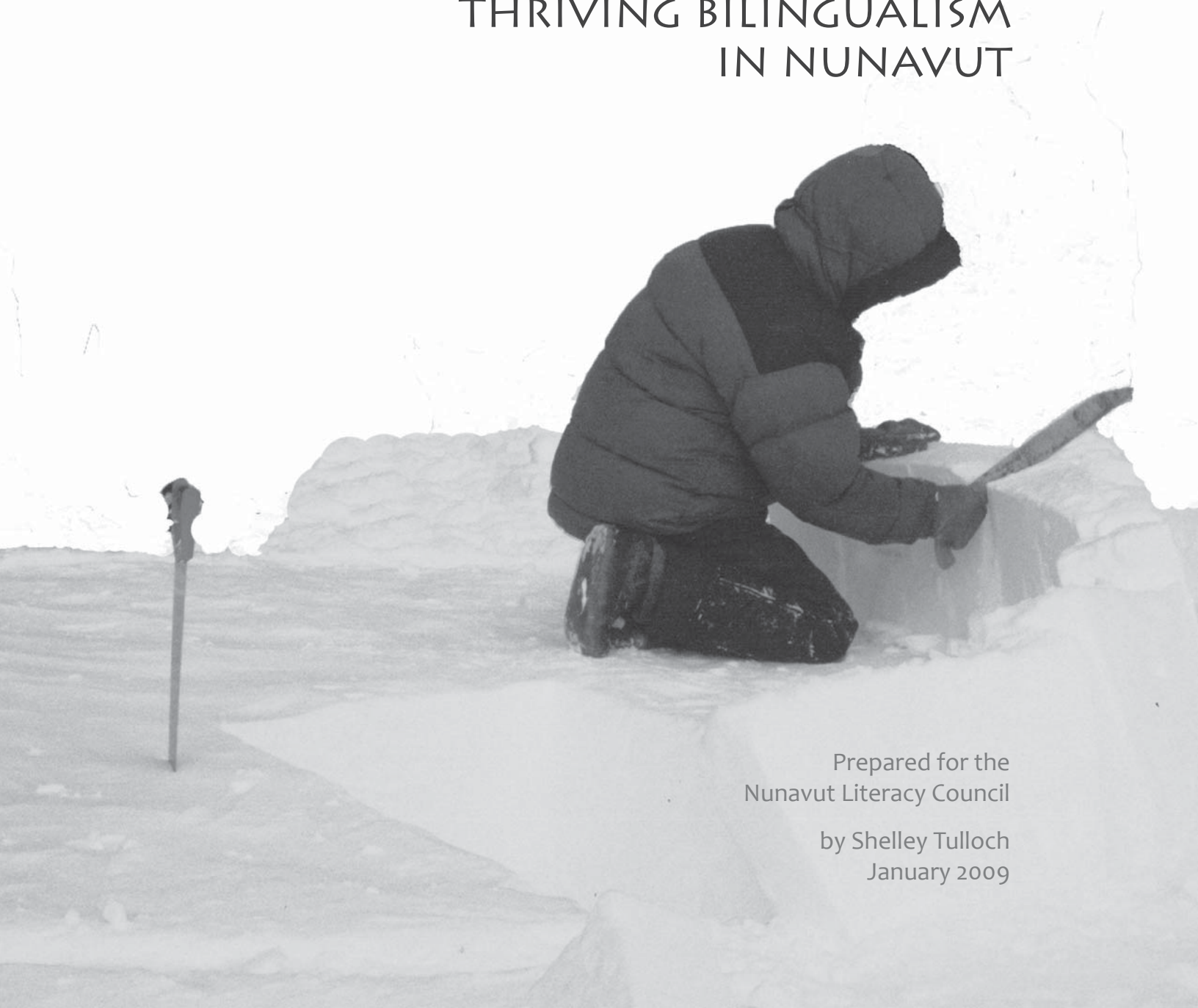


# BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

CONSIDERATIONS TO SUPPORT  
THRIVING BILINGUALISM  
IN NUNAVUT



Prepared for the  
Nunavut Literacy Council

by Shelley Tulloch  
January 2009



**BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION**

**CONSIDERATIONS TO SUPPORT THRIVING  
BILINGUALISM IN NUNAVUT**





Prepared for the Nunavut Literacy Council

by Shelley Tulloch

January 2009

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the



Human Resources and  
Social Development Canada

Ressources humaines et  
Développement social Canada

Social Development Partnership Program,  
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada



Santé  
Canada

Health  
Canada

Northern Region, Health Canada



Canadian Council on Learning

We would also like to thank the Inuit Language Role Models  
who participated in this research project

The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not  
necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper summarizes results from the Nunavut Literacy Council's literature review and field research on bilingual language development in Nunavut. It makes the links between current research, policy, and practice in Nunavut and, based on these, provides points of consideration for policy makers, programmers, and practitioners on how to develop a strong foundation for bilingualism in Nunavut.

Bilingualism in the Inuit language and English is conceptualized as a tool for accessing all opportunities available to Nunavummiut today. Knowledge and use of the Inuit language specifically will help achieve the well-being envisioned in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and Government of Nunavut mandates. As in any bilingual context, individuals and communities will acquire and exercise their two languages to varying degrees and in different ways. We suggest that to achieve stable bilingualism, the Inuit language must be put first. Thriving bilingualism will be achieved when:

- every Nunavummiuk has the opportunity to acquire basic and then advanced skills in both languages; and
- each individual can choose to use their preferred language in any context.

The current context in Nunavut is described as an unstable bilingualism, where both the Inuit language and English are widely learned and used, but where knowledge and use of English is surpassing that of the Inuit language, ultimately threatening shift from bilingualism in the Inuit language and English to English language monolingualism. This paper explores a few factors contributing to this dynamic: the history of language and literacy development in the North; governmental responses to the Inuit language; perceptions of “opportunities for “bilinguals””; tendencies to use English as the “default” language; impact (and limits) of parents’ language behaviour; the decreasing foundation of people’s oral language skills; and the urgent need for greater support for early learning with a particular focus on development of language and literacy skills.

Results from the Nunavut Literacy Council's field research are synthesized with other research results in Northern and/or bilingual contexts and analyzed in light of current policy development in Nunavut. In brief, we suggest:

- functional bilingualism is the goal in Nunavut

- functional bilingualism is achievable in Nunavut
- the Inuit language must be favoured in order to achieve functional bilingualism
- language development must be viewed holistically
- the development of advanced language skills in the mother tongue, i.e. the Inuit language, supports the development of advanced skills in another language, i.e. English
- the development of oral language skills (e.g. speaking and understanding) forms the basis for the development of literacy skills (e.g. reading and writing)
- the development of advanced oral skills forms the foundation for the development of advanced literacy skills.

The report highlights policy considerations derived directly from interviews with Inuit language “role models”. These considerations appear most promising based on analysis of the context in Nunavut and understandings of good practices in bilingual development.

The report concludes by outlining five potential programs of action in which the various actors contributing to bilingualism in the North could work together to put into action the policy recommendations identified throughout the paper. These include:

- dialect survey;
- mobilization of community-based language/literacy specialists;
- early childhood and adult language programs;
- elder/adult/youth literacy programs; and
- creative circles and production workshops.

These programs respond to what appear to be the most glaring gaps in current policy and practice. Each target enhances knowledge and use of the Inuit language, thus strengthening the foundation for enduring and functional bilingualism in Nunavut.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	v
Table of Contents.....	xi
Detailed Table of Contents.....	xiii
List of Tables .....	xiii
Summary of Recommendations .....	xv
Introduction .....	1
Section 1: Setting the Scene .....	7
Why the goal of bilingualism and biliteracy? .....	9
What is bilingualism and biliteracy? .....	15
Who is bilingualism and biliteracy for? .....	23
Section 2: Describing the Current “Problem” .....	27
Are Nunavummiut bilingual and biliterate? .....	29
What is contributing to the current state of bilingualism and biliteracy in the North? .....	43
Section 3: Describing the Solution .....	82
Who will participate in achieving bilingualism and biliteracy in Nunavut? .....	85
How can we work together? .....	97
Conclusion .....	113
References .....	115
Glossary .....	135
Appendix A – Parameters of literature review .....	141
Appendix B – Useful websites.....	143
Appendix C – Role models interview template.....	147
Appendix D – Nunavut Literacy Council definition of literacy .....	153
Appendix E – Sample list of contributions from international bodies relevant to sustaining bilingualism in Nunavut .....	155



## Detailed Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	v
Table of Contents.....	xi
Detailed Table of Contents.....	xiii
List of Tables .....	xiii
Summary of Recommendations .....	xv
Introduction .....	1
Section 1: Setting the Scene .....	7
Why the goal of bilingualism and biliteracy? .....	9
A Goal of the Nunavut Government.....	9
Community strength .....	10
A Goal congruent with Inuit language preservation.....	11
Individual strength .....	12
What is bilingualism and biliteracy? .....	15
Individual bilingualism vs. societal bilingualism .....	15
Bilingualism and biculturalism .....	15
Simultaneous vs. consecutive bilingualism.....	16
Bilingualism around the world .....	17
A “fully-functional” bilingual society in Nunavut .....	18
Who is bilingualism and biliteracy for? .....	23
Section 2: Describing the Current “Problem” .....	27
Are Nunavummiut bilingual and biliterate? .....	29
Inuit bilingualism and biliteracy.....	29
Qallunaat bilingualism and biliteracy .....	39
What is contributing to the current state of bilingualism and biliteracy in the North?43	
History of language and literacy development in the North.....	43
History of federal responses to the Inuit language .....	47
Context of Nunavut – Opportunities for “bilinguals”? .....	50

English as the “default” language .....	53
Impact of parents’ language behaviour.....	61
Lack of a language foundation to build on.....	64
Limits on what parents can do .....	65
Support beyond the home .....	72
Section 3: Describing the Solution .....	82
Who will participate in achieving bilingualism and biliteracy in Nunavut? .....	85
International bodies.....	85
International indigenous groups.....	86
Federal government and federal bodies .....	86
Territorial government, territorial bodies and leaders .....	87
Municipal governments/Hamlets .....	87
Inuit organizations .....	87
Workplaces .....	89
Formal education/schools/Nunavut Arctic College/teachers .....	89
Research bodies .....	90
Churches .....	91
Libraries .....	91
Authors, translators, artists, media producers.....	91
Grassroots or community-based language initiatives.....	92
Informal learning networks .....	93
How can we work together? .....	97
Role of policy, programming and practice .....	97
Dialect survey – Supporting Inuit in cross-dialectal communication .....	99
Mobilization of community-based language/literacy specialists .....	103
Early childhood and adult language programs.....	105
Elder/adult/youth literacy programs .....	107
Creative circles and production workshops .....	111
Conclusion .....	113

References .....	115
Glossary .....	135
Appendix A – Parameters of literature review .....	141
Appendix B – Useful websites.....	143
Appendix C – Role models interview template.....	147
Appendix D – Nunavut Literacy Council definition of literacy .....	153
Appendix E – Sample list of contributions from international bodies relevant to sustaining bilingualism in Nunavut .....	155



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Reported language skills of Inuit in Nunavut, by age range .....	34
Table 2: Adult Inuit language ability in Nunavut, by skill type and ability level.....	35
Table 3: Adult and child oral Inuit language ability and home use, by community.....	37





# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

## Setting Targets

- Recommendation 1:** Prioritize the Inuit language in all bilingual policy and programming. .... 13
- Recommendation 2:** Promote the value of bilingualism to all audiences. .... 13
- Recommendation 3:** Increase awareness among all audiences of the necessity of the Inuit language for achieving the well-being in Inuit communities envisioned by the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and Pinasuaqtavut. See also: Preamble, Official Languages Act (Nunavut 2008b). .... 14
- Recommendation 4:** Define “bilingualism”, for the purposes of bilingual bonuses in the Government of Nunavut, as knowledge and effective use of the Inuit language and one of the other official languages. .... 22
- Recommendation 5:** Develop policy and programming which recognizes bilingualism and biliteracy as a continuum of abilities and practices, shifting throughout lifetime, where skills in one area support and reinforce skills in another. .... 22
- Recommendation 6:** Recognize that all bilingual individuals’ skills are on a continuum. Avoid assuming that strong Inuit language skills need to be accompanied by equivalent or even moderate English language skills, especially among the older population. .... 22
- Recommendation 7:** Develop policy which sets minimum requirements for bilingualism as knowing enough of each language to understand when addressed in either language and be able to make others feel comfortable, to be welcoming. .... 22
- Recommendation 8:** Encourage learning the Inuit language to the highest levels. .... 22
- Recommendation 9:** Develop policy and programming which support acquisition and use of advanced language skills including: reading and writing; academic and computer-related uses (including typing); knowledge of specialized vocabulary (including place names and kin terms); understanding of various dialects within a single language; ability to translate between two languages; ability to stay in one language only when the situation calls for it (just the Inuit language, or just English); artistic uses (publication, visual art, storytelling, songs) .... 22

**Recommendation 10:** Explicitly state in policies of the Nunavut Government and Inuit organizations that bilingualism is for everyone in Nunavut..... 24

**Recommendation 11:** Develop and implement policy and programming to ensure, as a first step in a bilingual policy, at least receptive competence in the Inuit language. Particularly target children, youth and newcomers with such policies and programming..... 24

**Recommendation 12:** Recognize receptive skills as the foundation to productive skills, and basic skills as the foundation to advanced skills..... 24

**Recommendation 13:** Recognize the inherent value of all uses and varieties of the Inuit language (including ways of speaking specific to particular regions or specific groups of people, e.g. young people). Such recognition should come through explicit policies as well as awareness activities aimed at increasing tolerance and appreciation of variation in the Inuit language. (See also: Article 24.2(d), Inuit Language Protection Act and Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium (AILS 2008) Recommendations) ..... 78

## Creating Context

**Recommendation 14:** Develop policy and programming to facilitate cross-dialectal communication in the Inuit language. Such policy and programming may involve the introduction of an auxiliary standard form of the Inuit language or dialect awareness activities. See also: Arctic Languages Symposium Recommendations; Recommendations in “Preserving Dialects in Nunavut”. 78

**Recommendation 15:** Pay particular attention, in policy development in Nunavut, to create a context where both languages are valued, and where both languages are seen as part of accessing the best of all opportunities available to Nunavummiut. .... 78

**Recommendation 16:** Put in place policies and programming which help Nunavummiut to access opportunities for which the Inuit language is particularly valued..... 79

**Recommendation 17:** Create the expectation that the Inuit language should be used in any and all contexts in Nunavut..... 79

**Recommendation 18:** Develop strategies and mechanisms to create a context in which the Inuit language *may* be used in any context in Nunavut. .... 79

- Recommendation 19:** Develop policies and programs to support the Inuit language replacing English as the default language in certain contexts in Nunavut. .... 79
- Recommendation 20:** Continue to develop the Inuit language, and materials in it, so that it may be used in every context in Nunavut and so that exposure will increase (and thus opportunities for learning and use)..... 79
- Recommendation 21:** Implement programs, with sustained funding, to support creation of written materials in the Inuit language. .... 79
- Recommendation 22:** Support programs, with sustained funding, to increase creative production in the Inuit language. .... 79
- Recommendation 23:** Enforce hiring policies which give due recognition to knowledge and effective use of the Inuit language as a necessary skill for effectively serving an Inuit-language majority population. See also: Article 16, Inuit Language Protection Act ..... 79
- Recommendation 24:** Enforce hiring policies which stipulate that excellent Inuit language skills need not be accompanied by equivalent or even moderate English language skills in order for a candidate to be considered. See also: Article 16, Inuit Language Protection Act..... 79

## Supporting Learning

- Recommendation 25:** Increase awareness about language acquisition in a bilingual context. In particular, remind parents that their children *will* learn any language that (a) they are consistently exposed to *and* (b) they *need* to use in order to interact..... 79
- Recommendation 26:** Encourage parents to make their homes “Inuit-language-only” domains, to always speak the Inuit language to and around their children, and to encourage their children to speak back to them in the Inuit language..... 80
- Recommendation 27:** Support parents and families so that parents and children can spend more time together, including more time participating in subsistence activities..... 80
- Recommendation 28:** Establish programs which help parents help their children develop a strong oral foundation in the Inuit language..... 80
- Recommendation 29:** Provide parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators with tools to creatively use the Inuit language with children (e.g. songs,

games, books, etc. already under development by Nunavut Literacy Council, and training to create their own). See also: Article 9a and 9b, Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c)..... 80

**Recommendation 30:** Establish policies and programs to support young parents in particular in improving their Inuit language skills (e.g. master apprentice programs, learning circles, culture camps). See also: Article 10, Adult language acquisition and upgrading, in the Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c)..... 80

**Recommendation 31:** Provide parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators with tools to creatively use the Inuit language with children (e.g. songs, games, books, etc. already under development by Nunavut Literacy Council, and training to create their own). See also: Article 9a and 9b, Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c)..... 80

**Recommendation 32:** Create programs outside of the home – in early childhood education centres, daycares, libraries, schools – which help all children to acquire a strong oral foundation in the Inuit language. See also: Article 9 in the Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c)..... 80

**Recommendation 33:** Develop programming which allows all Nunavummiut to achieve the minimum standards of bilingualism for understanding and being welcoming/Establish mechanisms for language teaching and exposure to language use to facilitate the acquisition of at least receptive skills in the Inuit language for non-speakers..... 80

## INTRODUCTION

The Government of Nunavut's mandate is clear: "By 2020, Nunavut will be a place where [...] We are a fully functional bilingual society, in Inuktitut and English..." (Nunavut 2004:15). How bilingualism will be achieved, or even what is meant by "fully functional bilingualism" is not clearly laid out. Currently, most Inuit *do* speak (and, to some extent, read and write) the Inuit language and English, but many have not had the opportunity to acquire advanced skills in both languages. Although the Inuit language and English are both widely used throughout the communities, some fear that English is increasingly being favoured. The result is unstable bilingualism in most of Nunavut.

The Nunavut Literacy Council shares parts of the Government's mandate, in its aspiration to support Nunavummiut in developing strong, advanced language skills in whichever language they choose. Many Inuit wish to develop skills in both, but particularly look to the Council for support in developing Inuit language literacy.<sup>1</sup> Literacy is understood broadly, as incorporating a wide range of communicative skills:

Literacy is a skill that enables people to interpret and effectively respond to the world around them. Based upon language development from birth, it includes the ability to learn, communicate, read and write, pass on knowledge and participate actively in society. (Nunavut Literacy Council n.d.)<sup>2</sup>

The Nunavut Literacy Council thus works holistically with language, supporting both oral and written language development. Language and literacy are inextricably linked: the development of literacy skills is dependent upon a foundation of skill in oral language. In other words, generally a person must be able to *speak* a particular message before he or she will be able to write it down.

The relationship between language acquisition and literacy skill development is particularly complex in the dual language context of Nunavut. Research supports the idea that individuals will be most successful acquiring advanced language

---

<sup>1</sup> Possibly reflecting a sense that support for English language development is widely available, e.g. in schools, whereas support for Inuit language development is harder to come by.

<sup>2</sup> Literacy is defined in different ways, by different authors, for different purposes. This is entirely appropriate, as literacy is context-specific, acquired for particular needs. Bhola (1994: 34), writing for an international audience of community-based literacy programmers and practitioners, affirms: "Each literacy project, programme or campaign needs to... come up with its own particular definition of literacy in its particular setting."

skills, such as literacy, when they have the opportunity to do so first in their mother tongue, then in a second language. Concerns, then, that Inuit are not having the opportunity to acquire advanced oral skills in the Inuit language have direct implications for the achievement of Inuit language literacy, and for the establishment of stable, functional bilingualism in Nunavut.

The Nunavut Literacy Council thus undertook two extensive and broad-based research initiatives in 2005, with activities carrying through into 2007. The complementary projects, *Atatittiniq* and *Strengthening our Communities*, aimed at collecting and disseminating information that would contribute to a strong foundation for the development of “fully functional bilingualism”.<sup>3</sup> The team adopted four strategies to “make the links”:

- review of academic literature on language and literacy development;
- identification of promising practices in language and literacy programming;
- field research with Inuit language role models;<sup>4</sup> and
- workshops with those involved in language and literacy acquisition (especially in early childhood).

In these ways, the projects aimed to identify wisdom and promising practices both from within Nunavut and from other bilingual contexts with regard to effective language and literacy acquisition.

In the literature review and identification of promising practices, the team developed parameters to distinguish research and initiatives most relevant to the Nunavut context (recognizing that the indigenous language and literacy context even in Nunavut varies greatly depending on region and age).<sup>5</sup> The Nunavut Literacy Council focused on research where the two languages were being learned by children, either simultaneously or consecutively, and where either the ‘dominant’ language or the indigenous (in some cases, minority) language, or

---

<sup>3</sup> The *Atatittiniq* project, funded by the Canadian Population Health Initiative, targeted increased knowledge about the links between language acquisition and literacy development to create a solid base for program and policy development. The *Strengthening our Communities* project, funded by Social Development Canada, aimed to provide information, resources and training to build capacity of those developing language and literacy related programs and services.

<sup>4</sup> The Inuit language role models generously shared insights, experiences, and perspectives. When they are quoted throughout this paper, names are used, with permission, in recognition of the role models’ wise contributions.

<sup>5</sup> A list of parameters guiding the literature review is found in Appendix A.

both, were learned as the “first” language. They looked for instances where bilingualism is achieved and maintained when:

- bilingualism is occurring at the individual *and* the societal level;
- the mother tongue, or ancestral language, or its speakers, has been suppressed (even if local values attached to the language have been very positive);
- the second language, or “newcomer” language, is or has been the dominant language for socioeconomic advancement (including schooling).

The most applicable articles were those addressing language issues in indigenous communities; some literature of language maintenance in immigrant contexts was also considered. While the Nunavut Literacy Council read research on bilingual and biliterate development in two international languages (e.g. French and English, cf. Bourhis 2001, Bourhis and Landry 2008, Edwards 1996), caution was used in evaluating how transferable the results would be, due to highly different contextual factors. One of the outcomes of the work has been the compilation of a list of articles, books, websites, and other resources relating to language and literacy relevant to the Nunavut context (for list of websites, see Appendix B). Another outcome has been the rendering of some useful articles into everyday language, and posting them on the Nunavut Literacy Council website, making the research more accessible to programmers and policy developers.<sup>6</sup>

The literature review identified what researchers know about language acquisition and use in bilingual contexts such as Nunavut’s. Still, the Nunavut Literacy Council recognizes that a great deal of wisdom, understanding of what has happened and is now happening, and insights into what needs to be done, already exists in Nunavut communities. Inuit are looked to by indigenous people around the world as a success story in maintaining a strong indigenous language alongside English (cf. Nunavut, Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth 2008). The Nunavut Literacy Council recognized and drew on the strength of Inuit experience by incorporating radio call-in shows, interviews with language role models and workshops with community members working in language and literacy development (day care workers, librarians...) in the program of research. Through these, the Nunavut

---

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/research/research.htm>.

Literacy Council enhanced the literature review by adding what Inuit who are having success passing on the Inuit language to their children and grandchildren already know about bilingualism, and what they do to help those around them improve their language skills.

The field research was community-anchored and collaborative, with all team members contributing through the project design to communication of results. The team included Nunavut Literacy Council board members from communities across Nunavut (who facilitated travel and research in their home communities), Nunavut Literacy Council staff (including an Inuit elder), an external policy advisor and an external research advisor. The project corresponds to what Inuit have been saying they are looking for in Northern research (cf. Article 16, Inuit Language Protection Act, Nunavut 2008c; and Simons 2008), as it was conceived in the North, was led by Inuit researchers, and gave Inuit the chance to speak to other Inuit about their successes and their challenges in transmitting the language to the next generation.

The research questions were designed as a team, with efforts not to duplicate completed or ongoing sociolinguistic projects (e.g. Aylward 2004, 2006; Cooper 2006; Corson 2000; Dorais 2006; Dorais and Sammons 2002; Eriksson 1998; Hot 2008, Kuliktana 1998, Martin 2000; Tagalik 1998; Tompkins 2004, Tulloch 2004). The role models were identified, with the help of local Nunavut Literacy Council board members in Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, and Talurjuak,<sup>7</sup> based on the criteria of “a person, generally a parent, of any age who works to strengthen their own Inuit language skills and also encourages and assists other people in their community to do the same”.<sup>8</sup> They were asked questions about:

- their experiences learning and watching their children learn;
- how they conceptualize bilingualism (including associated skills, practices, and values);

---

<sup>7</sup> The Nunavut Literacy Council (NLC) had originally intended to include all three regions in the data collection. However, realizing that the Baffin region was already well-covered by recent sociolinguistic research (cf. Cooper 2006, Dorais 2006, Dorais and Sammons 2002, Eriksson 1998, Hot 2008, Tulloch 2004), and is more uniform in its maintenance of the Inuit language alongside English, the team limited its interviews to the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions. Results discussed in this paper incorporate others' work from the Baffin region with NLC results for a fuller picture of language experiences, attitudes, and desires in Nunavut.

