inuktitut.

Parents need assurance that the language they choose to use with their children will provide them with educational and professional opportunities in the future. Inuit organizations and the GN can work with language stakeholders and especially young people to develop a language strategy that is responsive to what community members identify as the factors influencing language choice in the home, in addition to directly or indirectly publishing learning resources. Inuit language literature and media are clearly needed to help advance literacy levels and provide outlets for language use and consumption. However, more specific data related to language choice must be ascertained in order to begin the long process of counterbalancing English.

Within democratic societies government constituencies consent to be governed by participating in the democratic process and are thereby responsible for identifying the priority areas of government. Inuit in Nunavut have consistently identified language as a priority area and requested extensive support from the GN and Ottawa in order to achieve our objectives. In the past decade, the GN and Government of Canada have not meaningfully addressed pervasive concerns related to language shift. As demonstrated, language shift was one of the major concerns leading to the political mobilization of Inuit in Canada and the eventual negotiation of the NLCA. The GN and NTI must play a larger role addressing those concerns, part of which must involve the GN working with Inuit to address the shortcomings of the *Education Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act.* As observed by Thomas R. Berger, "The success of Nunavut will ultimately be measured by the extent to which Inuit are able to participate in their own government and in the changing economic life of the Arctic."[150] Inuit participation in GN language planning has so far been non-existent, and it was only after bills dealing with language had become legislation that the GN initiated rounds of community consultations in the major dialect regions in 2009, culminating in the Nunavut Language Summit in 2010. In order to improve the social and cultural development of Inuit in Nunavut, the GN must revisit and strengthen key Inuit language-related legislation and policy by consulting with Inuit to a much greater degree. In doing so, the GN must recognize NTI as the constitutionally enshrined legal entity representing the interests of Inuit in Nunavut by fully incorporating NTI's social and cultural development policy recommendations into its work under NLCA Article 32.

Language issues are sensitive and personal, and Nunavummiut justifiably feel entitled to steer the course of any future policy directed at language. Nunavut was, after all, negotiated to secure decision-making power for Inuit in our own linguistic and cultural affairs. It is not possible to appease everybody, however, and Inuit must accept that in order to expedite and finance the proliferation of language resources, not all dialects will be represented all of the time. Without singling out a standard Inuktitut dialect for use in publications produced for all Inuktitut speaking communities, development and integration of materials is financially unsustainable and will continue to be produced at glacial speeds by a variety of organizations.

As in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region of the NT, Nunavik, and Nunatsiavut, the education system in Nunavut has not evolved far beyond its original purpose of assimilating Inuit into urban Canadian society, prerequisite to which was the eradication of language and identity. NS, hailed as Nunavut's most innovative and engaging education program, is located outside the boundaries of the territory and the GN's Department of Education has largely failed to implement culturally responsive curricula and pedagogy reflecting the culture and communities in which educators are present. The twinning of educational reform and the phasing-in of bilingual education should be part of a more holistic vision for Inuit education in Nunavut that is community-based and controlled, as well as culturally responsive.

Due to the forces of ongoing assimilation programs and the absence of adequate federal, provincial, and territorial support and resources, language loss and cultural erosion is the price Inuit and other Aboriginal Peoples are paying for Canadian citizenship. Inuit society has become inundated by English language, and it remains impractical to speak Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun at school, in most workplace settings, or in many private business establishments. If the Inuit language is adequately resourced by Inuit organizations, the GN and the Government of Canada in the ways suggested by this report, it will be possible to stabilize the Inuit language in Nunavut and eventually see its resurgence in the coming years.

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