<sup>8</sup> Definition elaborated by staff and board members of the Nunavut Literacy Council, representing each region of Nunavut (and various age groups of Inuit).



- how they understand learning to take place (including how they have supported their children and grandchildren to become and remain strong Inuit language users, even alongside English); and
- how they see the goal of bilingualism fitting in to the broader goal of well-being for Nunavummiut.<sup>9</sup>

During radio call-in shows (in the same four communities, as well as one Nunavut-wide CBC call-in show), listeners were asked:

- what they do to keep the Inuit language strong;
- who their language role models are; and
- what their ideas are for language development.

Realizing that bilingualism in Nunavut is being pursued, achieved, and maintained in a context of very intense political, economic, social and cultural change, and that this context affects opportunities and motivations to learn, use, and teach the Inuit language, the researchers also asked the role models about their broader perceptions of and aspirations for Nunavut society. They asked about the role models' broader goals for themselves, their children and their community, in order to see how language skills fit into achieving the desired, envisioned future. Rather than isolating the here and now, the researchers asked the role models about observed changes over their lifetime. They also asked about understandings of learning. The collected experiences of the role models as told in the interviews thus present a holistic understanding of the movement toward a highly competent bilingual society as understood by people who are admired for the way they are maintaining and embracing language skills.

The interviews and radio shows were conducted by two Inuit staff members at the Nunavut Literacy Council, in the language of the role model's choice (most frequently the Inuit language). They were then translated, transcribed, and their content systematically analysed. Categories for analysis were drawn from the data. They include what the role models and radio callers say about:

- Language (speaking and understanding; variation; reading and writing; other advanced uses; and bilingualism)
- Successes and challenges
- Beliefs and motivation

---

<sup>9</sup> The complete interview template is found in Appendix C.

- Learning
- Practices
- Desired skills (subsistence/traditional, socioeconomic, and social) and
- Ideas for change.

Coding based on these themes was completed using software for qualitative analysis (NVivo). Follow-up workshops in Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, and Iqaluit facilitated the communication of research results and further dialogue on these topics with practitioners in programming and policy related to language and literacy in Nunavut. In this paper, wisdom and recommendations from the role models are presented alongside “promising practices” and academic knowledge about language and literacy development from similar contexts around the world. This paper offers a Nunavut-grounded understanding of how language(s) and literacy are acquired and how policy makers and programmers can contribute to a strong foundation for a thriving bilingual society.

This policy paper thus reflects the final stage of the Nunavut Literacy Council’s *Atatittiniq* and *Strengthening our Communities* projects – the amalgamation and dissemination of the information and new understandings garnered through the research, targeted to those involved in program and policy development. The ideas in this paper, as well as other ideas from researchers and policy makers working in all Inuit regions in Canada, will be discussed (and adjusted) at a knowledge exchange workshop promoting evidence-based decision making in Inuit literacy and language programming and policy.

This paper is offered as part of an ongoing dialogue and cooperation between all stakeholders to pursue, and put in place the conditions necessary for, stable and effective bilingualism in Nunavut.

Literacy is a human right, a tool of personal empowerment and a means for social and human development. Educational opportunities depend on literacy.

- UNESCO Statement on why literacy is important, 2009

## SECTION 1: SETTING THE SCENE

Moses Alijaq, Rankin Inlet Elder

*We hear of people who speak different languages, depending on where they come from, so in the same way, Inuit always spoke their own language. Even though we cannot go back to live the way we did in the past, I think it is very important to keep our language and not to lose it. [...] I envy those people who are able to read, write and speak their own language, using their very own tradition and culture (ways). If we did this more with our youth, I would be happy. [...] I noticed, about 1975, they even wanted us to learn French and be rid of our Inuktitut altogether; I was upset when I heard this. I wanted to keep our language. We heard that they wanted us to stop using our traditions and culture and learn French instead and I was upset because I wanted to always keep Inuktitut and our ways and traditions. But I am happy that we still have it up to today.*



## WHY THE GOAL OF BILINGUALISM AND BILITERACY?

### A Goal of the Nunavut Government

The goal of bilingualism and biliteracy is fundamental to the Government of Nunavut's mandate. Nunavut was created, in part, to carve out a niche in Canada where Inuit could be Inuit. The push for self-government as a co-requisite to any land claim reflects the feeling, in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s, that Inuit did not have sufficient control to shape the kind of society they wanted, nor to fully participate in the opportunities the changing society offered. Inuit were one minority among many within Canada and within the then Northwest Territories. There is evidence that Inuit felt alienated from federal and territorial governments that did not speak their language or value their ways of being (cf. Nunavut Constitutional Forum 1983). In the negotiations leading up to the creation of the Nunavut, language and other aspects of Inuit culture played a key role. The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement includes explicit clauses mandating use of the Inuit language in certain interactions, both oral and written. These clauses target improved communication to Nunavummiut and increased opportunities for Inuit to participate in government and public affairs through use of the Inuit language<sup>10</sup> - evidently one of the goals of the new Territory. The achievement of self-reliance, cultural and social well-being are crucial objectives of the Nunavut Act and the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (as recorded in Article 37.1.1; Canada 1993b:245). Just as unrepresentative use of the Inuit language prior to Nunavut was seen as a symptom of inequality in the Canadian context and societal changes beyond the Inuit's control, so too is use of the Inuit language seen as a tool to achieve Inuit equality and well-being in Nunavut.<sup>11</sup> Its use alongside Canada's official languages in all aspects of Nunavut society is one indicator that the goals of Nunavut are being achieved.

When the Government of Canada, the Government of the (then) Northwest Territories, and Tungavik Federation of Nunavut (now Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, or NTI) signed the Nunavut Act in 1993, they agreed that the new territory would have authority to make laws for "the preservation, use

---

<sup>10</sup> See Tulloch and Hust 2003 for list and analysis of language-related clauses in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

<sup>11</sup> It was believed, for instance that "official status for Inuktitut will hasten the full participation by Inuit in employment opportunities in Nunavut" (Nunavut Constitutional Forum 1983:18).

and promotion of the Inuktitut language, to the extent that the laws do not diminish the legal status of, of any rights in respect of, the English and French languages” (Canada 1993a:6). In other words, the Government of Nunavut has the mandate to promote bilingualism in the Inuit language and Canada’s official languages. Note that the bilingualism promoted in these founding documents of Nunavut is a bilingualism that takes one (or both) of “Canada’s official languages” as the default, base language (in practice, in most Nunavut contexts, this means English).<sup>12</sup> This is an ongoing, underlying challenge facing Inuit language promotion (and thus the maintenance of bilingualism) in Nunavut.

## Community strength

Since its very first mandate (outlined in *Pinasuaqtavut* 1999-2004, and renewed in *Pinasuaqtavut* 2004-2009), the Government of Nunavut has explicitly stated that language plays a key role in achieving the goals of Nunavut. Language is necessary to act out the values that underpin what Nunavut should be, and strategies for achieving a strong society involve language. Language is necessary to achieve “*Tunnganarniq*: fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive. [...] Removing language and cultural barriers is important in welcoming people” (*Pinasuaqtavut* 2004:3). It is essential for “*Ajiiqatigiinni*q: decision making through discussion and consensus. [...] Inuit language will be widely used as the primary language of communication” (*Pinasuaqtavut* 2004:3-4). Use of the Inuit language helps achieve “*Pijarnirniqsatkatujjiqatigiittianrirlu*: simplicity and unity”, for example, when it is used as the working language of the government, and when English documents are translated so all can understand.

The most compelling arguments for bilingualism are presented under the value of *ilippallianguinnarniq*: continuing learning:

We believe that it is only by developing a culture of lifelong learning that Nunavummiut can reach their full potential. The values that will guide us are: [...]

- Land and language skills and respectful pride in our cultures and languages are fundamental for adults and children; [...]

---

<sup>12</sup> Throughout this paper, it is assumed that the primary bilingualism in Nunavut is and will continue to be bilingualism in the Inuit language and English. While a sizeable francophone minority in Iqaluit use French and English daily, only few Inuit in Nunavut are learning French to a high degree of proficiency.

- Children should be able to receive instruction in their first language; [...]

In 2020, Nunavut is a place where:

- Our population is adaptable to change and welcomes new skills, while preserving its culture, values and language of origin;
- We are a fully functional bilingual society, in Inuktitut and English, respectful and committed to the needs and rights of French speakers.

(Nunavut 2004:15)<sup>13</sup>

It is the spirit and goal of lifelong learning that lay the foundation for the recommendations for bilingualism and biliteracy in this paper.

## A Goal congruent with Inuit language preservation

The preamble to the Education Act (Bill 21), affirms that achieving bilingualism is a prerequisite to taking full advantage of all opportunities available to Nunavummiut: “[...] Believing that bilingual education can contribute to the preservation, use and promotion of Inuit language and culture and provide students with multiple opportunities” (Nunavut 2008a:1).<sup>14</sup> It adds one further reason to pursue bilingualism: the preservation of the Inuit language. If it is taken for granted that all young Nunavummiut will learn English, promoting bilingualism is effectively pursuing maintenance of the Inuit language. Many other documents have argued *why* the Inuit language should be maintained and developed (cf. Aylward 2004; Martin 2000; Taylor and Wright 2003; Tompkin 2004; Tulloch and ICYC 2005; Tulloch 2008; Wright and Taylor 1995) and have documented that the Inuit language is losing ground next to the encroachment of English (see also “Are Nunavummiut bilingual and biliterate?

---

<sup>13</sup> Other guiding principles and strategies of *Pinasuaqtavut*, though not quoted here, are relevant to developing language policy and strategies (e.g. innovation, respect, working together, building on strengths, increasing opportunities). Even if these do not explicitly address language, they address societal values and Inuit practices which, if encouraged, will facilitate learning, transmission, and use of the Inuit language, thus contributing to the foundation of bilingualism.

<sup>14</sup> The Berger Report (2006), conciliating between Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) and the Canadian Government, found, in fact, that the Canadian Government had failed in its Land Claims responsibility to support development of a society in which Inuit can fully participate in government and jobs *because* it had failed to support development of an effective bilingual education system in Nunavut.

further in this paper). All evidence suggests that thriving bilingualism will only be achieved by putting the Inuit language first. In line with policy developments in Nunavut to date, this paper focuses on the Inuit language, considering policy and programming for the Inuit language most essential for laying the foundation for the desired bilingual society.

Societal bilingualism which allows the Inuit language to be used in all areas, including the workplace, government, and media, favours Inuit participation (and pride), and can also contribute to ongoing development of the language. The initiatives of the Government of Nunavut to develop and standardize modern terminology for legal terms, environment issues, mining, etc.,<sup>15</sup> for example, has the dual benefit of strengthening the Inuit language and making it possible for Inuit to communicate about and participate in such activities in the Inuit language. Increased reading and writing of the Inuit language gives the language another anchor, which strengthens it overall.

## Individual strength

The individual benefits of bilingualism also contribute to a stronger society. In the past, some people have been concerned that learning two languages as a child may be confusing, detrimental, or pointless. Academic researchers in the field of bilingualism have pointed out that evidence shows the reverse to be true. Learning, knowing and using two or more languages helps bilingual people to be:

- more flexible thinkers
- more effective problem solvers (seeing problems in more than one way)
- more creative
- quicker to see the links and relationships between similar things
- able to access and process a wider range of information
- more tolerant of other cultures and ways of doing things
- more adaptive
- quicker to take advantage of new situations and opportunities

---

<sup>15</sup> A list of the published glossaries can be found at [http://nac.nu.ca/publications\\_for\\_sale#1](http://nac.nu.ca/publications_for_sale#1); a recent list of developed terms for mining can be found at: [http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nu/nuv/ming\\_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nu/nuv/ming_e.html).



- better learners
- better able to deal with contradictions inherent to real life.

Wurm (2001:15) summarizes these arguments in support of bilingualism thus: “Bi- and multilingualism from very early childhood onwards, to be maintained past the age of six years, is the most advantageous quality any person can possess”. Skutnabb-Kangas argues, “language and cultural diversity maximises chances of human success and adaptability” (Baker 2001:281, summarizing Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). While other factors can also contribute to these highly favourable results (Inuit elders, for example, had many challenges to survive and developed high levels of flexibility, creativity, and adaptability), bilingualism is one tool which can help Inuit develop to make the most of their potential.

In brief, bilingualism has been identified as a desirable goal: for Nunavut, for the future of the Inuit language, for individuals and for societies as whole. Inuit in Nunavut, both politically and from the grassroots, have been clear that they choose bilingualism and are pursuing this desired future. Bilingualism contributes to individual and community well being through enhancing an individual’s ability to make sense of and contribute to the world and by making such participation more possible through increased communication, access to knowledge and information sharing. In the Nunavut context, bilingualism is a means for achieving equality that Inuit have not historically enjoyed in Canada, ensuring the language’s vitality, and making sure Inuit have choices and the opportunity to build the society they have envisioned. English is embraced as a language of mobility and its continued learning and use are not questioned. To lay the foundation for a strong bilingual society in Nunavut, though, opportunities for learning, using, and developing the Inuit language must be maintained at the forefront.

## Setting Targets

**Recommendation 1:** Prioritize the Inuit language in all bilingual policy and programming.

**Recommendation 2:** Promote the value of bilingualism to all audiences.

**Recommendation 3:** Increase awareness among all audiences of the necessity of the Inuit language for achieving the well-being in Inuit communities envisioned by the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and *Pinasuaqtavut*. See also: Preamble, Official Languages Act (Nunavut 2008b).

# WHAT IS BILINGUALISM AND BILITERACY?

## Individual bilingualism vs. societal bilingualism

Bilingualism is being approached at two levels in Nunavut – individual and societal. The first refers to an individual’s knowledge and use of two or more languages; the second refers to the presence and use of two or more languages in a given community. Each of these levels of bilingualism necessarily influences the other’s development. While this paper focuses on individuals’ and families’ language acquisition and use, the underlying pulse is the context of societal bilingualism in Nunavut in which (and for which) these skills are developing.<sup>16</sup> Laying a strong foundation for bilingualism includes enhancing individual opportunities to learn, use, and develop the Inuit language, while also addressing the societal context for which these skills will be needed.

## Bilingualism and biculturalism

The knowledge, or presence, and use of two languages is intricately linked to the knowledge (individual) or presence (societal) of two ways of being, two traditions, two sets of cultural practices. Bilingualism occurs when people, their institutions, their productions, and their ideas are in contact. The great value of bilingualism is being able to draw on multiple resources and the opportunity to participate in a greater breadth of practices than a single culture offers. Continued ability to participate in these practices and potential future opportunity to do so are key to the maintenance of bilingualism (see for example *Pinasuaqtavut*, which pairs language and culture; land and language skills [Nunavut 2004:15]; such pairings were also common in the interviews).

Young Inuit in the 1950s who spent winters in residential schools and summers with their families are clear examples of bilingual individuals participating in two distinct cultures (in what were then two largely monolingual contexts, cf. Légaré 2008). The context in Nunavut today is more complex. Both the Inuit language and English may be used just about

---

<sup>16</sup> For theoretical discussion of these two levels of bilingualism and their interplay, see for example Hamers and Blanc 2000, Grosjean 2008.

anywhere, and *bilingual* practices are arguably part of contemporary Inuit culture and identity in Nunavut (cf. Dorais 2006; Hot 2008, in press; Tulloch 2004). In some cases, either language (or both) is acceptable and will be understood; switching between the two is common – this is true of bilingual situations around the world.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, some contexts require individuals to use only the Inuit language, or only English. For example, the Inuit language is particularly valued for its links to Inuit practices, values, and traditions that date back to nomadic times, while English is particularly valued for social and economic mobility (especially being able to attend advanced education and interact with people outside of Nunavut). So, while switching between the Inuit language and English may be acceptable in many contexts, those individuals who are also able to use *only* the Inuit language, or *only* English, when the situation requires, will be best suited to take full advantage of the realm of possibilities in Nunavut.

## Simultaneous vs. consecutive bilingualism

When children acquire two languages before the age of three, they are said to be “simultaneous bilinguals”. For simultaneous bilinguals, both languages can be considered the “first language” or “mother tongue”.<sup>18</sup> Consecutive (or sequential, or successive) bilinguals are those who have a firm grounding in their first language, or mother tongue, prior to acquiring a second language (cf. Hua and Wei 2005). Both types of bilinguals can acquire very high levels of proficiency in both languages (for further discussion see Romaine 1995). The distinction comes to the forefront when developing educational policy and when parents are deciding in which language stream to enrol their children. Mother tongue education is preferred, especially if the mother tongue has in any way been minoritized. Educating children in a language they already master allows them to focus on content. Educating children in the ancestral language of their community can increase self-esteem. Research in Nunavik

---

<sup>17</sup> See Heller 1998 for discussion of the positive values associated with mixing languages. Mixing languages is considered problematic in some Inuit contexts, largely because some are concerned that mixing occurs when an individual is *not able* to stay in the Inuit language and communicate fully, or does not appreciate the societal contexts in which exclusive use of the Inuit language (e.g. when monolingual elders are around) is expected and desired.

<sup>18</sup> The exact age at which children are considered simultaneous or consecutive bilinguals varies somewhat, with some researchers considering “simultaneous bilingualism” occurring up to six years of age. Other researchers focus more on the context of acquisition (i.e. two languages learned in the home, or in natural environments, very early in life), as opposed to an exact age of acquisition.

showed, for example, that Inuit children educated in the Inuit language, their mother tongue, had better academic outcomes, higher language development, and higher self esteem than Inuit children educated in English (cf. Bougie et al. 2003, Taylor and Wright 2003, Wright and Taylor 1995, Wright, Taylor and Macarthur 2000). Education in a second language (i.e. immersion programs) can be successful also, although evidence comes from programs where the mother tongue is the dominant language, well supported in all contexts throughout the community, and motivation is high to acquire the second language (e.g. English-speaking children attending French-immersion classes in Canada, cf. Genesee 1998; or English-speaking children of Mohawk ancestry attending Mohawk immersion classes, cf. Jacobs 1998). In Nunavut, children may have the Inuit language, English, or both, as the mother tongue. The challenge is maintaining and developing both and developing programming and policy to reflect this diverse reality.

## Bilingualism around the world

In the North American context, where a few major international languages – mainly English, though in Mexico, Spanish, and in Quebec, French<sup>19</sup> – have tended to overpower all other languages (indigenous languages and languages of newcomers from other groups), monolingualism (where individuals only know one language, and where only one language is commonly seen and heard in a given community) can seem to be the norm. However, in other contexts, multilingualism at an individual and a societal level is the norm. There is evidence, for example, that prior to European arrival and intensive contact, indigenous groups in North America were bilingual in each other's languages, including Inuit and Cree (where their communities were in contact, cf. Patrick 1998, 2003). In many African and Asian countries, children grow up hearing several languages around them and learn to speak each one – without special instruction or schooling – just through ongoing exposure, desire to interact, and opportunities to practice. There are no mental limits to acquiring multiple languages – especially in children (cf. Grosjean 1982, 2008; Hamers and Blanc 2000; Hua and Wei 2005).

---

<sup>19</sup> It is worth noting that indigenous languages in contact with French have generally fared better than indigenous languages in contact with English. See for example Maurais 1996 and Norris 1996, 2003.

Bilingualism can be sustainable; it does not have to be a choice of one or the other. The tendency witnessed in Nunavut, and across North America, to quickly shift within as few as three generations from monolingual use of the ancestral language to monolingual use of the English language is symptomatic *only* of the context (linguistic, social, political, economic, and cultural) in which and for which the languages are learned and used. Where languages enjoy relative equality<sup>20</sup> (e.g. French and English in Montreal; English and Spanish in California; Catalan and Spanish in Barcelona; even multiple tribal languages), stable bilingualism is more likely to ensue. Another context that seems to favour stable bilingualism around the world is when each language maintains distinct domains of use, for example where one is used exclusively in the home, for informal community interaction, and the other is used exclusively for business and politics (see for example Ferguson’s 1959 and Fishman’s 1967, 1971 descriptions of *diglossic* and bilingual communities).

Because the *context* of bilingualism is far more important to predicting outcomes and possibilities than human capability and possibility (which are limitless), it is essential to anchor discussions, plans, and programming for achieving bilingualism in the specific context (family, community, region, country) for which we are intending to lay the strong foundation. While we can learn a great deal from academic studies of bilingual development and best practices from around the world, each must be evaluated in light of its relevance to the specific context we are working with. Positive outcomes in the achievement and maintenance of bilingualism may reflect successful programming, but they may equally be the product of contexts which offer significant opportunities in both languages.

## A “fully-functional” bilingual society in Nunavut

The Government of Nunavut has set strong goals for the achievement and maintenance of “fully functional bilingualism”. But what is bilingualism and biliteracy? Academic definitions range from advanced ability in the four skills (speaking, understanding, reading and writing) in each language to some level of ability in at least one of the skills, in each of two languages.<sup>21</sup> At a functional

---

<sup>20</sup> Recognizing that equality does not mean exactly the same status and characteristics of each language and its speakers.

<sup>21</sup> In this section, we are focusing on ways of defining or delimiting bilingual language skills. For a Nunavut Literacy Council (NLC) definition of literacy, please see Appendix D. NLC definitions

level, most people working with bilingualism and biliteracy acknowledge that these skills exist on a continuum (cf. Grosjean 2008, Hornberger 2003, Hornberger and Sylvester 2000). It is indeed rare to find a person who is equally skilled in each language. Rather, the abilities an individual develops are directly linked to exposure, opportunities to interact, and the practices that one engages in with that language (including the types of practices that are valued in that language). For example, an Inuk who has spent a great deal of time on the land, interacting with elders, discussing the hunt and other traditional practices in the Inuit language, and an Inuk who uses the Inuit language consistently at work in a government office, developing high level government documents, would both be considered highly skilled users of the Inuit language, but perhaps in very different ways. In a similar way, a Nunavummiuk who graduates from high school in Nunavut (for now, with upper level academic courses taught exclusively in English), while spending time in the community and on the land with elders and other community members using only the Inuit language, will likely be a highly proficient speaker of both languages, but will have abilities in one language (e.g. singing a traditional hunting song in the Inuit language; explaining a mathematical formula in English) that he doesn't have in the other. The differences in abilities are linked to the contexts in which the language skills are acquired and used, *not* to limits in the languages themselves. Much the same way, biliteracy skills will reflect opportunities and contexts and types of texts with which one interacts in either language. In every case, research is clear that development of skills in *either* language can support overall bilingual development.<sup>22</sup> The key to bilingualism then seems to be the opportunity to witness, develop and use skills in the types of language practices one wishes to acquire and maintain, and to have these skills valued and acknowledged within the society.

Bilingual skills are dynamic. As with any other skill, practice leads to improvement and lack of use leads to attrition. If an Inuk has not gone to school in the Inuit language, for example, but then has the opportunity to work using the Inuit language, he or she will learn academic language skills through exposure and practice. In contrast, if an Inuk has gone to school and

---

acknowledge that literacy, and advanced language skills, involve much more than reading and writing. Such considerations are reflected in the recommendations throughout this paper.

<sup>22</sup> It is essential, though, that any language programming in the dominant language takes place in a context of support and respect for the mother tongue; when this does not occur, programming in the dominant language can detract from mother tongue development.

learned to read and write in the Inuit language, but then only reads and writes in English, it is normal for his or her comfort level reading and writing in the Inuit language to decrease. It is particularly helpful to have some monolingual contexts (e.g. places where or people with whom only the Inuit language is used) so that one has the opportunity, and the need, to interact without having recourse to the other language. Feeling stronger in one language, and then in the other, is normal for bilingual individuals (cf. Grosjean 1985, 2008). As situations change again, skills previously acquired come back quickly (e.g. if the Inuk reader has materials that he or she is motivated to read in the Inuit language and starts reading more frequently, comfort level will quickly come back to its original level, and, if he or she continues reading, increase). Bilingual development does not have to be linear, and rarely will language skills in one language match the other language. Perhaps it is most useful to understand bilingualism as a *continuum of abilities and practices, shifting throughout lifetime, where skills in one area support and reinforce skills in another*.

All that said, how will the Government of Nunavut know when it has reached its goal of “fully functional bilingualism”? For Nunavut graduates, the new Education Act (Bill 21, Article 23.2; Nunavut 2008a:15) suggests bilingualism means being “... able to use both languages competently in academic and other contexts.” According to policy introduced by Premier Paul Okalik in 2006, for senior government officials in the Territory, adequate bilingualism means: “They have to be fluent, they have to work with members and with people within Nunavut ... They should understand and be able to communicate with Inuit that may be unilingual” (CBC News North 2006). Inuit feedback from the role model interviews, radio call-in shows and workshops suggest that local perceptions of minimum requirements for a bilingual environment include:

- being able to understand when you are addressed in either language
- being able to make others feel comfortable, being welcoming.

These two characteristics can contribute to the well-being of everyone in the bilingual community. Also, they lay the foundation for learning more advanced uses of the language(s).



Inuit feedback from the role model interviews, radio call-in shows and workshops suggest that local perceptions of what constitutes advanced language skills in a bilingual environment include:

- Reading and writing
- Academic and computer-related uses (including typing)
- Knowledge of specialized vocabulary (including place names and kin terms)
- Understanding of various dialects within a single language
- Ability to translate between two languages
- Ability to stay in one language only when the situation calls for it (just the Inuit language, or just English)
- Artistic uses (publication, visual art, storytelling, songs)

These advanced language skills reinforce knowledge, help learning, advance further knowledge, allow one to get jobs and communicate, and participate even more fully in all the opportunities that the bilingual communities offer (see also Hot 2008 for further discussion of mutual support between “basic” and “advanced” linguistic practices).

Policy makers, programmers, and practitioners in Nunavut pursuing a “fully-functional bilingual society” have the challenge of setting targets to define when satisfactory levels of bilingualism have been achieved. It is recommended that policy, programming and practice pursue both individual language development and the development of a society in which both languages have their appropriate place. It is recommended that bilingualism and biliteracy be understood holistically, as a range of ways of being including language, cultural practices, and even identity. It is further recommended that policy makers, programmers, and practitioners take into account understandings that while some Inuit are adding (or have added) the Inuit language or English to their previously monolingual repertoire, many young Nunavummiut have been bilingual since they started understanding and speaking (i.e. have never experienced monolingualism). Bilingualism is the norm around the world, and is highly achievable and sustainable in contexts where both languages are respected and widely used. Finally, it is recommended that policy makers take into account the dynamism and flexibility of bilingualism, and the reasons why bilingualism is desired and

enacted in Nunavut, to develop policy in accordance with the people’s reality and needs.

## Setting Targets

**Recommendation 4:** Define “bilingualism”, for the purposes of bilingual bonuses in the Government of Nunavut, as knowledge and effective use of the Inuit language and one of the other official languages.

(See section on “What is contributing...?”)

**Recommendation 5:** Develop policy and programming which recognizes bilingualism and biliteracy as a continuum of abilities and practices, shifting throughout lifetime, where skills in one area support and reinforce skills in another.

**Recommendation 6:** Recognize that all bilingual individuals’ skills are on a continuum. Avoid assuming that strong Inuit language skills need to be accompanied by equivalent or even moderate English language skills, especially among the older population.

**Recommendation 7:** Develop policy which sets minimum requirements for bilingualism as knowing enough of each language to understand when addressed in either language and be able to make others feel comfortable, to be welcoming.

**Recommendation 8:** Encourage learning the Inuit language to the highest levels.

**Recommendation 9:** Develop policy and programming which support acquisition and use of advanced language skills including: reading and writing; academic and computer-related uses (including typing); knowledge of specialized vocabulary (including place names and kin terms); understanding of various dialects within a single language; ability to translate between two languages; ability to stay in one language only when the situation calls for it (just the Inuit language, or just English); and artistic uses (publication, visual art, storytelling, songs).

## WHO IS BILINGUALISM AND BILITERACY FOR?

Everyone benefits from learning, and having the opportunity to use, two or more languages. Bilingualism is the norm around the world and is advantageous for speakers of any mother tongue. The Nunavut Education Act (Bill 21) makes it explicit that bilingualism, in the Inuit language and another official language, *will be* for every student who goes through the school system in Nunavut. Territorial policy and programming suggest bilingualism is desired for every public servant in Nunavut, facilitated through the offering of Inuit language classes to new arrivals. Even if the success of these short-term programs (sometimes offered to transient workers) is questioned, they have the potential to increase understanding and make minimal interactions with monolingual Inuit language speakers possible. Further, they address the potential bilingualism of the most monolingual group of people in Nunavut. The Government of Nunavut has gone beyond these minimal expectations, making it explicit that fluency in the Inuit language is the responsibility of every senior bureaucrat (CBC News 2006). But what about Nunavummiut who have already graduated from high school (or will prior to implementation of the Education Act) and are not bilingual? What about those who move to Nunavut as adults and don't have access to government Inuit-second-language courses? In brief, what about Nunavummiut who have not yet had the opportunity to develop basic and/or advanced skills in both languages, and who do not have access to the limited government-run programs to assist students or government workers to develop language skills?

Non-Inuit teachers in the North are just one of the groups most needing support to learn and appreciate the value of the Inuit language. Almost all teachers beyond the primary level in Nunavut are recent arrivals from the South. As the Nunavut Government pursues its goal of increasing the number of Inuit teachers at all levels, it is necessary to support this group in learning at least enough of the Inuit language to show respect and be welcoming in the Inuit language.

Another group particularly needing support is today's youth. Some feel that the Inuit language belongs to the elders, not to them (cf. Tulloch and ICYC 2005). Others feel like *their* ways of using the Inuit language (which have, as is the case in all living languages, evolved from those of the elders) are inadequate and/or not respected as valid ways of using the Inuit language (cf. Tulloch 2004; Tulloch and ICYC 2005). A great many feel that their

opportunities to learn and use English have swamped their opportunities to learn and use the Inuit language.

Policy and programming is needed to give everyone in Nunavut – young children, school-aged children, youth, adults, elders, Inuit and non-Inuit – the opportunity to acquire and maintain bilingualism and biliteracy. Where exactly speakers fit – or should fit - on the bilingualism and biliteracy continuum will depend on particular needs and desires. They need not all have the same levels of competency as each other, or in both languages. A strategy for creating a foundation for a strong bilingual Nunavut should include mechanisms for facilitating learning, advancement, and opportunities for use of the Inuit language for all groups in Nunavut. Further, it should explicitly address learning targets for each group (what are considered minimal acceptable levels of competence and use in each; what are the desired levels of competence and use in each). Finally, it must address respect for various ways of using both the Inuit language and English.

## Setting Targets

**Recommendation 10:** Explicitly state in policies of the Nunavut Government and Inuit organizations that bilingualism is for everyone in Nunavut.

**Recommendation 11:** Develop and implement policy and programming to ensure, as a first step in a bilingual policy, at least receptive competence in the Inuit language. Particularly target children, youth and newcomers with such policies and programming.

**Recommendation 12:** Recognize receptive skills as the foundation to productive skills, and basic skills as the foundation to advanced skills.

**Recommendation 13:** Recognize the inherent value of all uses and varieties of the Inuit language (including ways of speaking specific to particular regions or specific groups of people, e.g. young people). Such recognition should come through explicit policies as well as awareness activities aimed at increasing tolerance and appreciation of variation in the Inuit language. (See also: Article 24.2(d), Inuit Language Protection Act and Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium (AILS 2008) Recommendations)

The Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Minister of the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, addressing the First Inuit Circumpolar Youth Symposium on the Inuit Language

*“... I am looking at the generation that the rest of us are depending on to carry the Inuit language into the future. [...] You, our young people, face some new challenges as well as some fantastic and gratifying opportunities. Not only do you have to make sure that our language grows and develops in our homes and communities, you also have to take it to places it hasn't been before: to the internet, to chat rooms, to the CD's people play on their stereos. [...] It is my hope that you will learn as much as you can from your Elders and their deep understanding of where we all came from. Remember, though, that Kalaallisut, Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, Yupik, or whatever form of the Inuit language you speak, belongs to you just as much as it belongs to your Elders. It is your language to shape and to change so that you are able to talk to each other about what matters most to young people today.”* (quoted in Tulloch and ICYC 2005)



National governments and donors have favoured formal primary schooling over early childhood, literacy and skills programmes for youth and adults despite the direct impact of these on achieving universal primary education and gender parity.

- UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2008: 4)

## SECTION 2: DESCRIBING THE CURRENT “PROBLEM”

*Eva Voisey, Whale Cove Call-In Show*

*...At the same time we are encouraging and have been encouraged ourselves to learn the English language (in school) and to go to school in order “to be successful.” And we know that is true because most jobs are asking for those qualifications. For a long time we have been saying and asking that those non-Inuit, Qablunaaqs who come to our communities seeking jobs to be able to learn to speak Inuktitut, just as our children complete school up to Grade 12. We don’t try much at all to help someone learn to speak Inuktitut and that causes a gap or division, although we want them to feel welcome here, it is difficult to become one with them or coincide with them (because of language/culture). I know there were short courses offered in learning to speak Inuktitut for qablunaats. We learned to write in Inuktitut on our own, some of us being taught by our mothers. But today, there are so many more distractions/subjects, TV, hockey, volleyball. Our children spend less time at home, and it’s nearly impossible to even have a time alone with them now. Our chores and hobbies are endless. I think in our time, we had a (more) difficult upbringing/life, but it was also a time we seem to learn more in a faster time (teaching/learning was easier), we were taught so much of the traditional way. A lot of the younger generation speak English only to their children now as if it is the only language.*





# ARE NUNAVUMMIUT BILINGUAL AND BILITERATE?

## Inuit bilingualism and biliteracy

The Nunavut Literacy Council research and Government of Nunavut initiatives come in reaction to the observation that the current linguistic reality in Nunavut only partially reflects the aspired-to bilingualism (both at the societal and individual levels). Many Inuit have very high language skills in both the Inuit language and English, but there is a trend, more advanced in some communities than others, away from the Inuit language. Some fear that Nunavummiut may be rapidly shifting from an Inuit language monolingual society (where, up until as late as fifty years ago, some Inuit were living in contexts where Inuit *only* knew and used the Inuit language) to a monolingual English society, with only a couple of bilingual generations in between.

As late as fifty years ago, many Inuit lived with little contact with speakers of any other language.<sup>23</sup> These Inuit became expert in basic and advanced uses of the language (including traditional forms of Inuit literacy) simply through exposure, interaction, and practice: spending time in families; sharing knowledge, stories and songs; performing dances and verbal duels; playing games; composing songs for children and for each other; naming places and each other and understanding one's relationship to the land and to each other through these names; joking; listening and learning (cf. Balanoff and Chambers 2005). Some learned to write the Inuit language as the scripts made their way through the Arctic with missionaries, as well as with traveling Inuit who had learned them from others (cf. Harper 1983, Laugrand 2002). These Inuit are now today's elders, who maintain high Inuit language skills to this day.

Those who were past school age before the Canadian Government intervened with imposed formal education have acquired various levels of English competence. For most, the Inuit language is still the preferred language, the one best understood, and most comfortably spoken, although many can understand and speak anywhere from a few words to entire conversations in English. These elders are highly regarded for the first-hand knowledge and

---

<sup>23</sup> Exact timing of contact varies from community to community and from region to region. Probably one of the reasons why more English, and less of the Inuit language, is heard in communities like Cambridge Bay is because intensive contact with English speakers began earlier (cf. Dorais 1990).

experience of the traditional Inuit lifestyle (subsisting off the land) and for their impressive Inuit language skills. Through intense exposure as children to many different ways of using the Inuit language, and through lifetimes of continued learning, elders have acquired advanced language skills and are invaluable resources for sharing (through teaching or modelling) advanced ways of using the Inuit language. They are also particularly well suited to pass on language skills in conjunction with traditional practices, those uses for which the Inuit language is exclusively valued.

The oldest living generation of Inuit, admired by all younger generations, says that they, in turn, admire the younger generations. The next younger generation experienced life on the land with their parents, at least for part of their life. In some cases, they acquired excellent Inuit language skills. This generation also had intensive exposure to English. They were taken to residential schools where English was the only language they were allowed to hear or to use, and they were formally taught to use this language, orally and in writing. Some returned regularly home, where the Inuit language was still exclusively used, and continued interaction with their families during these months allowed ongoing development of Inuit language skills. Some developed the advanced Inuit language skills listed above during the summers and post-school, while achieving academic proficiency in English while at school (cf. Légaré 2008). Others, through extended absence or through the schools' pressure to reject their "bad" language, never fully developed the Inuit language.

*After a lifetime of beatings, going hungry, standing in a corridor on one leg, and walking in the snow with no shoes for speaking Inuvialuktun, and having a heavy, stinging paste rubbed on my face, which they did to stop us from expressing our Eskimo custom of raising our eyebrows for "yes" and wrinkling our noses for "no", I soon lost the ability to speak my mother tongue. When a language dies, the world it was generated from is broken down too. (Mary Carpenter, quoted in Task Force on Aboriginal Cultures and Languages 2005:29)*

Thus, in this generation we begin to see the emergence of strong bilingualism; many members of this generation are perhaps the most proficient bilinguals of anyone in Nunavut. At the same time, we witness the seeds for the breakdown of intergenerational transmission of the Inuit language, with resulting societal impact.

The first bilingual generation (today's middle-aged Inuit, 40s to 50s in many areas of Nunavut; also elders in the western part of Nunavut and areas with more intensive, early contact), was the first to have choices with regard to which language to pass on – the Inuit language, or English? Most opted for the Inuit language, their first language and “heart language”, the language that belonged to them and they were still most comfortable communicating in. They raised children to be highly proficient speakers of the Inuit language. Their bilingual children, like them, achieved English proficiency through formal schooling and (new to the children's generation) through increasing exposure to English-language media<sup>24</sup> and English-speaking newcomers coming from Southern Canada. Other parents, seeing the influx of English-language institutions and the new possibilities coming with them, wanted to help their children access the best of the new world. They used English in the home with their children (sometimes alongside the Inuit language) believing this was the best way to support bilingual development. Some such children are indeed proficient speakers of both now. Others, with extensive schooling in English and reduced exposure and time to practice the Inuit language at home, have not had the opportunity to develop as high a level of skill in the Inuit language as they did in English, or as high of Inuit language skills as their parents had.<sup>25</sup>

*Mary Kanajuq Voisey, Whale Cove Elder*

*In the beginning I had wanted my children to learn English first, because of the fear that they will not succeed in their life in Arviat. I was afraid that to learn Inuktitut would take away the precious time of learning the English language.*

Inuit language schooling was introduced in the late 1970s for Kindergarten through Grade 3, and this has affected the younger generation of bilinguals' (today's 30-somethings) interaction with the Inuit language (cf. Cooper 2007). While the older generations had been learning to read and write informally, through missionary activity (the main reading material being the Bible and hymn books) and through informal networks, these children began learning to read and write in the Inuit language in school. Many of this generation are

---

<sup>24</sup> Radio was introduced in the North in the 1950s, and basic television was introduced in some communities as early as 1973 (cf. Cooper 2007, Graburn 1982)

<sup>25</sup> Cooper (2007:28) provides a useful table summarizing media and educational exposure to the English of various age groups of Inuit, with birth dates from prior to 1949 through to 1991.

nominal Inuit language “readers and writers”, being able to sound out symbols they see on the page, and use the syllabic or alphabetic system to record the sounds of speech they hear. Few have had opportunities to develop advanced literacy skills in the Inuit language beyond what they learned from Kindergarten to Grade three. Like the older generation, but for different reasons, they are bilingual and biliterate. In many small communities, their bilingualism is “balanced”, or equal (at least, orally). In other communities, orally, and throughout Nunavut in reading and writing, competence in English is surpassing competence in the Inuit language.

*Mary Tatty, Rankin Inlet Call-In Show*

*I spoke Inuktitut only, we didn't know, or I didn't know any English at all. I let my son go to Inuktitut stream kindergarten, I think up to grade 4. But my daughters, I put in the English stream, with regret now. My son can write Inuktitut and English. My daughters try and they do understand most of Inuktitut. But I know that we need to use Inuktitut more in the home. [...] When my son started school I was determined to put him in the Inuktitut stream. I still don't regret it up to today because he knows both Inuktitut and English.*

*Amajuaq, Rankin Inlet Call-In Show*

*I'm not sure how the system works now, I used to hear about the options in Inuktitut or English... and I was determined to put my kids in the English stream so that they will not have a time looking for jobs, then I started hearing other parents regretting about not putting their children through Inuktitut. I think they still offer Inuktitut for the early grades and then the kids can go through English in the later grades, that way the children learn Inuktitut while they're small and wouldn't forget it as easy.*

For some speakers to be more comfortable in English for a certain period, at a time when their life experiences are putting them more into English language contexts than Inuit language contexts, is relatively normal in bilingual situations. It only becomes a concern when (a) the speakers no longer have Inuit language contexts to go back to, i.e. when English is everywhere and they never *have* to switch back to the Inuit language and when (b) their comfort in English becomes anchored so that this is the language they prefer

to use to and around their children. The elders are such proficient speakers, in part, because they had such rich exposure to the Inuit language and had no choice other than to interact in the Inuit language. Today's children and teens – not necessarily thinking of the long-term benefits of bilingualism – can choose English only. It is the language of their entertainment (Cable TV, Internet, movies and video games making English all the more appealing); all of their friends can speak it; and it's often what they use all day at school and then at part-time jobs. When the parents do not insist on an “Inuit language-only” home, the children may have no monolingual Inuit language context to go back to. They may not have opportunities to develop advanced skills. Some Inuit are concerned that this is what is happening with the youngest generation. Even in cases where parents persist in the Inuit language, the pressures of English are intense and some communities are observing subtractive bilingualism (where acquisition of the second language, English, leads to decreased knowledge and use of the mother tongue, the Inuit language), or passive bilingualism (where children learn to understand two languages – the Inuit language and English, but only ever learn to actively produce [speak or write] in one of them). 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.

*Monica, in Talurjuaq Call-In Show: Children are speaking mainly English in our community. My grandparents did not speak any English at all. My parents were able to say only a few English words. Now, as being the next generation, I am able to speak both languages. My children are able to understand both languages but sometimes there are some words that they do not understand. Now my grandchild does not want to speak Inuktitut. It is so hard although I speak to her in Inuktitut.*

Statistics from the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics' Nunavut Household Study (2002) substantiate these changes in the linguistic situation (see Table 1). While they show levels of Inuit language competence remaining relatively high in all age groups, the middle-aged to older generations have the most confidence in their Inuit language ability. Those under 45 show most

confidence in their English language ability. Although the Nunavut Household Survey data available does not address competence in English reading, a concurrent survey by Tulloch (2004), limited to three Baffin Island communities, showed 67 percent of 18-25 year olds reporting “excellent to good” abilities reading in Inuktitut (comparable to reports in the Nunavut Household Survey) and 97 percent reporting excellent to good abilities reading in English. In terms of biliteracy, while both languages are being acquired somewhat, it appears that Inuit language reading and writing skills are not being developed to a level Inuit are satisfied with.<sup>26</sup> Qualitative data collected by Hot (in press) confirms that, with the exception of elders, English literacy levels are surpassing Inuit language literacy levels.

**Table 1: Reported language skills of Inuit in Nunavut, by age range**

Age Group	Speak the Inuit language “very well or relatively well” (%)	Speak the English language “very well or relatively well” (%)	Read/Write the Inuit language “very well or relatively well”	
			Syllabics (%)	Roman orthography (%)
15-24	81	87	63	52
25-34	87	87	63	57
35-44	91	88	57	51
45-54	98	63	67	54
55-64	99	21	78	56
65+	99	9	77	51

Data from Nunavut Household Study, Nunavut Bureau of Statistics 2002

<sup>26</sup> While French is a co-official language in Nunavut, no more than one percent of the Inuit population, in any of the age ranges, reported speaking French “very well or relatively well”.

Data collected through the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA)<sup>27</sup> in 2001 (presented in Table 2) supports the Nunavut Household Survey data, showing a high majority of Inuit self-reporting as proficient users of the Inuit language.

**Table 2: Adult Inuit language ability in Nunavut, by skill type and ability level.**

	Inuit who understand the Inuit language (%)	Inuit who speak the Inuit language (%)	Inuit who read the Inuit language (%)	Inuit who write the Inuit language (%)
Very well	89	89	67	69
Relatively well	10	10	17	18
Not at all to with effort	1	1	16	14

Data from SLiCA, published in Poppel et al. 2007

The big picture for bilingualism and biliteracy in Nunavut thus seems promising, and it is, especially compared to the much more immediate threat to many indigenous languages around the world (where a much smaller percentage speak the language, and where many do not have writing, cf. Mackey 2003). However, the data are perhaps overly positive. The self-reported abilities in reading and writing are likely overestimated. Dorais and Sammons (2002) contrast self-reports of reading and writing fluency in the Inuit language to Inuit language literacy test results and describe actual levels as much lower than reported levels. Corroborating data in the Nunavut Household Survey (Nunavut Bureau of Statistics 2002) shows that only 18.5 percent of Inuit who are *able* to read and write the Inuit language actually *do* read the Inuit language version when they see bilingual publications. The lack of use possibly reflects competence, and definitely hinders any development in reading fluency. In English, the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS, Statistics Canada

---

<sup>27</sup> SLiCA is an international initiative of the Arctic Council. The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and other indigenous groups were key partners. Canadian data were collected in 2001, with data in other countries collected in subsequent years.

2005) reports that 88 percent of Inuit in Nunavut, and 30 percent of non-Inuit in Nunavut have less than level 3 prose literacy ability, where level 3 would be considered the minimum level to fully take advantage of growing opportunities in a text-based society.

Furthermore, the very strong oral results (81 percent to 99 percent of Inuit in Nunavut speaking and understanding the Inuit language “very well or relatively well”), hide a complex community-by-community and age-based reality. Data collected by Statistics Canada (2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey) show adults’ ability to speak the Inuit language “very well or relatively well” as ranging from 61 percent to 100 percent. Comparable numbers for children (under 15 years old) range from less than ten percent to 96 percent. Table 3 (below) shows the percent of Inuit adults and children, per community in Nunavut, who speak and understand the Inuit language “very well or relatively well”. These detailed data show that while, among adults, oral competence in the Inuit language remains relatively high, the skills are not necessarily being passed on to the next generation. The percent of children who can speak and understand the Inuit language is lower than the percent of adults, for almost every community. The data suggest a strong correlation between using the Inuit language only or mostly in the home and children’s ability to speak the language very well or relatively well, a trend confirmed in role models interviews.

In brief, at an individual level, one can consider that bilingualism and biliteracy is being achieved in that most Inuit can speak, understand, read and write the Inuit language and English. Their competencies range, but most are able to use each language to some extent. Still, the level of Inuit language being achieved does not always meet Inuit hopes and expectations. Many younger Inuit have not had the opportunity to develop advanced oral or written skills in the Inuit language, but see these as important for their futures. There is some evidence that the majority of Inuit are not confident and effective readers and writers of Inuktitut or English.



**Table 3: Adult and child oral Inuit language ability and home use, by community**

Region	Community	Adults (15 yrs and older)				Children (under 15 yrs)		
		Understands “very well or relatively well” (%)		Speaks “very well or relatively well” (%)		Uses the Inuit language at home “all or most of the time” (%)	Understands “very well or relatively well” (%)	Speaks “very well or relatively well” (%)
		2001	2006	2001	2006			
Kitikmeot	Kugluktuk	63	53	61	51	27	21	< 10
	Cambridge Bay	68	62	60	57	35	24	< 15
	Taloyoak	89	79	89	69	34	29	25
	Gjoa Haven	89	71	83	58	38	39	23
	Kugaaruk	90	79	87	64	43	35	26
	Bathurst Inlet	data not available						
Kivalliq	Repulse Bay	100	93	100	90	97	100	96
	Chesterfield Inlet	95	n/a	89	n/a	58	92	83
	Coral Harbour	97	93	97	91	89	100	90
	Baker Lake	96	89	90	77	51	78	58
	Rankin Inlet	98	89	92	75	63	85	52
	Whale Cove	94	n/a	94	n/a	81	100	92
	Arviat	100	97	99	95	96	96	92
Baffin	Hall Beach	100	97	100	100	97	96	96
	Igloolik	100	98	100	95	96	94	87
	Resolute	data not available						
	Grise Fiord	data not available						
	Arctic Bay	100	95	100	95	92	100	95
	Pond Inlet	98	94	98	92	92	100	93
	Clyde River	100	96	100	98	91	100	93
	Qikiqtarjuaq	97	100	97	97	94	100	94

	Pangnirtung	97	96	97	97	83	93	88
	Iqaluit	95	95	91	92	63	80	52
	Kimmirut	100	n/a	96	n/a	88	93	86
	Cape Dorset	98	99	98	100	95	100	95
	Sanikiluaq	92	98	92	98	86	81	77
Nunavut	Total	94	89	91	86	71	81	69

**Data from Statistics Canada, 2001 (2006 where noted)**

## Qallunaat bilingualism and biliteracy

At a societal level, Nunavut's bilingualism continues to evolve. In the early days of intensive contact between Inuit and non-Inuit, it seems that the Inuit language was maintained in the areas of life in which it had always been used (family, friends, community), and English was used in most of the new institutions, functions and practices being brought in (cf. Dorais 1989). Non-Inuit who settled in Inuit communities in the 1950s and 1960s were by far the minority and tended to learn the Inuit language as a matter of course.

*Interview with non-Inuit elder in Baffin region:*

*I've been brought up with it [Inuktitut] ever since I was 18 years old and I came up and people spoke no English and I was in a situation where it was quite easy for me to learn because people didn't speak English, number one, and number two, I was working with them and they would visit with me in my home and this came as a matter of course that I would practice and use the language. So, it was a good situation for me. Not for white people coming up now and taking an Arctic College course because they don't really learn it... (B1, Tulloch 2001)*

The relative place of the Inuit language and English are continuing to shift. However, the effective balance between the Inuit language and English has not yet been found.

Aside from the non-Inuit who have lived in Nunavut for the past forty or fifty years, very few non-Inuit in Nunavut speak the Inuit language well. While the Nunavut Household Survey showed 87 to 88 percent of Inuit under 45 speaking English “very well or relatively well”, it only showed three percent of the non-Inuit population in Nunavut speaking the Inuit language “very well or relatively well” (Nunavut Bureau of Statistics 2002). This reflects an asymmetric relationship between languages and speakers in Nunavut, where Inuit, for the most part, are proficient bilinguals, and English-speakers,<sup>28</sup> for the most part, remain monolingual or achieve only

---

<sup>28</sup> It is worth noting that the monolingual English-speaking population in Nunavut is not just made up of non-Inuit. It includes Inuit who for various reasons have not learned, or have forgotten, the Inuit

basic competence in the Inuit language. The lack of reciprocity is a problem because it seems to reflect, and perhaps perpetuate, the inequality that gave rise to the impetus for Nunavut in the first place. Also, with the strong Inuit value on being welcoming (*tunnganarniq*), the asymmetric bilingualism creates a context where the monolingual minority implicitly “coerces” language accommodation, that is, where the bilingual Inuit, because they are capable, *ajunngi*, speak English to make monolingual Nunavummiut feel welcome and understand. English becomes the default language, with negative repercussions for exposure to and interaction in the Inuit language, thus limiting development of Inuit language skills. Part of laying the foundation for strong bilingualism for all Nunavummiut is making the Inuit language the default language in Nunavut.

Finally, although only a small percentage of Nunavummiut are monolingual, the limitations on and opportunities available to monolingual speakers indicates inequality in the current context of bilingualism in Nunavut. Monolingual English speakers (or those with strong skills in English but weak skills in the Inuit language) are perceived to have more opportunities than monolingual Inuit language speakers (or those with strong skills in the Inuit language but weak skills in English). People who only know English generally have little problem finding jobs, accessing government programs, or receiving services in stores, the post office, the bank, etc. In contrast, people who only know the Inuit language experience extreme limitations in all these areas (cf. Nunavut Household Survey, Nunavut Bureau of Statistics 2002). This should not be the case in a territory where the Inuit language is reported to be the sole mother tongue of 70 percent of the population and where English is only reported to be the sole mother tongue of about 26 percent of the population (Statistics Canada 2006). While bilingualism is the desired goal for everyone, monolingual Inuit language speakers should be considered an invaluable resource in a bilingual community. They have the advanced language skills, the traditional knowledge, and the broad understandings that are desired and sought after by many Inuit. While bilingualism opens the most doors to everyone, it should be possible for a monolingual Inuit

---

language (see Tulloch 2004 among others for discussion of language attrition in Inuit youth; see Kouritzen 1999 for broader discussion of first language loss).

language speaker to function at least as effectively within Nunavut communities as a monolingual English speaker.

In sum, many aspects of a “functional bilingualism” already exist in Nunavut. However, the context and opportunities for learning justify concerns that action is needed now to secure a bilingual future.



## WHAT IS CONTRIBUTING TO THE CURRENT STATE OF BILINGUALISM AND BILITERACY IN THE NORTH?

What is contributing to the relative strength of the Inuit language across Nunavut? Why, even though most adults still understand and speak the Inuit language well, do so many Inuit fear that the Inuit language is at risk of being lost? Why, in bilingual contexts typical of most of Nunavut, does it seem that English is always put first? How can knowledge and use of the Inuit language be so highly valued, and yet not consistently practiced with one's children? Why are some children not speaking the Inuit language at all, even though their parents speak it? These are some questions that Inuit around Nunavut are pondering, and that formed the basis of the Nunavut Literacy Council field research.

The answers lie partly in the context of Nunavut, in which languages are being learned and used, and partly in the complexity of human nature (we don't always do what we want to do). Good intentions are supported or thwarted by a context that favours one language or the other more or less strongly, more or less overtly. While on the one hand, individual and family agency is ultimately and profoundly shaping the population's ability in each language, on the other hand, the social, political and economic context sets limits and potential for what seems reasonable in each context (see Shohamy 2006 for further discussion of the power of individual agency; see Bourhis and Landry 2008, Kaplan and Baldauf 1997, Mackey 2003 for further discussion of the importance of context). When Mary Simons (2008), President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) titled her keynote address on the preservation and development of the Inuit language "Good Intentions are Not Enough" she was reflecting on the discrepancy between the sought after reality and the current context.

### History of language and literacy development in the North

The Inuit language is a strong and well-developed language. People interested in efforts to affect the future development of a language work within the fields of "corpus development", efforts to change or maintain

the language itself, and “status planning”, efforts to change or maintain the status of a language (cf. Calvet 1996, Kaplan and Baldauf 1997).<sup>29</sup> These areas of action intersect and influence each other. The “corpus” and the “status” of the Inuit language are already relatively well-developed for many purposes, but need continued support.

Even before deliberate development, the Inuit language is, and always has been, extremely rich and expressive. The language includes, for example, extensive, intricate vocabulary to name traditional practices, people, and places. Some of these names bring with them whole stories, stories that continue to be told in very similar ways from Alaska to Greenland. The stories are part of the rich literary tradition of Inuit, as are personal songs and other artistic genres, composed, performed, and passed on from generation to generation.

When writing was introduced by missionaries in the early 1900s, using orthographies based on the roman script in some areas and a new syllabic script, adapted from the one developed for the Cree, in others, Inuit were quick to appropriate it as their own (cf. Harper 1982, 1985, 1998; Hot 2008). Dorais (1990a, 1996) and others report early ability to read and write in the Inuit language as close to 100 percent prior to widespread bilingualism. In its earliest uses (i.e. 1900-1950s), Inuit reading and writing was employed for accessing Christian writings (Bible, hymn books) and for personal communications (cf. Laugrand 2002). As the only language many Inuit knew, it was also the sole language in which Inuit read and wrote.

Inuit made reading and writing their own practice through using it (e.g. writing personal letters to each other – see Harper 2000), teaching it to each other (cf. Laugrand 2002), and taking charge of its development (e.g. MacLean 1979). The influx of outside institutions and practices (schools, government, media, financial services, wage economy), especially from the 1950s onward, brought with it a need for new types of literacy practices. School use of the Inuit language, starting in the 1970s, necessitated production of reading and teaching materials in the Inuit language beyond Christian publications. Government and industry uses led to the development of new types of specialized vocabulary (cf. Allan 1995, 1998; Brice-Bennett 1996; Crawford 1995; Korhonen 1996a, 1996b; Pastori 1994; Penney 1995; Sammons 1994; Stenton 1997). Media introduced new

---

<sup>29</sup> A further category, acquisition planning, is sometimes added.



ways to tell stories and even, in the form of local radio, new ways to communicate personal messages that might have previously been sent in notes.<sup>30</sup> Formal uses of the Inuit language – in government proceedings and publications – gave rise to the need for skilled translators and interpreters. Technological advancements such as typewriters then computers, internet, and email have placed yet more demands for language development, and the Inuit language has kept up with each of them, even if use of English in each new domain takes precedence to use of the written Inuit language. Ways of writing the Inuit language and written uses continue to shift alongside uses of English in the North, and currently, there are no inherent limits on how the Inuit language may be used.<sup>31</sup> According to the new Inuit Language Protection Act, an Inuit Language Authority, *Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit*, is mandated to oversee continued development of the language and its dialects (see Article 16, Nunavut 2008c).

Establishment of these new domains for using the written Inuit language also led to a push to set a standard way of writing the language. Following two failed standardization attempts led by the federal government, the Inuit Cultural Institute (ICI) led the standardization of the Inuit writing system in the 1970s (cf. Harper 2000, Kusugak 2008). While the standardized syllabic system has been well accepted, different varieties of the roman orthography continue to be used in Canada, while Greenland and Alaska have their own ways of writing the Inuit language. The question of standardization continues to be at the forefront of international Inuit politics, especially with regard to developing an auxiliary written standard, which could be used for interregional and international written communication and publication (see Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium Drafting Committee 2008; Kusugak 2008; MacLean 1979). Within the context of Nunavut, the *Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit* will have the mandate to oversee potential initiatives to standardize usages of the Inuit language (Article 16.5, Nunavut 2008c).

Another way that the introduction of new (western) institutions impacted reading and writing in the Inuit language is that these institutions came

---

<sup>30</sup> See Hot, in press, for discussion of further evolution of sending personal messages, now through the Internet, using both the Inuit language and English, though favouring English.

<sup>31</sup> See examples of grassroots language development in subsequent section, “Who will achieve bilingualism and biliteracy?”

with their own language – English. Inuit needed to know English to participate in associated practices, whether they were overtly “forced”, as was the case in residential schools, or covertly influenced, for example wanting English to understand radio and television, or to get a job. At some points, it appeared that English was the only option. The federal policy, enforced in the residential schools (until the 1960s), was total assimilation of Inuit.

*Two primary objectives of the Residential Schools system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child". [...] First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages and cultural practices were prohibited in these schools. (Prime Minister Stephen Harper 2008)*

Some Inuit did not know that bilingualism and biliteracy is an option and felt that if one can only have one language, let it be English to get ahead. Thinking seems to be shifting though, leading up to and following Nunavut. Many Inuit feel that two languages are better than one, and now feel that it is possible to have both (such an understanding is well substantiated in research on bilingualism). The Inuit language role models admire Inuit who incorporate elements of both ways, both cultures, and both languages, who are making the best of all opportunities.

Emily Angulalik, Cambridge Bay NLC Board Member

[Interviewer :Who are the other language role models in this community?]

*[...] the interpreters, the teachers, our language specialists, our parents, definitely, and I'd say the youth that are trying and that are willing to distinguish between our new, today's society and back then, like mixing the two so that they can, you know, get both out of it, be proud of what you're doing now, what you have and be proud of who you're ancestors, who and what they have accomplished.*

Yolande Aupalu, Talurjuak Mother:

*I first spoke to my children in English mostly, I worried a lot, thinking, why, when I grew up only knowing Inuktitut, am I only speaking to my children in English, why am I not talking only in Inuktitut to my children. Now I try to talk only in Inuktitut to them, I don't worry about anyone laughing at us or them, because that's how I was raised and I have to try to raise my children the same way, I came to this conclusion. [...] Of course, because they're going to have to find jobs, I'd like them to be able to understand and read and write well in Inuktitut and English. They say, in the near future, that those who are bilingual in Inuktitut and English will be better qualified for jobs. I was the same way, because I was able to write in English and because of my schooling-and I want the same for my children. [...]*

Jackie Napajuq, Whale Cove Elder

*It is better today, because they are able to speak both languages. They have to know the two languages for today's lifestyle. [...] I tell them the keep their language but it is also much better to learn both. [...]*

## History of federal responses to the Inuit language

The federal government has played and continues to play a key role in shaping what opportunities are available to Canadian Inuit to create a thriving bilingualism. Early reactions to the linguistic diversity of Canada's First Nations, Inuit and Metis populations were marked by explicit assimilationist policies, enacted through removing children from their home communities and educating them to use English only. Later policies are accepting of diversity in Canada, and acknowledge the possibility for indigenous or minority groups to preserve and promote their languages.

Articles 25, 27 and 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* guarantee Aboriginal and "multicultural" rights:

25. The guarantee in this Charter of certain rights and freedoms shall not be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from any aboriginal, treaty or other rights or freedoms that pertain to the aboriginal peoples of Canada including:

(a) any rights or freedoms that have been recognized by the Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763; and

(b) any rights or freedoms that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.

[...]

27. This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.

[...]

35. (1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed. (Canada. Department of Justice 1999:64-66)

Some indigenous people in Canada interpret these clauses as protecting indigenous people's right to preserve, protect and promote their languages.

The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988) acknowledges the value of languages other than English and French in Canada, and makes it possible for the Government, if it so chooses, to support their acquisition and use:

3(1) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to [...]

(i) preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada;

(j) advance multiculturalism throughout Canada in harmony with the national commitment to the official languages of Canada.

[...]

5. The Minister shall take such measures as the Minister considers appropriate to implement the multiculturalism policy of Canada and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, may [...]

(f) facilitate the acquisition, retention and use of all languages that contribute to the multicultural heritage of Canada. (Canada. House of Commons 1988)

The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* does not give any special recognition to First Nations, Metis, or Inuit languages as the founding languages of Canada, nor does any other federal law. Attempts to do so have all failed.

The *Act to Establish an Aboriginal Languages Foundation* (Bill C-269) was defeated in the House of Commons in 1989. The Charlottetown Accord Constitutional Amendment, “the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, being the first peoples to govern this land, have the right to promote their languages, cultures and traditions...” (Paragraph b of the Canada Clause, Canada 1992:1) was defeated in a Canada-wide referendum (along with other constitutional amendments).

While the federal government still seems a long way away from recognizing Inuit, First Nations, and Metis claims that their languages be recognized as official (or founding, or national) languages of Canada (cf. Task Force 2005, Nunavut 2008b), efforts are being made to overcome the long-term effects of residential school harm to indigenous languages and cultures. The change in attitudes and approach are reflected in the reports of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs (cf. Canada 1990) and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (cf. Canada 1994), and in *Gathering Strength – Canada’s Aboriginal Action Plan* (Canada 1997). Good intentions have been actualized to some extent; the federal government, through Canadian Heritage, has made some funding commitments for language revitalization. The Task Force on Aboriginal Cultures and Languages (2005) was one attempt by the federal government to hear from First Nations, Inuit, and Metis about what they need and want now for their languages. (See Burnaby 1999 and MacMillan 1998 for further discussion of federal language policy and language rights, with application to indigenous people in Canada).

For some indigenous Canadians, the Prime Minister’s apology for the harms of residential schools marks another step in addressing the context which has, for some families, destroyed potential for intergenerational language transmission:

*Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country. [...] The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian Residential Schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language. [...] The legacy of Indian Residential Schools has contributed to social problems that continue to exist in many communities today. (Prime Minister Stephen Harper 2008)*

Mary Simons, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) acknowledges the apology as key to moving forward with the federal government. Still, she reiterates the call from the Task Force report for sustained support and funding:

*Over the years, the response by our government to our appeal for recognition and preservation of our language resulted in sporadic and fragmented support usually tied to short-term initiatives launched under the general title of ‘cultural programming’. And this is what I mean by “good intentions are not enough”, because for all the good work we put into promoting the importance of our indigenous languages, until there is a substantive shift in belief, health of our people and the health of our communities’ language initiatives will be forever condemned to the whim of ‘on again off again’ funding for ‘general cultural programming’ by our government. I believe that the first step to move us beyond good intentions is awakening our governments to the legitimacy and validity of our indigenous languages. Our language is not just something that needs the odd program of support under the ‘catch all’ of cultural programming. It is much more and what we are and the health of our language lies at the core of our well-being. (Simons 2008:3-4)*

In brief, while federal policies can be interpreted as supporting indigenous languages, more enabling legislation would further anchor Inuit rights to learn, use and promote the Inuit language. Multi-year funding agreements would allow Inuit to more adequately act on good plans and bring to fruition territorial and grassroots initiatives to lay a foundation for thriving bilingualism.

## Context of Nunavut – Opportunities for “bilinguals”?

The question of opportunity seems to be exerting a strong influence on parents’ and individuals’ choices in language transmission and use. Some Inuit remember a time when “bilingualism” as an asset for government jobs only meant English and French. New policies in Nunavut explicitly value bilingualism in the Inuit language and one of the country’s official languages (English or French). Nunavummiut have caught on to these changes and most acknowledge that bilingualism will help their children succeed economically as well as socially in Nunavut and beyond. Still, the

shift to recognize the value of the Inuit language explicitly through action and concrete opportunities with the Inuit language is not yet complete. Although the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (Canada 1993b:193) contains specific clauses to recognize fluency in the Inuit language as part of “appropriate search criteria and job descriptions...” (Article 23.4.2[d][iii]), it has seemed to some Inuit up until now that the Inuit language is only valued in the job market when it is added to good to excellent English language skills.

*Quluaq: Would you want your children/grandchildren to do good in either language?*

*Maryanne Tattuinee: Yes, I want them to excel and do good in either language, so that when they are working, they’ll be understood.*

*Quluaq: Or for example when there is a job ad they ask for bilingual people for the workplace, would you want that?*

*Maryanne: I would not like that ability/or inability to be the basis for hiring. When the school, Kivalliq Hall, first opened and they were looking for a guidance counsellor for the students there, I really thought I was qualified but I was written back saying I don’t qualify because of my lack of education and this really put me down and I couldn’t get it off my mind. Then I realized how competitive it is today that you are (written off) on the basis that you are not schooled and I would be considered of no use due to the fact that I don’t speak in English and I wouldn’t be understood. I don’t even try out for jobs now.*

English is reinforced as the default language, the necessary language, and the Inuit language is relegated to “an asset” when a monolingual or highly Inuit language-dominant bilingual is perceived to be at a disadvantage for getting a job and a monolingual or highly English-language dominant bilingual still has good chances to secure a “good” job in Nunavut. True equality, and a context for thriving bilingualism, will be achieved when, at least within regions where the Inuit language is still being learned and used, the value of knowing and using the Inuit language to serve an Inuit majority population is acknowledged as the default, with excellent English

skills considered “an asset” for jobs in which communication outside of Nunavut, or with the English-mother-tongue minority, is required.

Such aspirations are certainly reflected in the Government of Nunavut’s mandate, *Pinasuaqtuvut*:

In 2020, Nunavut is a place where:

- [...] Inuktitut, in all its forms, is the working language of the Nunavut Government; [...]

Objectives of the Second Legislative Assembly of Nunavut:

- [...] Develop made-in-Nunavut language legislation to foster the use of Inuktitut in the workplace and the public and private sectors;
- Promote Inuktitut as the working language of government;
- Seek funding to increase the capacity of the language services section to provide translation and interpretation between the official languages of Nunavut;
- Make laws, government policies, documents and forms, available in Nunavut’s official languages (Nunavut 2004:8-10)

The Inuit Language Protection Act passed in 2008 indeed includes concrete and enforceable measures which should, as applied, change the current situation and achieve the *Pinasuaqtavut* mandate. Article 12.2 (Nunavut 2008c) includes measures to support Government of Nunavut employees in acquiring basic and advanced Inuit language skills (Article 12.2[g]), and to ensure that Government of Nunavut employees can complete all work-related communication in the Inuit language, including interacting with management (Article 12.2[f]). It further protects the right of monolingual, or Inuit-language dominant bilinguals (or those who prefer to work in the Inuit language) to participate fully in any government job, unless the job requirements specifically necessitate knowledge and use of English:

Article 12.5 No territorial institution shall discharge, suspend, expel, reprimand, intimidate, harass, coerce, evict, transfer, impose a pecuniary or other penalty on or otherwise discriminate against an employee only because the employee is a unilingual speaker of the Inuit Language or prefers to speak or use the Inuit Language. (Nunavut 2008c:11)



*Quluaq: Why do you think many more children are picking up English more than Inuktitut today? They're using more English today even though the elders are still only using Inuktitut.*

*Sharon Qiyuq, Whale Cove: The jobs for today require one to know English, first and foremost and because there are many different dialects, so they refer to English to understand each other.*

It is recommended that policy be developed to create a context in which both languages, English and the Inuit language, are explicitly valued, and where both are seen as part of accessing the best of all opportunities available to Nunavummiut. It is further recommended that policies and programming support Nunavummiut to access opportunities for which the Inuit language is particularly valued.

## English as the “default” language

The observation of English as the “default” language in the workplace can perhaps partly be attributed to the wage economy coming into Nunavut from the outside. To begin with, those leading the wage economy were speaking English, and Inuit had to adapt to that minority. Only more recently, in the context of Nunavut, have Inuit had the freedom and political clout to stand up and address the inequality in the English-based wage economy and insist on the implementation of the Inuit language in all domains, including work and government. They have had some success. The Inuit language is now frequently heard in the legislature (with translation to accommodate speakers of other official languages or dialects). The Inuit language is increasingly being seen on signage around towns (cf. Daveluy and Ferguson, in press). Official institutional use of the Inuit language is increasing. Bilingual behaviour is increasingly the norm.

However, the observation of English as the “default” language in Nunavut goes beyond its use in “new” institutions (government, school... ). In private use, in the playground, in communities, bilingual Inuit can be heard speaking English to one another (although also in the Inuit language, or in a mix of the two). The extent to which this happens depends on the context of each community. In some communities, certainly, where bilingualism is remaining balanced, the Inuit language is used very

naturally as the first language. In others, the only contexts in which English is not heard are those in which English *cannot* be used, i.e. situations in which one is interacting with monolingual Inuit-language speakers or in which someone has defined the situation as “Inuit language only”. Perhaps ironically, the more monolingual contexts for interaction one has, the stronger the foundation for sustained bilingualism will be.

It is recommended that policy be developed which creates the expectation that the Inuit language should be used in any and all contexts in Nunavut. It is further recommended that strategies and mechanisms be developed to create a context in which this expectation can be realized. It is recommended that policies and programs explicitly address contexts in which English seems to be replacing the Inuit language as the default language.

## Dialects

A few factors are contributing to some individuals and some communities using English as a “default” language, at least in some interactions. The first is interaction between speakers of different dialects. In some communities, interaction between speakers of different dialects is limited to instances of traveling or a few speakers who have moved in from elsewhere. In Iqaluit, interaction between speakers of different dialects is commonplace, as Inuit have moved in from across Northern Canada, bringing with them a plethora of different dialects. In communities like Repulse Bay, Chesterfield Inlet, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Resolute and Grise Fjord, the presence of multiple dialects within a single community dates back to federal government sedentarization/settlement plans, where different groups of Inuit were brought in or “encouraged” to settle in a single community (cf. Dorais 1990b).<sup>32</sup> Difficulty navigating communication between dialects is partly contributing to use of English as a default language. Inuit explain switching to English with speakers of different dialects in order to be understood, and also in order to avoid

---

<sup>32</sup> Movement through government decentralization may also be bringing speakers of different dialects into greater contact.

teasing or criticism that one's dialect is "incorrect" use of the Inuit language.

*Yolande Aupalu, Talurjuaq: At first, when he [my son] was a child, I only spoke in Inuktitut to him. When he became three years old, other kids would laugh at him [because it was a different dialect] and he got embarrassed so he began to speak only in English. But now he tries to talk in Inuktitut.*

*Mary Tatty, Rankin Inlet Call-In: I grew up in Arviat and anyone from here or whoever isn't from there, would say I'm speaking in broken-Inuktitut but I am speaking perfect Arviat dialect, and I was embarrassed at first to try and talk the Rankin dialect and it was difficult at first to switch dialects, but I did it and it can be done, it's not impossible. But I don't think we should mock each other or try to embarrass each other when using our dialects because we all share one language and understand each other.*

It is recommended that policy be developed which explicitly recognizes the value of all varieties of the Inuit language. It is further recommended that policy and programming be developed to facilitate cross-dialectal communication in the Inuit language, so that the Inuit language can remain the default language for communication between Inuit and in the North, even between speakers of different dialects.

## Writing

The difference between dialects becomes a reason to default to English in reading and writing, as well as in face-to-face communication. This may be particularly true of speakers of Natsilingmiutut dialect (spoken in Kitikmeot and Kivalliq regions), orally closer to Inuinnaqtun than to the Inuktitut dialects, but written with the syllabic writing system:

*Caller, Talurjuaq Call-In Show: We just get lost or do not know what to do when there are no teaching materials. It would make things easier if the books were translated into your dialect or even if we translate the English books into Inuktitut. It is harder to write the Cambridge Bay dialect into Inuktitut because they write differently. It is easier to understand the Kivalliq dialect because we write the same way.*

Even where the writing system is shared, some Inuit prefer to read in English than to read in a dialect that is not their own. Another reason given why English seems to have become the default language for reading and writing (except perhaps in the religious domain, in which Inuit reading and writing was introduced) is that the huge majority of written material in the North is in English. Even where Inuit language materials exist, many of these are based on, or translated from, materials originally created in English. Some people prefer the original to the translation, whether it's because the translation is poor, feels awkward, is in another dialect, or is just not the original creation. When only one in five Inuit who are able read and write the Inuit language actually read the Inuit language version when they see bilingual publications (Nunavut Bureau of Statistics 2002), accepting English as the default reading and writing language becomes a self-perpetuating cycle. When people are not reading in Inuit language, they are not improving their reading fluency, nor or they improving as writers.

*Quluaq: Why is it that the younger generation is speaking so much English today?*

*Jackie Napajuq, Whale Cove: Because they learn about the English language in the beginning and its writing system. That is how they started out as a child. They started out with books.*

*Quluaq: Are they able to speak and write in both languages?*

*Philip Siturat, Whale Cove: They are able to do both but they often write in English. Maybe it is because we are too attached to the English language.*

Again, one witnesses a cycle non-conducive to producing strong bilinguals and biliterates where, even if reading and writing in the Inuit language are highly valued, people are reading in English (if they are reading at all) because they consider the publications in that language more reliable or interesting. The suggestion is that changed attitudes *and* higher quality material in the Inuit language may increase Inuit language reading practices. There may also be a need to produce more monolingual Inuit language materials (where one cannot default to English). However, the small audience for Inuit language written materials currently may decrease motivation to produce them.

UNESCO has been recommending since at least 1953 that a wide variety of reading materials must be developed in the mother tongue in order to provide the required support and motivation to achieve mother tongue literacy. It is recommended that the Government of Nunavut place priority on the creation of such varied and high quality written materials in the Inuit language.

## Increasing number of English monolinguals and English-dominant bilinguals

The increasing number of Nunavummiut who do not speak the Inuit language well, coupled with the high Inuit value on being welcoming, *tunnganarniq*, is also contributing to English being used as a default language in some areas of Nunavut. Although Nunavut was created to increase opportunities for Inuit, and to carve out a place in Canada where Inuit ways of being would be celebrated and lived out daily, the new jobs it created led to an influx of Southern Canadians, with little or no knowledge of the Inuit language. Especially in the capital, Iqaluit, where almost half of the population are now non-Inuit, or in mining towns, as was the case in Nanisivik, accommodation to the language of the newcomers can be an important factor in Inuit choosing English over the Inuit language.

Mary Kanajuuq Voisey, Whale Cove Elder: *When a group of Inuit people meet a Qablunaaq outside (in Rankin) they automatically start speaking to the Qablunaaq in English. This is not right. We should be speaking to them in Inuktitut instead and try and let him understand our language. It would encourage them to learn Inuktitut.*

Practices may be changing now, as awareness grows that it is acceptable and even desirable to continue speaking the Inuit language even if not everyone understands, but until recently, it was common for a group of Inuit speaking the Inuit language to shift to English to accommodate a single English speaker.

Even among Inuit, the linguistic reality is shifting in Nunavut so far as to create a reality where English is more likely to be understood by children than the Inuit language, further contributing to use of English as a default language. Dorais and Sammons (2002) found, in the Baffin region of Nunavut, parents switching to English with their children once in they were in school, simply because their children knew the language. This result is reiterated in the role models interviews in the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions. Some talked about their children or grandchildren “preferring” English. Others talked about feeling compelled to switch to English with their children or grandchildren because they do not understand the Inuit language (this was particularly true in Cambridge Bay, where the majority of children do not know the Inuit language at all, but was expressed throughout the role models interviews). Others simply switched to English when their children did, effectively letting their children choose what would be the language of the home.

*Cecilia Pagvialok, Rankin-Inlet Call-In: [My children] are able to read very well in Inuktitut and speak it but my daughter loves to talk in English. Not too long ago there was a radio show on Family Literacy Week my sister was saying that we have to speak only in Inuktitut for a week. I ask my kids what their aunt had just said in Inuktitut. My daughter said “She said that we have to talk only in Inuktitut” and she said it in English. I told her that I did not understand what she was saying in English and so she said it in Inuktitut. As she was telling me what she said she started to cry. And the reason why she was crying was because she was not looking forward to speaking in Inuktitut for a whole week. If people support each other it would be easier and speak Inuktitut at home. Our children are unable to speak the Inuktitut language that is so easy to learn. This is really hard. [...] I went to Igloodik sometime ago. I really admire for all the children there to be speaking their mother tongue. I wish that it was like that here.*

*John Tautunngi, Rankin Inlet: I want them [my children and grandchildren] to always know the Inuktitut language. My daughter Marlene does not seem to notice that her children are speaking too much English. Her youngest son speaks a lot of English and is forgetting Inuktitut. They understand me but then when the younger one speaks to me I often do not understand him. He knows how to speak Inuktitut but have to switch to English because of his limited knowledge about Inuktitut.*

*Quluaq: Do you think there is a barrier between you and your son that keeps him from knowing his language more? Or do you think there are any hindrances?*

*Cecile Panika, Whale Cove: When he can't understand me, yes.*

*Quluaq: What do you think the reason is?*

*Cecile: Because he doesn't understand Inuktitut, that's the main problem/issue.*

*Philip Siturat, Whale Cove: We speak both languages to them [our grandchildren]. When they speak in English we talk back to them in English and when they speak in Inuktitut we answer in Inuktitut.*

*Quluaq: Do you sometimes notice when they do not understand Inuktitut?*

*Philip: Yes, therefore we have to talk to them in English when they do not understand. [...]*

*Quluaq: Are there barriers when you want to teach them language?*

*Philip: Yes, when they do not understand Inuktitut. And perhaps as grandparents or parents we are just speaking to them in English so that they will understand better.*

*Susie, Whale Cove Call-In: Yes, that is the only way today. And when they reply to us in English while we are using Inuktitut, we don't mind it (or are bothered by it), we don't push them enough to use Inuktitut and that's one of the reasons why they tend to use English all the more.*

*Quluaq: Can you tell when your son doesn't understand you when you speak Inuktitut to him?*

*Cecile Panika, Whale Cove: Yes.*

*Quluaq: What do you do to make him understand?*

*Cecile: When he doesn't seem to understand, I just try to explain it to him in English, to make him understand.*

*Interviewer: Which language does your children use to speak to you at home?*

*John Manilak, Talurjuaq: In Inuktitut but they want to speak in English.*

*[...] I speak the Nattilingmiut dialect. I speak only Inuktitut but my children want to speak English. I encourage them to speak Inuktitut. But sometimes I will say something in English to make them clearly understand.*

*Emily Angulalik, Cambridge Bay: I try and encourage my kids, but they need to speak more, they are always, "Mom, speak English," like you know. And, but I try to encourage them to speak Inuinnaqtun and even just to listen to conversations between [my husband and I] and although (there's) dialectal difference again, sometimes I tend to pick up his dialect, you know, mix it up Inuinnaqtun which is not so good, but anyways.*



Whether parents are accommodating children's preferences or actual abilities, switching to English as the default language is having detrimental effects on the acquisition and maintenance of stable bilingualism in Nunavut. Children who are not exposed to the Inuit language do not have opportunities to learn; children who have no need to use the Inuit language to interact have minimal motivation to learn; children who are not encouraged to use the Inuit language have no opportunity to practice and thus develop their Inuit language skills.

It is recommended that policy and programming is developed to increase awareness about language acquisition in a bilingual context. In particular, remind parents that their children *will* learn any language that (a) they are consistently exposed to *and* (b) they *need* to use in order to interact. It is further recommended that policy and programming be developed to encourage parents to make their homes "Inuit-language-only" domains, to always speak the Inuit language to and around their children, and to encourage their children to speak back to them in the Inuit language.

## Impact of parents' language behaviour

Parents' and caregivers' language choices have a huge impact on the way children acquire the Inuit language (or not) and thus are fundamental to laying a foundation for strong bilingualism in Nunavut. In the role models interviews, parents who insisted on an Inuit-language-only home, and who made a point of only using the Inuit language to their children, are also the parents who report that their children have acquired excellent competence in the Inuit language. (All parents reported that their children have acquired excellent competence in English, so it appears that use of English in the home is not necessary to help children acquire English.)

*Cecilia Pagvialok, Rankin-Inlet Call-In*

*It's so hard when kids don't understand Inuktitut, and they don't practice namesakes and Inuktitut relative names (tuqlurautiit); kids don't know their female cousins, male cousins, and so on. We should keep talking to them in Inuktitut at home, answer their questions-when they ask, don't laugh at them, explain to them gently. And when they have homework, they ask about the meanings so they should be told and made to understand. [...] Like when I ask a question in Inuktitut and they answer me in English, I'll say, "What?" and tell them, "I know the answer but I want you to answer me back in Inuktitut." I tell them I won't ever reply to them in English, they live with me and I really want them to learn Inuktitut. The parents out there, it would be better for you to try to talk in Inuktitut as much as possible. [...] We can all learn if we keep trying, it's not too hard! Just keep talking to them in Inuktitut and they'll pick it up. When they don't want to learn it is hard.*

*Quluaq: Do they sometimes not understand what you are saying?*

*John Tautunngi, Rankin Inlet: They mostly understand me.*

*Quluaq: When they do not understand what do you do to make them understand?*

*Tautunngi: I just repeat myself and make sure they understand.*

*Quluaq: Are there any barriers that make them not speak Inuktitut?*

*Mary Voisey, Whale Cove: Not really, although they speak English I always speak to them in Inuktitut. I think that sometimes it is hard for the younger children to respond back in Inuktitut so they answer in English. When someone speaks to me in English, sometimes I will not be able to respond back in English so I respond in Inuktitut. They are probably thinking that we might not be able to understand them. It might be like that but we have to keep encouraging them. I like to sing songs and play my guitar. They will be following the songs I sing in Inuktitut and they really enjoy singing with me and it makes them really happy. Singing is one very good way of learning a language. If we are not always teaching them language at least they should be listening to Inuktitut songs so that they can memorize it in that way.*

The parents who use only the Inuit language with their children realize that it takes an effort – and the overall context of the family, the community and the territory shapes *how much* effort it takes. They realize that they do have a choice to keep using the Inuit language, even if their children prefer English or have come to understand English better: they can repeat, give examples, persist. They realize that their children *will* become strong speakers of the Inuit language if they keep hearing it and needing to use it in order to interact in the home. When their children don't understand, they lovingly give examples and repeat themselves in a different way, avoiding switching to English, to maximize their children's language exposure. They spend time with their children, just being together and interacting. They use the Inuit language in creative ways together.

Of course, this is easier said than done. It is much easier when the children are young and rely on the parents and have no choice but to spend a great deal of time together. Many parents *are* trying to use the Inuit language all the time in the home, but have limited time with their children once they put them in day care, or once they start school. Then, support from the caregivers and teachers becomes even more important both in terms of continued exposure to and interaction in the Inuit language and in terms of sending positive messages about the value of the Inuit language even once schooling shifts to English.

Some parents and caregivers feel limited by their own language competence. Even though the elders say that they admire the language competence of the younger, bilingual generations, some of these younger people feel self-conscious of their Inuit language because it is not the same rich language of the elders. They may feel that what they know of the Inuit language is not valuable enough to pass on, or they might simply feel somewhat embarrassed or shy when others hear them using the Inuit language.

*Cecilia, Whale Cove Call-In: I have an adopted baby who is one year old and I really want him/her to know Inuktitut and English well as s/he grows up, hopefully not making mistakes the way I do. Of course I make mistakes because I don't know everything in Inuktitut.*

*Qannuaq, Cambridge Bay Call-In: Some young people are not trying to speak Inuinnaqtun because they do not know enough to have a conversation. I don't want them to be shy but just try. I am not fluent in English but I am fluent in Inuinnaqtun.*

In these cases, decreasing competence leads to a lack of motivation to use the Inuit language, when people who do not feel they speak the language well feel like ashamed or self-conscious to use it.

It is recommended that language policy and programming explicitly focus on helping young parents to develop strong language skills, and equipping parents to support their children's language development in the home. It is further recommended that policy and programming for bilingual acquisition facilitate families spending time together, including participating in traditional activities together.

## Lack of a language foundation to build on

The unfortunate side effect when children do not acquire a solid foundation of the Inuit language in the home, is that they then do not have the assumed basis from which to develop advanced uses. When people are weaker speakers, people tend to address them in English instead of the Inuit language, cutting down on their opportunities to be exposed to and interact in the Inuit language, which is necessary for advancement.

*Monica: Do you talk to your children in Inuktitut or English?*

*Eva Voisey, Whale Cove Call-In: A mixture of both as long as they understand! (now laughs at this). When I tell them something in Inuktitut and they reply, "How do you mean?" and trying to make them understand doesn't get you anywhere (in Inuktitut) because they have not grasped the meanings/words in Inuktitut and don't seem to take it seriously. Although we want them taught well in both English and Inuktitut, it is difficult with so much more out there (affects their priorities).*

*Monica: How many children do you have?*

*Eva: Five.*

*Monica: Do they all speak in Inuktitut?*

*Eva: Yes, they all do speak in Inuktitut but the younger ones speak in English to their friends, while the older ones use Inuktitut more.*

*M: And they can probably write in Inuktitut?*

*Eva: I think the older ones can, but the younger ones... ?*

When children do not have basic speaking and understanding down, they do not have the foundation upon which to build advanced skills such as reading, writing, singing, or storytelling.

*Johnny Sammurtok, Whale Cove Radio Call-In: I teach Inuktitut at school and the kids, they'll learn the syllabics ii-uu-aa but they hesitate to write in Inuktitut because they don't know the meanings of the Inuktitut words...*

*Bernadette Saumik, Rankin Inlet: Sometimes I'll be asked to come to the schools and teach a group of children Inuktitut, drum dancing/singing, stories. But they don't understand so there is an interpreter standing by, explaining all that I'm doing (in English)...*

Children – and adults, for that matter – can't take advantage of exposure to these advanced uses if they don't understand basic speaking. In order to develop skills they would need to practice, but without knowledge of basic speaking and understanding, they have no place to begin.

It is thus recommended that language policy and programming explicitly target basic skills and receptive skills in order to lay the foundation for further learning.

## Limits on what parents can do

While the essential role of parents transmitting the Inuit language to their children and providing a monolingual Inuit language environment for even their adult children to come home to cannot be overestimated, many parents are doing the best that they can do, using the Inuit language as

much as they can, and still not seeing the results they hope for in their children. Part of the reason is that children spend so many hours outside of the home every day, listening to and interacting with speakers other than their parents.

## Peer influence

The role models observe, and this is substantiated in other research, that children are doing much of their interacting with peers, and thus peer language use is having a profound effect on language acquisition. At present, the language used between siblings and between friends is often English.

*Bernadette Saumik, Rankin Inlet: (Inuktitut) is being taught and being learnt very well, except a lot of their peers/friends don't speak Inuktitut. I don't think they forget easily when it is used at home but it's when they spend more time amongst their friends (who don't speak it) that they start not understanding us (parents), it seems.*

*Interviewer: When your children talk to you, do they use either language, or to other children?*

*Yolande Aupalu, Whale Cove: For myself, I try to make them use Inuktitut, but they can't speak it well. They use only English to their friends.*

*Caller, Talurjuaq Radio Call-In: Our children in Talurjuaq are speaking only in English. The people who work to save the Inuktitut language should travel to our communities.*

*Monica: Why do you think they are speaking more English rather than Inuktitut?*

*Caller: It is because they only communicate with the ones that they can understand and it is their peers that they speak with.*

Children are improving in English from a very young age partly because they are learning from their peers and are motivated to speak like their peers. Children in English-speaking day cares and English-dominant schools, who are accessing and talking about English-language media, understandably get in the habit of using English together. If peer language use could be reversed, to encourage children once again using the Inuit language as the default language among friends, it could have excellent impacts on laying a strong foundation for bilingualism in Nunavut (especially where strong Inuit language use is being modeled in the home). The Inuit Language Protection Act's clause to promote early childhood education and daycare opportunities in the Inuit language should go a long way to anchor practices of using the Inuit language with peers at an early age (especially if combined with parents' commitment to encouraging Inuit language use between siblings):

Article 9: To address the pre-school stage of learning, consistent with the significance of this developmental stage for language acquisition and revitalization, the Government of Nunavut shall promote early childhood Inuit Language development and learning involving children and their parents at the community level... (Nunavut 2008c:8)

It is recommended that policy and programming continue to address and prioritize early childhood language acquisition. While the home is the anchor of language acquisition, it is also recommended that policy and programming support creation of programs in early childhood education centres, day cares, libraries, etc.

## Media influence

Another teacher of the language (at least of receptive skills), and motivator in language use and acquisition, is popular media. Inuit of all ages are hearing and seeing English in greater proportion than its actual presence in the community in terms of speakers through the media. High access to English-language media creates more exposure and thus more potential for learning of English. The popularity of English language media also adds to attractiveness of English (adding covert pressure to use this as the "cool" language).

*Quluaq: Do there seem to be any kind of hindrances or something in the way?*

*Moses Alijaq, Rankin Inlet: All these places and things we have now, like the game of hockey, restaurants, television, I have nothing against them and we have to use them today. With all the different things, I think the young are so capable now, the students learn about so much now, so many things that can fill the mind. Some things we need to use and so on. And sometimes life is hard.*

*Quluaq: Why do you think the younger generation is speaking so much English in some communities?*

*Bernadette Saumik, Rankin Inlet: No doubt, since they started learning to speak, all they've heard or been taught is English, by going to school, it's mostly English and then they go home and watch TV in English again.*

*Monica: We see Inuktitut being lost quickly today, it seems, for example here in Rankin, what do you think is the reason why we seem to be losing Inuktitut? Because we, parents, are not trying hard enough...?*

*Eva Voisey, Whale Cove Radio Call-In: The television is really powerful teaching tool, and it is like the 'babysitter' of our children now, especially till they reach about 10 years old, when we need to do something, we tell them, "Here, watch TV", and they are learning constantly in English because we don't have Inuktitut shows all day...and then we use both languages to them so long as they understand, sometimes even, when we use another term for them to understand in Inuktitut, they still don't get it...*

*Quluaq: Why do you think the younger people are picking up the English language so much quicker than the Inuktitut language?*

*Mary Voisey, Whale Cove Radio Call-In: The TV! As soon as we wake up, the TV goes on. The toddlers are made to watch cartoons so that they will not cry. Then she or he will already understand English when they start school. We do not teach them English at home. It is from the TV that they learn English even before pre-school.*



*Quluaq: Why is there so much English spoken by the younger generation in some communities?*

*Philip Siturat, Whale Cove: I think it is because of the TV. The TV is on all day.*

*Quluaq: Do you think you know why so many children are speaking more English today?*

*Violet Charlie, Talurjuaq: From the TV; they watch it a lot and listen to it a lot. I think that is the reason why Inuktitut is being lost more today.*

*Quluaq: Why do you think some youth are picking up and speaking only in English so much more today in some communities?*

*Yolande Aupalu, Talurjuaq: Inuks, Inuit are the only reason, because they are talking too much English. They only start talking more in Inuktitut when they become adults, although sometimes they don't speak it right. The young ones are talking in English only because that's all the whole family/community is speaking.*

*Quluaq: Yes, and perhaps other things like, they're only listening to music in English or watching too much TV, these are other factors as well.*

*Yolande: Yes, and the computer games, movies in English only, they watch TV, play games and sometimes all day long.*

The time spent in front of English language media, by extension, also decreases exposure to Inuit language in that time spent in front of the television might have otherwise been spent visiting, talking with friends and family. Families in Clyde River who remember the recent introduction of cable television, anecdotally report a quick shift from visiting with friends and family in the evenings to watching television with less conversation.

Presence of the Inuit language in media is helping acquisition of the Inuit language, and has the potential to contribute to thriving bilingualism by shifting exposure back to the Inuit language. Inuit language media development is partly targeted in the Inuit Language Protection Act:

Article 24 [...] The Minister [of Languages] shall develop policies or programs intended to promote [...]

(2)(f) 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...

(Nunavut 2008c:18)

Similar recommendations were made by the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium Drafting Committee (2008). Public broadcasting through CBC North, and Inuit-led initiatives such as the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC) and Isuma and Isuma.tv are already contributing to media production and distribution in the Inuit language (cf. Sorensen 2000, Kunuk 2008). IBC and Isuma are actively training the next generation of media producers. Still, more stringent policy is needed to support and propel Inuit language media development and distribution. (See Kunuk 2008 for specific recommendations from Inuit language media producers about the support they need to continue, increase, and improve production and distribution.)

### Lack of materials in the Inuit language

The most important contribution parents can make to their children's language acquisition is providing exposure to varied uses of the language. Parents' own oral (and written) use, and the practices of visitors and other family members (speaking to each other as well as to the children) provide rich stimuli for children's learning. Nonetheless, some parents who are doing their best to speak the language at home wish for greater availability of materials in the Inuit language, which would help them to expose their children to a wider range of speech practices, especially advanced uses. They feel hindered from explicitly teaching their children by the lack of resources to support Inuit language teaching in the home.

*Monica: Although you want to teach him more, does there seem to be something in the way?*

*Jean Kusugak, Rankin Inlet: There is not enough Inuktitut reading material, or children's television shows are all in English, I think these are some barriers – lack of learning/teaching material in Inuktitut for kids and the TV shows.*

*Cecile Panika, Whale Cove: The only thing we have in Inuktitut is the calendar and the Bible. We have nothing in Inuktitut, they're trying to make these kinds ... but they are slow at it here in Whale Cove.*

*Quluaq: What are you missing that you think of when you want to teach your language?*

*Violet Charlie, Talurjuaq: There is not enough reading material. There are lots of English-only books. I've tried to order some books before, but they are only in English. There are no Inuktitut books available to buy. They only have some at the school.*

Some parents are overcoming the lack of materials creatively making their own, sharing with others, and accessing whatever is available in libraries, drawing on the resources of the Nunavut Literacy Council, etc. However, the plethora of English-language materials, next to the dearth of Inuit language materials, makes it tempting to just use English. Again, some feel that children are receiving the subliminal message that English is more important than the Inuit language when so many high quality materials are available in English and so few are available in the Inuit language.

The development of materials to support early childhood education is partly addressed in Articles 9a and 9b of the Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c). It is recommended that policy makers and programmers:

- put priority on providing parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators with tools to creatively use the Inuit language with children (e.g. songs, games, books, etc. already under development by Nunavut Literacy Council, and training to create their own);

- implement programs, with sustained funding, to support creation of written materials in the Inuit language, specifically and;
- support programs, with sustained funding, to increase creative production in the Inuit language more generally.

## Support beyond the home

Schools also exert an extremely strong influence on language acquisition. Many of today's middle-aged bilinguals say that they only learned English once they went to school – and they acquired very high levels of competence in the language. In the Kitikmeot context, where intergenerational transmission of the language in the home is increasingly unlikely, many are looking to the schools to teach Inuinnaqtun to their children. The new Education Act (Bill 21) recognizes the need for special measures to revitalize Inuinnaqtun in communities where it is the indigenous and ancestral language, but not necessarily the mother tongue of the children or youth.

Most communities in Nunavut have (and have had, since the 1970s) what is called an early-exit model of immersion education, where children are educated in the Inuit language for the first three or four years of formal schooling, then in English for the remainder. (In contexts where there are high numbers of non-Inuit, Inuit have also had the option to choose English-language education all the way through.) Thomas Berger (2006), in his conciliation report to Nunavut Tunngavik and the Canadian Government, concluded that this system is absolutely failing all Nunavut children. In an early exit model, the children never have the chance to develop advanced uses of the first language (such as advanced storytelling or essay writing), and have no support to maintain even the basic skills they've acquired (e.g. reading and writing in the Inuit language, in the early years at school). They are thus not as well equipped as they could be to go on to be workers or creators in the Inuit language. UNESCO documents go further, claiming that inadequate access to education in the mother tongue not only has repercussions on language development, but also on broader personal, academic, social, and economic development:

Research conclusions about results of present-day indigenous and minority education show that the length of mother tongue medium education is more important than any other factor (including socio-

economic status) in predicting the educational success of bilingual students, including their competence in the dominant language (e.g. Thomas & Collier 2002). Today's indigenous and minority education is organized contrary to solid research evidence about how best to reach high levels of bilingualism or multilingualism and how to enable these children to achieve academically in school. Dominant-language medium education for indigenous children often curtails the development of the children's capabilities, perpetuates poverty, and causes serious mental harm. (Anders-Bar et al. 2008:4)

Berger's findings echo previous years' rumblings and research and consultation, expressing that the education system was inadequate for producing high level bilinguals, and trying to find a system more appropriate to the aspirations of Nunavummiut. Since the creation of Nunavut, the mandate of the government has included developing an education system based on children's right to acquire an education in their first language.<sup>33</sup> *Pinasuaqtavut 2004-2009 reports:*

Major Accomplishments of the First Government of Nunavut, April 1999 – March 2004:

- [...] Established a 10-year curriculum and resource development strategy;
- Completed Language of Instruction study [...]

Objectives of the Second Legislative Assembly of Nunavut:

- [...] Develop a Language of Instruction Strategy for Nunavut schools and provide the resources required for effective implementation;
- Strengthen the teaching and learning of Inuktitut in schools and in the public service so that it can become the language of work by 2020;
- Work for a public education system that focuses on graduating bilingual youth who are equipped with the skills and knowledge to succeed in post-secondary studies;

---

<sup>33</sup> For further discussion of mother tongue education as a human right, see Anders-Baer 2008; Magga et al. n.d.; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000; UNESCO 1953; and United Nations 2007.

- [...] Deliver more career development programs at the community level including basic literacy, pre-employment, certificate, diploma and degree programs... (Nunavut 2004:16-17)

The list of accomplishments refers to two (separate) commissioned reports produced in 2000 by Ian Martin and David Corson for the Department of Education on policy options for bilingual programming in Nunavut. The reports are based on analyses of the current context in Nunavut and comparisons to policies and programming in similar contexts internationally. After extensive consultations in Nunavut, the new Education Act (Bill 21) embraces some of these recommendations, proposing options of models for bilingual education through to the end of Grade 12, with graduation expectations including fluency in both the Inuit language and English (Articles 24.1 and 23.2, Nunavut 2008a). Consistent with other Nunavut bilingualism policies, the Education Act seems to acknowledge that achieving bilingualism will mean prioritizing the Inuit language, “In administering this Act, the Minister shall ensure that the education program supports the use, development and the revitalization of the Inuit Language” (Article 25.2, Nunavut 2008a:15). Two concerns the Nunavut Literacy Council heard in role models interviews and workshops are the need for competency targets (i.e. how to know when someone speaks the Inuit language “well” for his or her age) and effective materials for teaching. The Education Act addresses these needs:

Article 25.4 The Minister shall establish and implement competency targets in the spoken and written forms of the languages of instruction.

Article 25.6 The Minister shall make available learning materials to enhance and support the use of the Inuit Language. (Nunavut 2008a:16).

These recommendations in the Education Act are reiterated in the Inuit Language Protection Act (Article 8, Nunavut 2008c) and their implementation will help achieve a fully bilingual society.

The question of in which dialect the materials should be produced for effective learning support is repeatedly mentioned by users and producers, and should be addressed through recommendations on standardization and/or teaching dialect awareness.

*Caller, Talurjuaq Radio Call-In: I am thankful for you to be here to ask these questions. What I want to say is that our children are in school all day. They will leave the school at 3:30 and that is when we could spend sometime with them. I am very grateful to the teachers. I think that they should have full time Inuktitut teachers in the schools just like the full time English teachers so that they will not forget about the past. I know that they teach Inuktitut here using the materials that were made by other communities and not made in Qitirmiut (Talurjuaq area). It would be good to develop Inuktitut materials here. I think that they do not understand what they are supposed to be learning in Inuktitut because the materials are in the dialect that they cannot understand. And it is good too in a way, at least it is Inuktitut that they are being taught.*

Part of the strength of bilingualism in Nunavut is that Nunavut has Inuit teachers, trained in the North, qualified to teach in its schools. The Nunavut Teacher Education Program graduates students with Bachelor of Education degrees completed in the North. A newer collaboration between Nunavut Arctic College and the University of Prince Edward Island is offering a Masters of Education program specially geared to Nunavut students. These bilingual and bicultural educators are the greatest asset for accomplishing the goal of bilingual graduates. However, they are in the minority. The need for educated workers and the pressures of teaching leads trained teachers to be snatched up by other government job opportunities. The relatively few trained Inuit teachers teach almost exclusively in the primary levels. The need to train and support teachers who can teach in the Inuit language is explicitly addressed in the Inuit Language Protection Act:

Article 8.2 The Government of Nunavut shall, in a manner that is consistent with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, [... ]

(d) develop and provide [... ]

(ii) the training, certification and professional development for educators and others, including Inuit Language training and upgrading, that are necessary to produce the number, type and quality of educators required to implement this section. (Nunavut 2008c:8)

The need for trained and available Inuit teachers applies at all levels of education, especially junior high, high school, and post-secondary (i.e. Nunavut Arctic College). In the meantime, policy and programming must be put in place to support non-Inuit teachers' acquisition of the Inuit language and general adaptation to and appreciation of the bilingual and bicultural context in Nunavut.

The system of public education has incredible potential to contribute to the achievement and maintenance of “fully functional bilingualism” in Nunavut. Training children and youth in the Inuit language and English throughout the school day has the direct benefit of developing academic language skills in both languages. It also has the indirect benefit of sending messages about the importance of the Inuit language (current programs where the Inuit language is not taught past Grade 3 may be sending the message that the Inuit language is not important, or is only for children). Furthermore, schooling in the Inuit language increases the number of hours a student is exposed to the Inuit language in a given day and increases the contexts in which it might feel “normal” to use the Inuit language (affecting the “default” language of the community). Whereas in the past, school has been blamed for tipping the scales against the Inuit language (first overtly, then covertly through neglect of the Inuit language and strong support for English), formal schooling has the potential to tip the scales back toward supporting stable Inuit language – English bilingualism.

With the new Education Act, communities will have a choice from among bilingual education models. Some parents have been reluctant to put their children in an Inuit language stream, believing this will hold them back.



*Did you put your children through the Inuktitut or English stream in school?*

*Maryrose, Rankin Inlet Call-In: I tried to put all of them in Inuktitut when they first started, but they couldn't do English well when they got to grade 4, so in some ways it's good and in some ways, it's not good. So I put the younger ones in English but I regretted it later and wished I had put them all through Inuktitut at the beginning, only one of them is able to read and write in Inuktitut.*

*Monica: What was your regret?*

*Maryrose: These other ones aren't able to read or write in Inuktitut and they tend to speak only in English.*

Government, educators, and groups like the Nunavut Literacy Council must continue to work with the public to help them understand the options for bilingual education. Government and educators must work together to ensure development of a high quality bilingual program, with effective transitions from Inuit language immersion to English language instruction. They must work with the public to ensure understanding of (and confidence in) the new model(s), and how these are effective for their children's learning.

The Education Act (Nunavut 2008a) emphasizes the role of parents, elders, and community participation in formal education. The role models also emphasized that one cannot rely on schools to do it alone, but must work with them:

*Quluaq: How do you teach them [your children and grandchildren] the Inuktitut language?*

*John Manilak, Talurjuaq: I do not teach them so much. But today as parents, we do not do enough. We depend on the teachers too much. We should be working with them and share our knowledge with them.*

In sum, many factors are positively contributing to bilingualism in Nunavut. Inuit in many areas are competent speakers, feel free to choose the Inuit language in a wide range of interactions, are developing as advanced Inuit language users, and are transmitting the Inuit language to the next

generation. English also seems to be well-learned by all of the younger generations, and opportunities to learn it well abound. Current trends of decreasing use of the Inuit language – especially in the home and private life – are worrying, though. They are leading to lower rates of transmission of the Inuit language, and thus a shakier foundation for future bilingualism.

Bilingualism gives choices. Some bilingual Nunavummiut are choosing to persist in the Inuit language, to speak to their children, to speak to others with different dialects, to speak in the workplace, to read, to access media. Others are choosing to switch to English in most interactions. Most have conflicting motivations which push them sometimes to prefer English, other times to prefer the Inuit language. In the dynamics of language contact, the preference is often so slight as not to be noticed, as both the Inuit language and English are highly valued. In order for bilingualism to be achieved and maintained, the Inuit language must be put first. The time to act is now, while so many Inuit still speak the language well, while young parents can still use it to their children, and while the elders are still around to mentor and spend time with younger people. By starting with oral and receptive competence, and building up to more advanced skills in the Inuit language, by working together, a fully-functional bilingual society will be achieved and sustained long into the future.

The following list summarizes the recommendations for bilingual policy and programming, derived from the analysis of factors contributing to the current context outlined in this chapter. They target two main areas: creating the context for thriving bilingualism, and supporting learning of both languages, with priority on the Inuit language.

## Creating Context

**Recommendation 14:** Develop policy and programming to facilitate cross-dialectal communication in the Inuit language. Such policy and programming may involve the introduction of an auxiliary standard form of the Inuit language and/or dialect awareness activities. See also: Arctic Languages Symposium Recommendations; Recommendations in “Preserving Dialects in Nunavut” (Tulloch 2005).

**Recommendation 15:** Pay particular attention in policy development in Nunavut to create a context where both languages are valued, and where

both languages are seen as part of accessing the best of all opportunities available to Nunavummiut.

**Recommendation 16:** Put in place policies and programming which help Nunavummiut to access opportunities for which the Inuit language is particularly valued.

**Recommendation 17:** Create the expectation that the Inuit language should be used in any and all contexts in Nunavut.

**Recommendation 18:** Develop strategies and mechanisms to create a context in which the Inuit language *may* be used in any context in Nunavut.

**Recommendation 19:** Develop policies and programs to support the Inuit language replacing English as the default language in certain contexts in Nunavut.

**Recommendation 20:** Continue to develop the Inuit language, and materials in it, so that it may be used in every context in Nunavut and so that exposure will increase (and thus opportunities for learning and use).

**Recommendation 21:** Implement programs, with sustained funding, to support creation of written materials in the Inuit language.

**Recommendation 22:** Support programs, with sustained funding, to increase creative production in the Inuit language.

**Recommendation 23:** Enforce hiring policies which give due recognition to knowledge and effective use of the Inuit language as a necessary skill for effectively serving an Inuit-language majority population. See also: Article 16, Inuit Language Protection Act.

**Recommendation 24:** Enforce hiring policies which stipulate that excellent Inuit language skills need not be accompanied by equivalent or even moderate English language skills in order for a candidate to be considered. See also: Article 16, Inuit Language Protection Act.

## Supporting Learning

**Recommendation 25:** Increase awareness about language acquisition in a bilingual context. In particular, remind parents that their children *will* learn

any language that (a) they are consistently exposed to *and* (b) they need to use in order to interact.

**Recommendation 26:** Encourage parents to make their homes “Inuit-language-only” domains, to always speak the Inuit language to and around their children, and to encourage their children to speak back to them in the Inuit language.

**Recommendation 27:** Support parents and families so that parents and children can spend more time together, including more time participating in subsistence activities.

**Recommendation 28:** Establish programs which help parents help their children develop a strong oral foundation in the Inuit language.

**Recommendation 29:** Provide parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators with tools to creatively use the Inuit language with children (e.g. songs, games, books, etc. already under development by Nunavut Literacy Council, and training to create their own). See also: Article 9a and 9b, Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c).

**Recommendation 30:** Establish policies and programs to support young parents in particular in improving their Inuit language skills (e.g. master apprentice programs, learning circles, culture camps). See also: Article 10, Adult language acquisition and upgrading, in the Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c).

**Recommendation 31:** Provide parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators with tools to creatively use the Inuit language with children (e.g. songs, games, books, etc. already under development by Nunavut Literacy Council, and training to create their own). See also: Article 9a and 9b, Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c).

**Recommendation 32:** Create programs outside of the home – in early childhood education centres, daycares, libraries, schools – which help all children to acquire a strong oral foundation in the Inuit language. See also: Article 9 in the Inuit Language Protection Act (Nunavut 2008c).

**Recommendation 33:** Develop programming which allows all Nunavummiut to achieve the minimum standards of bilingualism for understanding and being welcoming. Establish mechanisms for language teaching and exposure to language use to facilitate the acquisition of at least receptive skills in the Inuit language for non-speakers.

John Manilak, Talurjuak Elder

“I encourage [my children] to sing songs or just speak in Inuktitut. Today’s children are different compared to the past. I often think “Why are they like that”? [To teach the Inuktitut language, it is helpful to have opportunities for] learning about the traditional way of living, sewing, and learning about the men and women’s tools. Sometimes when we only hear about them it is too easy to forget. It is better to make them so that we will not forget. It might be hard at first but we can learn. We can do those ourselves instead of depending on the teachers. [...] I would prefer to teach [my children language] out in the land. Such as building iglus, seal hunting or fishing. They have to see and do, just the same way we were taught by our parents. Many of us think this way. We remember how we were raised. [...] [Children] should go to the elders or go to the school. We, the elders, are just waiting for them to ask questions. [...] I used to admire those families who were close to each other and the ones who use kinship terms between families. My mother used to tell me families will get closer to each other if they use the kinship terms. She used to tell me that it was good to share food so that they will share with us also and not forget to include orphans and those who were less fortunate. [...] I want all people to speak to each other in Inuktitut. I also want them to try to keep their traditional ways of singing, throat singing, and drum dancing.

Jerilyn Kaniak, Cambridge Bay Youth

Being around people that can speak it... For me, I stay around language as much [as I can] so I can really get into it and understand and learn how to speak it. So it’s probably from going one place where it’s really spoken very well and then bringing it back [My brothers] are always wanting to go out and stay out... on the land and hunt... When you’re out there there’s nothing stopping you. [...] It’s when you’re out that’s when it’s all really going to come. [It’s important to know the Inuit language] because it’s what we are now needing bilingual workers and (whatever) so it’s really important. [...] In order to help the elders, make their daily lives complete, it’s very important. [...] [To learn the language, I’m] studying and taking the class and listening to Elders, staying in touch with them. [...] At home, we have books, my grandmother (she’s staying at our place), tapes, songs, CDs, whatever, the TVs a good one too. And family. [...] What encourages me to learn is my younger brother, he’s like my little pride and joy, keeps me up with it and he’s keeping up with me too and that’s what’s really keeping me going. [...] [The challenge is] parents not really speaking it to you. They speak it to us but not as much so. [...] I always ask them to too. Okay for a little bit and then they give up (for a while). [...] I always tell [my brother], you’re lucky, look I’m right here I’m looking up to you. And then I look at myself and then look down, there’s my brother that will be looking up to me.



Quluaq Pilakapsi, Nunavut Literacy Council Inuktitut Resource Coordinator

*... when a child is first born, they pick up whatever language is being used at home. So if parents speak Inuktitut at home, it will help preserve Inuktitut. Our language is beautiful and it will strengthen their identity wherever they go, people will know where they come from. We may not have the same dialects but it's the same language, you will have to help those children in your home as you are the ones in control, because when they go out, they will always continue to hear Qablunaatitut, but in your homes, you are the boss and this will help them not to lose Inuktitut.*

### SECTION 3: DESCRIBING THE SOLUTION

Quluaq Pilakapsi, Nunavut Literacy Council Inuktitut Resource Coordinator

*I can't say that it is not strong because I can hear it being used everywhere I go. If the parents try harder to use Inuktitut to their children, they will pick it up more because they hear it a lot. Just help each other to understand Inuktitut. [...] We all have different talents that we are good at. We have different abilities and you can get good at doing something. You have the power to become able if you put your mind to it. Maybe something I can't do so I encourage the youth to be told that they are *ajungi*, capable and that will encourage them to try harder and not give up. I really have the youth in my heart.*





# WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN ACHIEVING BILINGUALISM AND BILITERACY IN NUNAVUT?

Who will make Nunavut a fully functional bilingual society? At the most fundamental level, thriving bilingualism will only be achieved when intergenerational transmission is ensured, that is, when families and individuals decide to put the Inuit language first. However, the contexts that set limits and possibilities for individual choices are established by international, national, regional and local entities. This section identifies some of the actors. For each, examples are given of how the group contributes to the creation of a thriving bilingualism in Nunavut. The list is not exhaustive but rather indicative of current strengths, trends and possibilities.

## International bodies

International organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), and the Arctic Council, among others, play an important role in setting international standards for the appreciation and protection of diversity. As a member state to each of these, Canada has a responsibility to respond to the recommendations of these bodies and to be a positive contributor to discussions. Often the contribution of such international bodies involves the declaration of human rights (e.g. indigenous rights, rights of the child, linguistic rights). They may also make concrete recommendations for the promotion of diversity based on recognized needs and best practices around the world. Appendix E lists some examples of relevant contributions from international bodies, which support efforts to promote bilingualism in Nunavut. See also Smeets (2005) for a detailed outline of UNESCO's contributions to the maintenance of linguistic diversity.

## International indigenous groups

Indigenous groups are meeting internationally to share concerns and solutions. In 2008, for instance, permanent members of the Arctic Council, led by the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and Saami Council, hosted the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium (AILS 2008). This conference brought together mainly indigenous speakers from across the Arctic to share promising practices in language revitalization. Text of speeches and recommendations from the symposium are available at [www.arcticlanguages.com](http://www.arcticlanguages.com). The International Symposium on the World's Indigenous Languages (ISWIL 2005), hosted by Canadian Heritage, also brought together primarily indigenous speakers from around the world to share on language revitalization in their specific contexts. Such international gatherings of indigenous peoples, at symposia, events, or through learning exchanges, can be a powerful tool for exchanging information and learning what tends to work to promote bilingualism in indigenous contexts. Appendix B includes websites of policy and programming initiatives in various contexts around the world (including Inuit contexts). These target strong language skill development and balanced bilingualism. Many are potentially applicable to Nunavut.

## Federal government and federal bodies

The Canadian federal government directly sets the context in which indigenous languages in Canada may develop and thrive. The federal government has been directly blamed for the breakdown in intergenerational transmission (see “What is contributing...” above). First Nations, Inuit and Metis have been clear what they require of the federal government in way of support (cf. Task Force 2005) – including official recognition of the value of their languages in the Canadian context; enabling legislation supporting language development, acquisition and use; and sustained multi-year funding agreements to ensure local language planning initiatives can be launched and carried through to fruition (e.g. media development, educational innovation). The Aboriginal Languages Initiative has funded, in the past, programs such as those recommended in this paper. Ongoing federal responses to Inuit claims will play an important role in supporting bilingualism in Nunavut.

## Territorial government, territorial bodies and leaders

The Territorial Government also has a key role to play in creating the context for bilingualism in Nunavut. Since its creation, mechanisms for language promotion, protection, and preservation were overtly built into the Government through the establishment of the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth (CLEY) and the Languages Commissioners Office. These offices have been actively developing and promoting the language (e.g. terminology workshops run by CLEY; Inuit language week [cf. Westman et al. 2005]), and increasing public awareness of their language rights. The Government's mandate, *Pinasuaqtavut* (Nunavut 2004), includes numerous language-related clauses, together indicating how important knowing and using the Inuit language is for creating the desired society within Nunavut. With the large majority of its electorate mother tongue speakers of the Inuit language, the Government of Nunavut is appropriately using its jurisdiction to pass enabling legislation for the Inuit language in the Territory. As the largest employer in the Territory, the Government has a real opportunity to make the goal of the Inuit language as the language of work in Nunavut a reality. In partnership with the federal government and Inuit organizations, the Territory plays a role in funding language initiatives and developing language programming and promotion initiatives.

## Municipal governments/Hamlets

Municipal/hamlet governments can also create a context for thriving bilingualism. As is the case for the territorial government, they have a special opportunity to favour the language of the majority of the community members they represent in their daily work and in the services they offer. Using the Inuit language in these contexts sends a positive message to all Nunavummiut about the language's value and appropriateness to be used in all contexts.

## Inuit organizations

Inuit organizations at all levels, international, national and regional, including youth and elder branches, have been strong advocates for the

Inuit language. For most, the explicit mission of the organizations includes preservation and use of the Inuit language.

At the international level, for example, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) is representing Inuit in forums such as the International Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Arctic Council, and advocating for greater awareness of language issues and international support for solutions (see for example Olsen 2008). The Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council has taken a lead in language preservation and revitalization through the organization of two Inuit Circumpolar Youth Symposia on the Inuit Language (2005 and 2007). The first synthesized youths' experiences, priorities, and recommendations with regard to the Inuit language (see Coley and Tulloch 2008, Tulloch and ICYC 2005); the second explored how youth work with each other, and with middle-aged Inuit and elders, pursuing existing promising practices and implementing new initiatives to strengthen the language (see Schuerch 2007).

At the national level, ITK is advocating strongly for Inuit to the Canadian public and the federal government. Mary Simons, President of ITK reports:

*... Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami has put forward a number of policy proposals to our Canadian government that speak to this need for an institutional capacity to support our language - Inuktitut. First, we have submitted a proposal for the establishment of an Inuit Knowledge Centre that will be the focus for research on and by Inuit and foster the next generation of Inuit scholars. [...] Secondly, as a result of our recent Summit on Inuit Education, ITK is also proposing that a Inuit Language Development Institute be established... linking language preservation and revitalization efforts in the 4 Inuit regions... and support[ing] efforts to produce Inuit language instruction materials, language research, elder vocabulary documentation... [I]t would coordinate an annual language symposium. (Simons 2008:8)*

ITK's track record for successfully moving from advocacy to programming is strong (for example, launching the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC) in 1982 [IBC 2007]).

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) has a long history of lobbying for Inuit control over policy and programs that affect Inuit. Its role in negotiating the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and Nunavut Act, and

the clauses that promote equitable language use in Nunavut, are just one example.

Regional organizations, in addition to playing an advocacy and awareness role, have been active in implementing programs which create opportunities to learn, use, and be exposed to various uses of the Inuit language. The Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA), for example, runs land-based programs for youth and women. The “Somebody's Daughter” program incorporates cultural practices, healing, and language/literacy development and provides an excellent example of the types of programs Inuit language role models said they would like to see more of. Other KIA initiatives include the production of new materials in the Inuit language (e.g. music CDs of children’s songs), through funding from the federal Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI).

All of the Inuit organizations, as they are largely staffed by Inuit and exist to serve and represent Inuit, provide what seems to be a natural context for using and promoting the Inuit language in the workplaces, publications, and services.

## Workplaces

As addressed throughout this paper, consideration of which language(s) will help one’s children to succeed, including securing jobs, is influencing language use in the home. Furthermore, as many require advanced language use (reading, writing, delivering presentations, computer use, etc.), workplaces are contexts for lifelong language learning. The Inuit Language Protection Act includes strong wording for the prioritization of the Inuit language in the workplace, where it has often been relegated to second place. The clauses, as implemented, promise to favourably impact all other initiatives to secure a firm foundation for stable bilingualism in Nunavut.

## Formal education/schools/Nunavut Arctic College/teachers

Formal education has been blamed as the killer of the Inuit language. Furthermore, lack of an adequate bilingual educational program (i.e. inadequate use of and teaching of the Inuit through all levels; abrupt transfer to English as language of instruction without appropriate

transitions) has been blamed for low levels of Inuit achievement in the school system, and, as a result, low Inuit representation in the workforce (see Berger 2006). The new Education Act addresses the need for a stronger bilingual program, training of teachers, and development of materials (Nunavut 2008a). The spirit of the law is creating an environment where teachers and students will succeed, and where Inuit language and cultural practices will be incorporated and respected. (A focus on language in education for language revitalization and community well-being has been a major recommendation of Inuit over the past years, see also Aylward 2004, 2006; Corson 2000; Martin 2000; Tulloch and ICYC 2005).

*Sharon Qijuk, Whale Cove Role Model: I have noticed in the schools, when they start kindergarten, they are taught Inuktitut up to Grade 4. Then from Grade 5 to 12, there is not much Inuktitut being taught. When they become teenagers, they speak more English and less Inuktitut. So I think we need to push harder and try harder to keep and teach our language in the schools.*

## Research bodies

The Inuit Language Protection Act calls for the creation of a language authority, which will oversee all research on the Inuit language. The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami is advocating for the creation of an Inuit Knowledge Centre and Inuit Language Development Institute. These proposed institutions aim at increased Inuit leadership in research about the Inuit language. While a great deal of research is being done about and with Inuit,<sup>34</sup> there is a desire for greater control over what's being researched and published about the Inuit language. Strategies include training Inuit scholars and increasing the recognition of other forms of knowledge in the communities. Existing research teams may be drawn on to identify relevant results from research in other contexts which may help inform policy and to partner in community-led initiatives. One of the needs identified in this paper is research to support the possible selection of an auxiliary dialect for literary creation. An Inuit Language Authority or Inuit

---

<sup>34</sup> For example, a list of publications of research on Inuit, Yup'ik and Saami languages is found at: <http://husky1.smu.ca/~stulloch/Publications.html> [sic].

Language Development Institute would be an appropriate leader in any such research.

## Churches

The religious domain is the first in which reading and writing the Inuit language was practiced (cf. Laugrand 2002). The Nunavut Literacy workshops identified church services as one of the few remaining monolingual (Inuit language) domains from some people. In contexts where advanced uses of the Inuit language are regularly practiced in the church (reading scripture and song lyrics, singing, preaching; cf. Hot, in press), churches may contribute to the development of thriving bilingualism by deliberately participating in literacy instruction, including teaching of reading, writing, and other advanced uses of the Inuit language (lyric composition, for example).

## Libraries

Libraries' reason for being is to increase access to language materials for pleasure and learning. Collections in Nunavut include materials in the Inuit language and in English, as well as different types of oral (CDs, DVDs, etc.) and written (current events, magazines, children's books, novels, etc.) materials. Many libraries already have programs and promotion initiatives to encourage people to come and use resources. Libraries, and library staff, can build on these strengths, giving parents and learners greater access to a wider range of materials in the Inuit language, and implementing Inuit language programming.

## Authors, translators, artists, media producers

The presence of high quality materials in the Inuit language is given as the reason why Inuit language materials are accessed, when they are. Cartoons like *Takuginai* (cf. IBC 2007) are highly popular with Inuit and non-Inuit children alike. These support language acquisition by increasing exposure and by keeping the Inuit language alive, fun, and "cool". *Atanarjuat* (Kunuk 2000) brought the Inuit language to the ears of speakers of all different languages, internationally. Non-Inuit were

reminded of the indigenous languages still used and valued around the world. Inuit, too, were reminded of the richness of their language; for those who understand the Inuit language, the dialogue became an opportunity to recollect traditional vocabulary, naming patterns, and ways of interacting. Hip hop, and other popular music in the Inuit language, children's books, radio productions, news productions, web creations, etc. are other opportunities to use, see and hear the Inuit language in a wide variety of genres, and with associated vocabulary, and to create a strong message to Inuit growing up that the Inuit language can be used anywhere, for anything. Inuit in our interviews and in other sets of language-related recommendations are calling for greater production in the Inuit language, including training and long-term funding for the creative initiatives of Nunavut's artists.

## Grassroots or community-based language initiatives

A great deal of existing artistic and literary creation in the Inuit language, as well as teaching materials and other language development, is coming from grassroots or community-based initiatives. Some are government-funded; others reflect the efforts of private enterprise. The following are just a few examples of how initiatives from individuals and groups can strongly favour the development of a strong foundation for bilingualism in Nunavut.

- **Pirurvik** ([www.pirurvik.ca](http://www.pirurvik.ca)) has the mandate to enhance “Inuit language, culture and well-being” (Pirurvik 2007). Their initiatives have included language development, such as the localization of Microsoft Word, creative production, such as the publication of a CD of Inuit language songs, and Inuit language teaching. In addition to Inuit-Second-Language classes at three levels, Pirurvik fills a niche by offering on-line language learning support (<http://www.tusaalanga.ca/>) and by offering advanced language and culture courses, taught by elders, and targeting Inuit language speakers who wish to acquire the most advanced uses of the language.
- **Isuma, and IsumaTV** ([www.isuma.ca](http://www.isuma.ca), [www.isuma.tv](http://www.isuma.tv)) Isuma is an Inuit-owned independent production company with the mission to “to produce independent community-based media – films, TV



and... Internet - to preserve and enhance Inuit culture and language; to create jobs and economic development in Igloolik and Nunavut; and to tell authentic Inuit stories to Inuit and non-Inuit audiences worldwide” (Isuma 2006). Their productions are extremely popular, and an essential addition to Inuit language media. Isuma.tv offers continuous streaming of (alternating) videos in the Inuit language, as well as offering a portal for broad distribution of other indigenous language audio/visual.

- **Nunavut Literacy Council** ([www.nunavutliteracy.ca](http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca)) is a not-for-profit organization, directed by board members from each region of Nunavut. It is engaged in research and programming for the Inuit language. Over the past years, it has supported family and adult literacy through publications, workshops, and materials distribution. The council also plays an advocacy role for language and literacy development in the territory.

Mary Simons (2008:7) recommends “the third shift that needs to take place for our Indigenous languages to reverse their decline and take hold in our communities is support for the development of new institutions and programs that support the growth and development of our language.” The grassroots and community-based organizations listed above are illustrative of the potential for such groups to profoundly and positively impact bilingualism in Nunavut.

## Informal learning networks

The role of informal learning networks cannot be underestimated, and yet these are the least well addressed in current policy. The levels of literacy of the elders, with no formal schooling, which surpass those of children who are taught to read and write in the schools (as evidenced in the interviews and in Hot 2008, Hot in press) is testimony to the effectiveness of informal learning networks, for all levels of language.

*Quluaq: What else can you do to teach your children your language?*

*Yolande Aupalu, Talurjuaq: First, they know numbers in Inuktitut and can write them, so I'll add to that, pictures of those, and different things they can see. I try to teach them but it gets harder for them when they try to write in Inuktitut.*

*Quluaq: When it gets difficult for them, step in and help them, so they don't feel like giving up. Once they want to quit, or give up, it gets hard to teach them anything, it's good to help them when they find it difficult.*

Parents play a key role in teaching children the Inuit language. A great deal of learning happens just by spending time together, being exposed to different activities and the language use that goes with it.

*Susie Napajuq, Whale Cove: [...] When I am sewing at home, or when any of us are sewing at home, I think it would help a lot if we shared the names of the patterns we are sewing on. But, like Eva said earlier, that we can't seem to find any time alone with our kids anymore because of their busy schedules, games and other things.*

This type of learning through interaction occurs not only between parents and children, but between elders and youth, between friends, between co-workers, and in broader environments of family visiting, going out on the land, interacting at work, etc.

Although face-to-face interaction is most effective in supporting language acquisition, individuals and families can also support learning through recording oral histories and informal creation of language and learning materials.

*Caller, Talurjuak Radio Call-In: I do not want people to forget it. I do not know how to teach Inuktitut because I do not have teaching techniques. We elders want to pass on our language to our children and our grandchildren because we will not live forever. I recently started taping the traditional knowledge on my own in order that I pass it along to the children and for those who have no parents. I want them to learn from the tapes about our past, as I have learned from my parents.*

While all of the actors listed in this section contribute to creating a context for thriving bilingualism and supportive learning opportunities, the establishment and maintenance of stable bilingualism will only be achieved when Nunavummiut decide, as individuals, as families, as workgroups, etc. to use the Inuit language, and to support each other's development. All other actors must work together to create the context in which bilingualism remains viable and desirable, and to support learning opportunities.



## HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER?

### Role of policy, programming and practice

The Government of Nunavut has taken the stance of preserving, protecting and promoting the Inuit language through the passage of strong language policy. The language and education laws reflect the desired linguistic future, define that future, and dictate measures for achieving it. Language policy protects and provides a context for language rights and the exercise of them. The Government of Nunavut's language legislation, for example, protects against oppression (e.g. discrimination based on choice to use the Inuit language in the workplace) and supports desired practices (e.g. language use in the workplace). The policies also support grassroots desires to see the Inuit language take a greater place in Inuit society by emphasizing the value of the Inuit language and prioritizing its acquisition and use.

In the case of language in the workplace and in the schools, funding to realize the Government of Nunavut's goals is implicit in related clauses. This is not the case for early childhood and adult education, nor for the creation of creative and written materials in the Inuit language. Whereas home and community-based language acquisition lays the essential foundation for all other language acquisition and use, government policy should clearly indicate this as a priority, matched with funding for programming development.

Programming enhances opportunities for learning and using the Inuit language and has greater direct impact on day-to-day behaviour than policies which can seem remote. However, policy and funding are required to support the implementation and continuation of language programming. Grassroots initiatives at language programming seem to be the most successful. If this is the case, the most effective government support may be to maintain current enabling policy, and to ensure long-term, sustained funding is available for the development of such programs. Programming and policy must be developed to reflect the desires of the population, to support their day-to-day practices, and to enable them to adopt language behaviours which will lay the foundation for thriving bilingualism.

The charts below outline strategies focusing on language research, mobilization of language/literacy specialists, language programs for pre-school-aged children and for those out of school, and creative production in the language. Current Nunavut laws recognize the desirability of these kinds of programs, but they are not given particular priority, nor do the current laws have mechanisms, or funding, to ensure they are implemented and carried through to reach the intended goal. For this reason, we focus on what are perceived areas of weakness in policy implementation, recommending that government policy consider recognizing home and community-based language literacy development as equal priority to school and work-based language and literacy development (research shows that the most effective way to lay a foundation for thriving bilingualism and biliteracy is to start in the home and community). Policy should also include evaluation mechanisms (i.e. what is working?) as part of the overall language plan.

In the following section, charts include the identification of actors involved in a number of strategies. Each chart lists possible joint actions, and expected short- and long-term outcomes. All plans ultimately target increased knowledge and use of the Inuit language, and thus strengthening of the foundation for bilingualism in Nunavut. The tables are presented as points of departure for discussion between the different actors in language planning in Nunavut to explore how all can work together to address current detractors from bilingualism and biliteracy, and to ensure a strong foundation is laid for thriving bilingualism and biliteracy in the future of Nunavut.

## Dialect survey – Supporting Inuit in cross-dialectal communication

Actors	Actions	Short-term Outcomes	Longer-term Outcomes	End Result
<p>Research team - may be made up of outside academics, insider specialists, participating organizations (e.g. NLC), student researchers...</p> <p>Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit (Inuit Language Authority to be created under Bill 7)</p> <p>Government of Nunavut (CLEY)</p> <p>Inuit associations (ICC and/or ITK)</p>	<p>1a. Map Inuit dialects based on predicted understanding (existing analyses of lexical and grammatical similarity)</p> <p>1b. Conduct intelligibility testing to determine how well speakers of different Inuit dialects can understand one another.</p> <p>1c. Conduct interviews or questionnaires with Inuit in various communities to test perceptions of how well other dialects are understood, and willingness to accept a reference (standard, auxiliary) dialect.</p> <p>2a. If short-term outcomes from 1a-c show it is possible to identify a single reference dialect, <i>Inuit Uqausinginnik</i></p>	<p>- Research team and <i>Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit</i> understand how well speakers of different dialects can understand each other.</p> <p>- Research team and <i>Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit</i> understand how willing speakers of different dialects are to accept a reference dialect.</p> <p>- <i>Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit</i> evaluate the possibility of a promoting a single reference (standard, auxiliary) dialect. i.e. if all Inuit language speakers in Nunavut understand a given dialect “relatively well” and are willing to accept it, then it may be possible to identify it as a reference standard.</p> <p>- A well-substantiated reference dialect is chosen, based on needs, ability, and desires of population</p> <p>- A well-chosen reference dialect is</p>	<p>- Inuit are empowered to use the Inuit language as the default language for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- oral communication</li> <li>- written communication</li> <li>- interpersonal communication</li> <li>- interregional communication</li> <li>- international communication</li> <li>- creative production</li> </ul> <p>- Inuit are accessing publications and creative expressions in the Inuit language from all areas of Inuit Nunaat.</p> <p>- Inuit are creating in the</p>	<p>Greater use of the Inuit language creates a stronger foundation for thriving bilingualism.</p>

<p>and/or regional associations)</p>	<p><i>Taigusiliuqtiit</i> identifies and promotes this dialect.</p> <p>2b. Promotion includes awareness-building that local dialects will be maintained.</p>	<p>accepted and embraced by the population.</p>	<p>Inuit language for the broader audience reached by the reference dialect.</p> <p>- Inuit are continuing to use local dialects for local communication.</p>	
--------------------------------------	--	---	---	--



## Dialect survey cont.

### **Enablers:**

- Research team familiar with methods for approaching dialect surveys.
- International standards for researching and identifying reference dialect.
- International promising practices showing value of reference dialect
- Large body of literature in western Greenlandic dialect.
- *Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit* to oversee decision making.
- Political will at territorial (CLEY, Government of Nunavut) and international (Arctic Council, ICC) levels to choose and promote a standard (see Arctic Languages Symposium Recommendations 2008).

### **Constraints:**

- Possible resistance among local population.
- Preference to use one's own dialect or else English among some Inuit.
- Fear, among some Inuit, that a reference dialect will lead to the loss of local dialects.
- Funding for training and travel of research team.



## Mobilization of community-based language/literacy specialists

Actors	Actions	Short-term Outcomes	Longer-term Outcomes	End Result
Individuals in communities who are recognized for their excellent language skills	1a. Identify people & organizations in communities who have the skills already to facilitate different types of language and literacy projects.	-Individuals with excellent language skills are recognized as such in their communities.	- People of all ages in the communities are supported in ongoing language acquisition	Levels of knowledge and use of the Inuit language increase in each community, thus strengthening the foundation for thriving bilingualism in Nunavut.
Nunavut Literacy Council	1b. Secure funding to pay salary to specialist workers and to support travel for training.	- Existing capacity is enhanced through specialized training and funding.	- Young parents are developing stronger language skills through community programs and are equipped to support their children’s language development.	
Community-based organizations (libraries, churches)	1c. Train community workers to effectively support language development.	- Inuit are equipped to help others strengthen their language skills. - Every community in Nunavut has a “home-based” language/literacy specialist worker; every Nunavummiuk has access to a language/literacy specialist in his/her community.	- Children are acquiring stronger Inuit language skills in the home, due to increased support to their parents.	
Nunavut Arctic College/Adult Learning Programs	2. Work with community-based language/literacy specialists to develop programs based on resources, needs and desires of community	- Community-based language/literacy specialists are using their skills to implement, lead and evaluate home and community-based language initiatives	- New, community-specific materials and resources are being developed in the Inuit language through community-based initiatives.	
Regional Inuit organizations	3. Equip community-based language/literacy specialists to track activities and outcomes of community-based language initiatives.			

## Mobilization of community-based language/literacy specialists cont.

### **Enablers:**

- Highly skilled language users are already present in all communities – elders, middle-aged bilinguals, youth...
- Perceived need in communities, as identified in Role Models research, for local language/literacy specialists to support home and community-based language and literacy development.
- Existing Nunavut Literacy Council community-based initiatives, which could be a launch point for new initiatives.
- Nunavut Literacy Council experience and mandate in training and mobilizing community language workers.

### **Constraints:**

- Funding to support training, travel, and potentially salary & expenses of community-based specialists.
- Availability (time-constraints) of highly skilled people in the communities.

## Early childhood and adult language programs

Actors	Actions	Short-term Outcomes	Longer-term Outcomes	End Result
Community-based language/literacy specialists  Nunavut Literacy Council	1. Implement language nest programs in test communities, targeting communities where intergenerational transmission/language use in the home is weakest.	- Children (birth to four years old) are learning the Inuit language as a first language from proficient speakers	- Children acquire a strong foundation in the Inuit language as their first language.  - Parents and children are using the Inuit language as the default language in the home	Levels of knowledge and use of the Inuit language increase in each community, thus strengthening the foundation for thriving bilingualism in Nunavut.
Community-based organizations (libraries, churches)  Early childhood educators and daycares	2. Implement master-apprentice programs in test communities, targeting in the first instance young parents (or young parents-to-be) with little to no knowledge of the Inuit language.	- Young parents learn basic communicative skills in the Inuit language  - Young parents are equipped to transmit the Inuit language as a first language to their children.	- Children are using the Inuit language with peers in the language nest context  - A new generation of Inuit capable in traditional advanced uses of the language are being trained	
Nunavut Arctic College/Adult Education  Regional Inuit organizations  Elders, skilled Inuit language speakers	3. Expand master-apprentice program to include more communities and to target those with good to excellent skills who wish to master more advanced, non-academic uses.	- Committed Inuit adults are acquiring basic and/or advanced language skills from recognized language experts in their communities.	- Intergenerational interaction between children, youth, middle-aged Inuit and elders is enhanced.	

## Early childhood and adult language programs cont.

### **Enablers:**

- The language nest and master-apprentice programs are well-documented and “proven” programs in contexts similar to Nunavut’s.<sup>35</sup>
  - King 2001 describes the rationale, implementation, and long-term success of language nest programming (Te Kohanga Reo) where they were first introduced in New Zealand.
  - Further information on history, curriculum, training, etc. can be found on the Kohanga Reo website, <http://www.kohanga.ac.nz/>.
  - Language nest programs have also been implemented and evaluated in Nunatsiavut.
  - Master apprentice program is outlined in Hinton 2001.
  - Detailed description of the program is given in Hinton, Vera and Steele 2002.
  - Master apprentice program has been successfully implemented in California, Alaska, British Columbia, and elsewhere.
- Inuit (including early childhood educators) who participated in workshops hosted by the Nunavut Literacy Council between 2005 and 2008 have some familiarity with these methods.
- Trainers for the master-apprentice program are available in Canada and in the USA.
- Both programs are indigenous-created and well-suited to the context of Nunavut.

### **Constraints:**

- Funding to set up language nests and to pay participants in master-apprentice program.
- Availability (time constraints) of language speakers to staff language nests
- Availability (time constraints) of language experts and would-be language learners to serve as masters and apprentices.

---

<sup>35</sup> See Ball 2007 for further examples of promising practices in encouraging strong first language development in indigenous children.

## Elder/adult/youth literacy programs

Actors	Actions	Short-term Outcomes	Longer-term Outcomes	End Result
Community-based language/literacy specialists	1. Transfer literacy programs offered to those who read only English	- Readers are able to access written information in the Inuit language at a level consistent with their oral ability	- More people are reading and writing in the Inuit language	Levels of knowledge and use of the Inuit language increase in each community, thus strengthening the foundation for thriving bilingualism in Nunavut.
Nunavut Literacy Council		- People with high oral competence also read and write in the Inuit language, reinforcing and enhancing their language skills.	- Inuit language literacy rates match English language literacy rates.	
Community-based organizations (libraries, churches)	2. Advanced literacy programs offered to Inuit language readers who want to enhance abilities using the Inuit language especially for leisure, creation, and to access new information	- People with lower oral proficiency in the Inuit language are equipped to begin to make sense of the environmental literacy (building blocks of learning).	- More people are using existing publications in the Inuit language.	
Nunavut Arctic College/Adult Educators		- Readers are acquiring new literacy skills, e.g. reading aloud, reading different types of texts, understanding different “tools” within texts (e.g. footnotes, indexes), reading and creating poetry, stories...	- Rates of reading and writing in the Inuit language match rates of reading and writing in the English language.	
Regional Inuit organizations	3. Adult basic literacy	- Readers are accessing information in genres and styles that may surpass their productive capability.	- More people are creatively producing in the Inuit language;	
Elders, skilled		- Oral and written competence are increasing concurrently.	breadth of Inuit language written materials is	
		- Basic reading and writing skills are acquired by Nunavummiut who have not		

<p>Inuit language speakers, middle-aged bilinguals</p>	<p>programs offered to non-readers, perhaps with targeted classes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ elders who never learned to read;</li> <li>○ Youth who are not effectively acquiring literacy skills in school</li> </ul>	<p>previously had the opportunity to learn them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New readers are able to access basic information in the Inuit language.</li> <li>- New readers have the tools and motivation to practice and improve reading and writing.</li> </ul>	<p>increasing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Critical mass of proficient Inuit language readers and writers/creators is achieved to sustain (and give motivation for) territory-wide basic literacy in the Inuit language.</li> </ul>	
--	---	--	--	--





## Elder/adult/youth literacy programs cont.

### **Enablers:**

- Individuals with strong reading and writing skills in English.
  - Especially middle-aged Inuit leadership who are highly proficient. bilinguals (orally) but may have gone through English-only education
  - Transfer literacy: transferring reading skills is relatively easy. With help, anyone in Nunavut who reads well in English should be able to learn quickly to read and write at a level consistent with his/her oral ability in Inuktitut.
- Individuals with excellent oral competence in the Inuit language.
  - These are most likely to be effective teachers and creative producers in the language = high outcomes from enhancing literacy skills.
  - Depending on exposure to reading and writing, may be best served by any one of the three literacy programs.
- Nunavut Literacy Council with mandate and experience producing materials.
- Nunavut Literacy Council with mandate and experience training literacy specialists.
- “Learning to Learn” manual produced by Nunavut Literacy Council (2004) has relevant ideas and suggestions and training for facilitators for advanced literacy programs and adult basic literacy programs, specific to the Nunavut context.

### **Constraints:**

- Reading and writing success in the Inuit language can generally be achieved to the level of, or slightly above, oral competence in the language. Initiatives to teach reading and writing require heavy pairing with other initiatives targeting oral skills in order for learners to have the appropriate foundation upon which to build more advanced skills.
- New materials (e.g. transfer primer or self-training primer; adult basic literacy materials) are required to teach these programs.

- Time commitment required of teachers and learners, especially for advanced and basic literacy training.
- Funding to create materials, train community-based language/literacy specialists, and implement programs.

## Creative circles and production workshops

Actors	Actions	Short-term Outcomes	Longer-term Outcomes	End Result
Community-based language/literacy specialists  Nunavut Literacy Council	1. Story-telling workshops a) sharing circles b) teaching/production workshops	Nunavummiut are exposed to and learn to share oral history; personal stories; stories from Inuit oral tradition; stories from other oral traditions.	- Quantity and quality of creative productions in the Inuit language increases.  - Access to creative production in the Inuit language increases as materials are distributed in the community, via radio, Internet (YouTube), CD distribution, among others.	Exposure to and use of the Inuit language in advanced ways increases status of the language, motivation to use it, and levels of use and competence in each community, thus strengthening the foundation for thriving bilingualism in Nunavut.
Community-based organizations (libraries, churches)  Authors, translators, artists, media producers	2. Song-writing workshop series a) sharing circles b) teaching/production workshops	Nunavummiut are exposed to and learn to compose lyrics in traditional genres (ajaja, verbal duelling, lullabies) and modern genres (hip hop).		
Nunavut Arctic College/Adult Educators	3. Drama team a) sharing circles b) teaching/production workshops	Community-based drama teams are exposed to and learn to produce radio shows, short, videos, improve sketches, high school play scripts, etc.	- A critical mass of creative production in the Inuit language is achieved to sustain (and give motivation for) territory-wide basic literacy.	
Regional Inuit organizations  Elders, skilled Inuit language speakers, middle-aged speakers, parents, youth	4. Written literature workshops a) sharing circles b) teaching/production workshops	Inuit writers share their work; write and publish about reader/writer common experiences (i.e. those that will best support basic literacy development)	- Inuit see their written language as fun and relevant	

## Creative circles and production workshops cont.

### **Enablers:**

- Proficient language users, including “graduates” of the most advanced reading group.
- Highly creative Inuit.
- Strong desire, as evidenced in the role model interviews, to learn to use the Inuit language in creative ways.
- Excellent models of creative production throughout Nunavut.
- Specific ideas for oral projects outlined in “Unipkausivut - Building Language and Literacy Skills Through Oral History” and “Literacy Programs that Work” (Nunavut Literacy Council 2004).
- Nunavut Literacy Council with mandate and experience supporting community-based literacy through creative programming.
- UNESCO statements supporting creative production as a necessary strategy for improving literacy.

### **Constraints:**

- Funding to set up sharing circles/teaching & production workshops and to pay leaders/facilitators/teachers.
- Availability (time constraints) of potential teachers/facilitators and participants.

## CONCLUSION

Many aspects of thriving bilingualism are already in place in Nunavut and can be built on. Most communities, individuals, and settings in Nunavut are indeed bilingual (or fit somewhere on the continuum of individual and societal bilingualism). The Government of Nunavut has already put in place mechanisms to strengthen the Inuit language, and thus to further secure the development of bilingual contexts. Actors at the international, national, regional and local levels are already working hard to achieve stable bilingualism. “Building on strengths” is a core value of Nunavut. The Nunavut Literacy Council research and resulting recommendations have taken a strengths-based approach. Like the New Zealand Maori, we do not consider language the *problem* in itself, but potentially the *solution* to a number of other challenges.

Since the negotiations leading up to Nunavut, Inuit have been clear that having and using the Inuit language, alongside English, is essential to shape the kind of society Inuit wish to live in. The Inuit language is the mother tongue of a majority of Nunavummiut. It is closely connected to Inuit culture, history and traditional practices. It is the language many Inuit feel most comfortable communicating in. Its use is necessary for effective communication within Nunavut. Research is increasingly showing how effective implementation of the Inuit language in the school system, and opportunities to know and use the Inuit language outside of school also, are strong contributors to individual and community well being.

Efforts are needed to support the context for bilingualism, that is, to maintain Nunavummiut’s motivation for bilingualism, and to enhance opportunities for acquiring, improving and using bilingual skills. The Official Languages Act, the Inuit Language Protection Act, and the Education Act include specific and detailed clauses for enhancing use of the Inuit language in schools and in the workplace. These clauses are operational and promise to be effective. The recommendations made throughout this paper include affirmation of what is already passed in legislation and policy, and some suggestions to work together to further these goals. The research in this paper suggests, though, that efforts must be go beyond schools and workplaces.

The purpose of the Nunavut Literacy Council’s research is to suggest ways that bilingualism and biliteracy may be achieved and sustained, and thus contribute to stronger, healthier communities and families. Based on the research, we have suggested possible avenues for the development of supportive policy and programming in Nunavut. Specifically, we make recommendations for defining

bilingualism, setting targets for policy and programming, creating a context where the Inuit language will be the default language in Nunavut, and supporting language learning. We suggest further development in policy and programming for early childhood and adult language development – areas less thoroughly addressed in current laws and essential for creating a strong foundation for bilingualism. The paper is grounded in understanding of complementary bilingual research, and of language-related policies and programming in Nunavut. The ongoing goal is to open the dialogue on how policy, research, and practice can inform each other, and how workers in each field may contribute to the goal of building “a fully functional bilingual society, in Inuktitut and English.”

Through the Knowledge Exchange Workshop in January 2009, the Nunavut Literacy Council will be expanding these ideas beyond Nunavut. Although needs and contexts are complex and vary between the Inuit regions, a foundation for bilingual development exists in each. Every region has comprehensive land claims and increasing levels of autonomy. Each region has begun to work for language revitalization and preservation. Although it is unlikely that each region, or even community, will adopt the same strategies, it is possible for Inuit to learn from each other, share best practices, and continue working together at local, regional, national, and even international levels to promote the Inuit language and lay the foundation for thriving bilingualism. Fully functional bilingualism can be achieved and sustained, if all levels commit and work together to put the Inuit language first.

## REFERENCES

Allen, D. (1995). *School Mathematics Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.

Allen, D. (1998). *School Science Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.

Anders-Baer, Lars, Ole Henrik-Magga, Robert Dunbar and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas. (2008). Forms of Education of Indigenous Children as Crimes against Humanity? Expert paper submitted to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Available online at:  
[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/E\\_C19\\_2008\\_7.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/E_C19_2008_7.pdf).  
Accessed 5 December 2008.

Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium Drafting Committee. (2008). Recommendations of the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium. Available online at:  
[http://www.arcticlanguages.com/presentations/20081021\\_arcticlanguages\\_recommendations.pdf](http://www.arcticlanguages.com/presentations/20081021_arcticlanguages_recommendations.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.

Aylward, M.L. (2004). *Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq: Future Schools of Nunavut*. Curriculum and School Services. Department of Education, Arviat, Nunavut.

Aylward, M.L. (2006). *The Role of Inuit Language and Culture in Nunavut Schooling: Discourses of the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Conversation*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation: University of South Australia: Adelaide, Australia.

Baker, Colin. (2001). Book Review of Linguistic Genocide in Education - or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights? By Tove Skutnabb-Kangas. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*. 5(2): 279-283.

- Ball, Jessica. (2007). Aboriginal Young Children's Language and Literacy Development: Research Evaluating Progress, Promising Practices, and Needs. Paper prepared for Canadian Language and Literacy Networked Centre of Excellence. Available online at: <http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/CLLRNet%20Feb%202008.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Ball, Jessica and Marlene Lewis. (2005). Using Indigenous Parents' Goals for Children's Language to Guide Speech-Language Practice and Policy. Paper presented at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education, University of Waikato, Hamilton, Aotearoa/New Zealand, November 27-December 1. Available online at: <http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/WIPCE%20Talking%20Points.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Balanoff, H. and C. Chambers. (2005). Do My Literacies Count as Literacy? An Inquiry Into Inuinnaqtun Literacies in the Canadian North." *Literacies* 6: 18-20. Available online at: <http://www.literacyjournal.ca/literacies/6-2005/pdf/balanoff+chambers.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Berger, Thomas. (2006). Conciliator's Final Report March 1, 2006 'The Nunavut Project' Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Implementation Contract Negotiations for the Second Planning Period 2003 – 2013. Submitted to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Available online at: [http://www.nunavuteconomicforum.ca/public/files/library/EDUCATIO/berger\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.nunavuteconomicforum.ca/public/files/library/EDUCATIO/berger_final_report.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Bhola, H. S. (1994). *A Sourcebook for Literacy Work: Perspectives from the Grassroots*. London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Bougie, E., S. C. Wright, et al. (2003). Early Heritage-Language Education and the Abrupt Shift to a Dominant-Language Classroom: Impact on the Personal and Collective Esteem of Inuit Children in Arctic Québec. *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism* 6(5): 349-373.



- Bourhis, Richard Y. (2001). Reversing Language Shift in Quebec. In Joshua A. Fishman, ed. *Can Threatened Languages be Saved? Reversing Language Shift, Revisited: A 21st Century Perspective*. pp. 101-141. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Bourhis, R.Y. and R. Landry. (2008). Group Vitality, Cultural Autonomy and the Wellness of Language Minorities. In R.Y. Bourhis, Ed. *The Vitality of the English-Speaking Communities of Quebec: From Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal. Available online at: <http://www.ceetum.umontreal.ca/pdf/Bourhis%20&Landry.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Brice-Bennett, D. (1996). *Legal Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
- Burnaby, Barbara. (1999). Policy on Aboriginal Languages in Canada: Notes on Status Planning. In Lisa Philips Valentine and Regna Darnell eds. *Theorizing the Americanist Tradition*. pp. 299-314. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Calvet, L.-J. (1996). *Les Politiques Linguistiques*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Canada. (1992). Draft Legal Text. Charlottetown Accord, 1992. Ottawa.
- Canada. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. (1997). *Gathering Strength – Canada’s Aboriginal Action Plan*. Ottawa: DIAND.
- Canada. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut. (1993). Agreement Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada. Ottawa: DIAND and the TFN.

Canada. Department of Justice. (1999). A Consolidation of the Constitution Acts 1867 to 1982. Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada.

Canada. House of Commons. (1988). Canadian Multiculturalism Act. LR 1985, chap. C-18.7.

Canada. House of Commons. (1993a). An Act to Establish a Territory to be Known as Nunavut and Provide for its Government and to Amend Certain Acts in Consequence thereof. Ottawa: The House of Commons of Canada.

Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1994). *Public Policy and Aboriginal Peoples: 1965-1992, Volume 2. Summaries of Reports by Federal Bodies and Aboriginal Organisations*. Ottawa: Canada Communication Group Publishing.

Canada. Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. (1990). *“You Took My Talk”: Aboriginal Literacy and Empowerment: Fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs*. Ottawa: Queen’s Printer for Canada.

CBC News North. (2006). ‘Learn Inuktitut or Iqqanaijaaqjaagunniiqtutit, Mandarins Told’, 7 June 2006. Available online at: <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/north/story/2006/06/07/nor-bilignual-senior.html>. Accessed 26 November 2008.

Coley, M.-E. and S. Tulloch. (2008). Emerging Leaders. *Horizons* 10(1): 767-768. Available online at: [http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/Horizons\\_Vol10Num1\\_final\\_e.pdf](http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/Horizons_Vol10Num1_final_e.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.

Cooper, M. J. (2007). Patterns of Use of Inuktitut and English within Communities in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Implications for Education. Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of New Brunswick. Master of Education. Available online at: <http://husky1.smu.ca/~stulloch/CooperThesisApril07.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.

- Corson, D. (2000). *Qulliq Quvvariarlugu Policy Options for Bilingual Education in the Territory of Nunavut*, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.
- Crawford, A. (1995). *Land Claims Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
- Cummins, Jim. (2001). Bilingual Children's Mother Tongue: Why is it Important for Education? *Sprogforum* 19: 15-20. Available online at : <http://inet.dpb.dpu.dk/infodok/sprogforum/Espr19/CumminsENG.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Daveluy, Michelle and Jenanne Ferguson. (in press). Scripted Urbanity in the Canadian North. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 19(1).
- Dorais, L.-J. (1989). Bilingualism and Diglossia in the Canadian Eastern Arctic. *Arctic* 42(3): 199-207.
- Dorais, L.-J. (1990a). The Canadian Inuit and their Language. In D. R. F. Collis, ed. *Arctic Languages: An Awakening*. pp. 185-289. Vendôme : Imprimerie des Presses Universitaires de France. Available online at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0008/000861/086162e.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Dorais, L.-J. (1990b). *Inuit Uqausiqatigiit. Inuit Languages and Dialects*. Iqaluit : Nunavut Arctic College.
- Dorais, L.-J. (1996). *La Parole Inuit: Langue, Culture et Société dans l'Arctique Nord-Américain*. Paris: Éditions Peeters.
- Dorais, L.-J. (2006). *Inuit Discourse and Identity after the Advent of Nunavut*. CIÉRA. Québec, Université Laval. Available online at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10315/1274>. Accessed 5 December 2008.

- Dorais, L.-J. and S. Sammons (2002). *Language in Nunavut: Discourse and Identity in the Baffin Region*. Iqaluit and Quebec City: Nunavut Arctic College and GÉTIC
- Edwards, John. (1996). Monolingualism, Bilingualism, Multiculturalism and Identity: Lessons and Insights from Recent Canadian Experience. In Sue Wright, ed. *Monolingualism and Bilingualism: Lessons from Canada and Spain*. pp. 5-37. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Eriksson, B. (1998). Iqaluit: Diglossia and Language Identity Among the Inuit. M.A. thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Växjö.
- Ferguson, C. (1959). Diglossia. *Word* 15: 325-340.
- Fishman, J. A. (1967). Bilingualism with and without Diglossia: Diglossia with and without Bilingualism. *Journal of Social Issues* 23: 29-38.
- Fishman, J. A. (1971). The Relationship Between Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics in the Study of Who Speaks What Language to Whom and When. In J. A. Fishman, R. L. Cooper and Roxana Ma, eds. *Bilingualism in the Barrio*. pp. 583-604. Bloomington: Indiana University.
- Genesee, Fred. (1998). French Immersion in Canada. In John Edwards, ed. *Language in Canada*. pp. 305-325. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Graburn, N. H. H. (1982). Television and the Canadian Inuit. *Études/Inuit/Studies* 6(1): 7-17.
- Grosjean, F. (1982). *Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

- Grosjean, F. (1985). The Bilingual as a Competent but Specific Speaker-Hearer. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 6: 467-477.
- Grosjean, F. (2008). *Studying Bilinguals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hamers, Josiane F. and Michel H. A. Blanc. (2000). *Bilinguality and Bilingualism*, 2nd Ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harper, Kenn. (1983). Writing in Inuktitut: An Historical Perspective. *Inuktitut*, September: 3-32.
- Harper, Kenn. (1985). The Early Development of Inuktitut Syllabic Orthography. *Études/Inuit/Studies* 9(1): 141-162.
- Harper, Kenn. (1998). Inuit Writing Systems. Discussion paper presented to the Nunavut Implementation Commission, Nunavut Language Policy Conference, Iqaluit.
- Harper, Kenn. (2000). Inuit Writing Systems in Nunavut. In Jens Dahl, Jack Hicks and Peter Jull, eds. *Nunavut: Inuit Regain Control of their Lands and their Lives*. pp. 154-68. Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- Harper, Stephen. (2008, June 11). Full Apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential Schools System. Available online at: [http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media\\_gallery.asp?media\\_category\\_id=20&media\\_id=2011](http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media_gallery.asp?media_category_id=20&media_id=2011). Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Heller, M., ed. (1988). *Codeswitching: Anthropological and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Hinton, Leanne. (2001). The Master-Apprentice Learning Program. In L. Hinton and K. Hale, Eds. *The Green Book of Language Revitalization*. pp. 217-226. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Hinton, Leanne, Matt Vera, and Nancy Steele. (2002). *How to Keep Your Language Alive: A Commonsense Approach to One-on-One Language Learning*. Berkeley: Heyday Books.
- Hornberger, Nancy. (2003). Literacy and Language Planning. In C. B. Paulston and G. R. Tucker, eds. *Sociolinguistics: The Essential Reader*. pp. 449-459. Blackwell.
- Hornberger, Nancy H. and Ellen Skilton Sylvester. (2000). Revisiting the Continua of Biliteracy: International and Critical Perspectives. *Language and Education* 14(2): 96-122. Available online at:  
<http://www.gse.upenn.edu/~hornberg/papers/RevisitingContinua2000.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Hot, Aurélie. (2008). Un bilinguisme stable est-il possible à Iqaluit? *Études Inuit Studies* 32(1).
- Hot, Aurélie. (in press). *Language Rights and Language Choices: The Potential of Inuktitut Literacy*. *Journal of Canadian Studies*. Special Issue on Nunavut.
- Hua, Zhu and Li Wei. (2005). Bilingual and Multilingual Language Acquisition. In Martin John Ball, Ed. *Clinical Sociolinguistics*. pp. 165-179. Blackwell.
- Inuit Broadcasting Corporation. (2007). Inuit Broadcasting Corporation Website. <http://www.inuitbroadcasting.ca/>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Isuma. (2006). Isuma Independent Inuit Film – About Us. Online at:  
<http://www.isuma.ca/about>. Accessed 5 December 2008.

- Jacobs, K.A. (1998). A Chronology of Mohawk Language Instruction at Kahnawà:ke. In L.A. Grenoble and L.J. Whaley, eds. *Endangered Languages: Language Loss and Community Response*. pp. 117-124. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kaplan, R. B. and R. B. Baldauf Jr. (1997). *Language Planning from Practice to Theory*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- King, Jeanette. (2001). Te Kohanga Reo: Maori Language Revitalization. In L. Hinton and K. Hale, eds. *The Green Book of Language Revitalization*. pp. 119-128. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Korhonen, M. (1996a). *Accounting Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
- Korhonen, M. (1996b). *Human Services Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
- Kouritzen, Sandra G. (1999). *Face[t]s of First Language Loss*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Kulikšana, M. (1998). Status and Issues of the Inuinnaqtun Language of the West Kitikmeot. Submitted to the Nunavut Language Policy Conference. Iqaluit.
- Kunuk, Zacharias, dir. (2000). *Atanarjuat, The Fast Runner*. Igloodik Isuma Productions.
- Kunuk, Zacharias. (2008). Technology and Media as Tools to Promote and Strengthen Indigenous Languages. Presentation at the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium, October 19-21, Tromsø, Norway. Available online at: [http://www.arcticlanguages.com/presentations/session3/zacharias\\_kunuk.pdf](http://www.arcticlanguages.com/presentations/session3/zacharias_kunuk.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.

- Kusugak, Jose. (2008). Trends on Inuit Language. Presentation at the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium, October 19-21, Tromso, Norway. Available online at:  
[http://www.arcticlanguages.com/presentations/session1/jose\\_kusugak.pdf](http://www.arcticlanguages.com/presentations/session1/jose_kusugak.pdf).  
Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Laugrand, Frédéric. (2002). *Mourir et Renaître. La Réception du Christianisme par les Inuit de l'Arctique de l'Est Canadien*. Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Légaré, André. (2008). Canada's Experiment with Aboriginal Self-Determination in Nunavut: From Vision to Illusion. *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 15: 335-367.
- Mackey, W. F. (2003). Forecasting the Fate of Languages. In J. Maurais and M. Morris, eds. *Languages in a Globalising World*. pp. 64-81. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MacLean, E. A. (1979). The Need for and Feasibility of Planning for a Coordinated International Auxiliary Inuit Writing System. In B. Basse and K. Jensen, eds. *Eskimo Languages: Their Present-Day Conditions*. pp. 51-64. Aarhus: Arkona.
- MacMillan, C. Michael. (1998). *The Practice of Language Rights in Canada*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press. [Chapter 7: The Status of Third Languages, pp. 180-207]
- Magga, Ole Henrik, Ida Nicolaisen, Mililani Trask, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Robert Dunbar. (n.d.). Indigenous Children's Education and Indigenous Languages. Expert paper written for the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
[http://www.arcticlanguages.com/papers/PFII\\_indigenous\\_childrens\\_education.pdf](http://www.arcticlanguages.com/papers/PFII_indigenous_childrens_education.pdf).



- Martin, I. (2000). Aajiqatigiingniq. Language of Instruction Research Paper. Submitted to the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut. Available online at: <http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/eng/pubdoc/ENG%20LOI%20Report.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Martin, I. (2000). Language Attitudes, Ability, Use, Vitality and Sociolinguistic Trends Most Likely to Affect School-based Language Planning and Promotion Policies. A support document to the Discussion Paper on Language of Instruction in Nunavut Schools. Submitted to the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut.
- Maurais, J., ed. (1996). *Quebec's Aboriginal Languages*. Toronto, Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Norris, Mary Jane. (1998). Canada's Aboriginal Languages. *Canadian Social Trends*: 9-16. Available online at: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/1998003/article/4003-eng.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Norris, Mary Jane. (2003). From Generation to Generation: Survival and Maintenance of Canada's Aboriginal Languages within Families, Communities and Cities. In *Maintaining the Links: Language, Identity and the Lands. Proceedings of the 7th Conference of the Foundation for Endangered Languages*, Broome, Western Australia, 22-24 September.
- Norris, Mary Jane. (2007). Aboriginal Languages in Canada: Emerging Trends and Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition. *Canadian Social Trends*: 19-27. Available online at: <http://www.visions.ab.ca/res/ablangincanada2007.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Nunavut. Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth. (2008). *Implementing the Dream: Our Made-in-Nunavut Language Legislation*. Presented at the International Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Languages, United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 8-10

- January, New York. Available online at:  
[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/EGM\\_IL\\_Nunavut.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/EGM_IL_Nunavut.pdf).  
Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. (2004). *Pinasuaqtavut*. Available online at:  
<http://www.gov.nu.ca/english/pinasuaqtavut/>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. (2008a). Bill 21, Education Act. Available online at:  
[http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/eng/pubdoc/Bill%2021%20Education%20Act%20\\_E-F\\_%20-%20introduction.pdf](http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/eng/pubdoc/Bill%2021%20Education%20Act%20_E-F_%20-%20introduction.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. (2008b). Consolidation of Official Languages Act.  
Available online at:  
[http://assembly.nu.ca/english/news/2008/Official\\_Languages\\_Act.pdf](http://assembly.nu.ca/english/news/2008/Official_Languages_Act.pdf).  
Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. (2008c). Inuit Language Protection Act. Available  
online at: [http://action.attavik.ca/home/justice-gn/attach-  
en\\_sourcelaw/e2008snc17.pdf](http://action.attavik.ca/home/justice-gn/attach-en_sourcelaw/e2008snc17.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Nunavut Bureau of Statistics. (2002). Language Data from the 2001 Nunavut  
Household Survey Available online at  
[http://nunavuteconomicforum.ca/public/files/library/LANGUAGE/Language%20  
data%20from%20the%202001%20Nunavut%20Household%20Survey%20\(English\).  
ppt](http://nunavuteconomicforum.ca/public/files/library/LANGUAGE/Language%20data%20from%20the%202001%20Nunavut%20Household%20Survey%20(English).ppt). Accessed 15 November 2008.
- Nunavut Constitutional Forum. (1983). *Building Nunavut/Batir le Nunavut*.  
Ottawa: Nunavut Constitutional Forum.
- Nunavut Literacy Council. (n.d.). Literacy Definitions. Online document at:  
[http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/resource/langlit/lit\\_def.pdf](http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/resource/langlit/lit_def.pdf). Accessed  
12 January 2009.

- Nunavut Literacy Council. (2004). Learning to Learn. Available online at:  
<http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/resource/lern2lrn/lern2lrn.pdf>.  
Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Nunavut Literacy Council. (2004). Literacy Programs that Work. Available online  
at: <http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/resource/reports/litprog/best.pdf>.  
Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Nunavut Literacy Council. 2004. "Unipkausivut - Building Language and Literacy  
Skills Through Oral History". Available online at:  
<http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/resource/unipkausivut/unip.pdf>.  
Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Olsen, Carl Christian [Puju]. (2008). Inuit Language. Presented at the International  
Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Languages, United Nations Permanent  
Forum on Indigenous Issues, 8-10 January, New York. Available online at:  
[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/EGM\\_IL\\_Olsen.doc](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/EGM_IL_Olsen.doc).  
Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Pastori, C. (1994). *Dental Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
- Patrick, D. (1998). Language, Power and Ethnicity in an Arctic Québec Community.  
Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Curriculum, Ontario Institute for Studies in  
Education, University of Toronto.
- Patrick, D. (2003). *Language, Politics, and Social Interaction in an Inuit Community*.  
Berlin : Mouton de Gruyter.
- Penney, C. (1995). *Medical Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
- Perez, B. (2004). *Sociocultural Contexts of Language and Literacy*. Lawrence  
Erlbaum Associates.

Pirurvik. (2007). Pirurvik Centre Website. Online at: [www.pirurvik.ca](http://www.pirurvik.ca). Accessed 5 December 2008.

Poppel, Birger, Jack Kruse, Gérard Duhaime, Larissa Abryutina. (2007). SLiCA Results. Anchorage: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska Anchorage.

Romaine, Suzanne. (1995). *Bilingualism*. Oxford: Wiley & Sons.

Sammons, K. (1994). *Environmental Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.

Schuerch, Greta. (2007). Emerging Inuit Leaders: Igniting a Language Movement. Final Report of the 2nd Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council Symposium on the Inuit Language. Available online at: [http://www.arcticlanguages.com/papers/2nd\\_ICYC\\_Inuit\\_Language\\_Symposium.pdf](http://www.arcticlanguages.com/papers/2nd_ICYC_Inuit_Language_Symposium.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.

Shohamy, E. (2006). *Language Policy Hidden Agendas and New Approaches*. London and New York: Routledge.

Simons, Mary. (2008). 'Good Intentions Are Not Enough'. Presentation at the Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium, October 19-21, Tromso, Norway. Available online at: [http://www.arcticlanguages.com/presentations/keynote/mary\\_simon.pdf](http://www.arcticlanguages.com/presentations/keynote/mary_simon.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.

Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove. (2000). *Linguistic Genocide in Education - or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* London: Erlbaum.

Smeets, Riëks. (2005). UNESCO Activities for Safeguarding Endangered Languages. Online document available at:

- <http://lingsib.unesco.ru/en/articles/smeets-1.shtml.htm>. Accessed 12 January 2009.
- Sorensen, Laila. (2000). The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation and Nunavut. In Jens Dahl, Jack Hicks and Peter Jull, eds. *Nunavut: Inuit Regain Control of their Lands and their Lives*. pp. 170-190. Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
- Statistics Canada. (2001). 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey Community Profiles. Available online at: <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profilo1aps/home.cfm>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Statistics Canada. (2005). International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS). The Daily, Wednesday November 9<sup>th</sup>. Available online at: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/051109/dq051109a-eng.htm>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Statistics Canada. (2006). 2006 Census of Population. Population by Mother Tongue, by Province and Territory. Available online at: <http://www40.statcan.ca/l01/cst01/demo11d-eng.htm>. Accessed 14 December 2006.
- Stenton, D. (1997). *Archaeology Glossary*. Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
- Tagalik, S. (1998). The Arviat Language Research Project: Language Beliefs as an Influencing Factor in the Quality of Oral Language in Iqaluit. MA Thesis, Department of Education, McGill University, Montreal.
- Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures. (2005). *Towards a New Beginning - A Foundational Report for a Strategy to Revitalize First Nation, Inuit and Métis Languages and Culture*. Ottawa: Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Taylor, D. M. and S. C. Wright. (1989). Language Attitudes in a Multilingual Northern Community. *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 9(1): 85-119. Available online at:  
<http://www.sfu.ca/psyc/faculty/wrights/Publications/CJNS%201989.pdf>.  
Accessed 5 December 2008.

Taylor, D. M. and S. C. Wright. (2003). Do Aboriginal Students Benefit from Education in their Heritage Language? Results from a Ten-year Program of Research in Nunavik. *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 23: 1-24. Available online at: [http://www.brandonu.ca/Library/cjns/23.1/cjnsv23no1\\_pg1-24.pdf](http://www.brandonu.ca/Library/cjns/23.1/cjnsv23no1_pg1-24.pdf).  
Accessed 5 December 2008.

Te Kohanga Reo. 2003. Te Kohanga Reo Website. <http://www.kohanga.ac.nz/>  
Accessed 5 December 2008.

Te Waka Reo. (2008). Languages in Aotearoa: Statement on Language Policy. Initiative of Te Waka Reo, the Language Policy Network of the New Zealand Diversity Action Programme, the Race Relations Commissioner and the Human Rights Commission of New Zealand. Available online at  
[http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc\\_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/14-Feb-2008\\_12-31-36\\_Language\\_Policy\\_Feb\\_08\\_V4.pdf](http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/14-Feb-2008_12-31-36_Language_Policy_Feb_08_V4.pdf). Accessed 1 December 2008.

Tompkins, Joanne. (2004). Sinvuniksamut Ilinniarniq. Student Consultation Report. Prepared for the Department of Education, Nunavut.

Tulloch, S. (2001). LAIY Corpus. Interviews with Nunavummiut about the current state of the Inuit language. Collected in Iqaluit, Pangnirtung and Pond Inlet, 1999-2001.

Tulloch, S. (2004). Inuktitut and Inuit Youth: Language Attitudes as a Basis for Language Planning. Ph.D. dissertation, Linguistics, Universite Laval. Available online at: <http://husky1.smu.ca/~stulloch/Tulloch2004.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.

Tulloch, S. (2005). Preserving Inuit Dialects in Nunavut. Research Report prepared for the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut. Available online at: <http://husky1.smu.ca/~stulloch/DialectStudyResearchReport.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.

Tulloch, S. (2005). Preserving Inuit Dialects in Nunavut - Trilingual Lay Summary. Prepared for the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut. Available at: <http://husky1.smu.ca/~stulloch/DialectStudyLaySummaryTrilingual.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.

Tulloch, S. (2006). "Preserving Dialects of an Endangered Language." *Current Issues in Language Planning* 7(2-3): 269-286.

Tulloch, S. (2008). Uqausirtinnik Annirusunniq – Longing for our Language. *Horizons* 10(1): 763-767. Available online at: [http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/Horizons\\_Vol10Num1\\_final\\_e.pdf](http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/Horizons_Vol10Num1_final_e.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2008.

Tulloch, S. and ICYC (2005). First Inuit Circumpolar Youth Symposium on the Inuit Language. Symposium Report prepared for the Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council. Available online at: <http://inuitcircumpolar.com/files/uploads/icc-files/ICYC-LanguageReport-English.pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.

Tulloch, S. and V. Hust (2003). An Analysis of Language Provisions in the Nunavut Act and the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. In G. Duhaime and N. Bernard (eds.), *Arctic Economic Development and Self-Government*. pp. 283-296. Quebec: GETIC, Université Laval. Available online at: <http://husky1.smu.ca/~stulloch/TullochHust2003.doc>. Accessed 5 December 2008.

UNESCO. (1953). *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education*. Paris: UNESCO. Available online at:

- <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0000/000028/002897EB/pdf>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- UNESCO. (2008). Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Education by 2015, Will We Make it?. Available online at:  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001548/154820e.pdf>. Accessed 12 January 2009.
- UNESCO. (2009). Why is Literacy Important? Online document at:  
[http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=54369&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=54369&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html). Accessed 12 January 2009.
- United Nations. (2007). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Available online at:  
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>. Accessed 5 December 2008.
- Westman, Clint, Michelle Daveluy, Liesel Knall, Marni Amirault and Doreen Ducharme. (2005). Language(s) Weeks in Nunavut: Contemporary Language Planning in the North. In Heather Castleden, Ryan Danby, Audrey Giles and Jean-Paul Pinard, eds. *New Northern Lights: Graduate Research on Circumpolar Studies from the University of Alberta*. pp. 157-173. Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press.
- Wright, S. C. and D. M. Taylor. (1995). Identity and the Language of the Classroom: Investigating the Impact of Heritage Versus Second Language Instruction on Personal and Collective Self-Esteem. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 87(2): 241-252.
- Wright, S. C., D. M. Taylor and J. Macarthur. (2000). Subtractive Bilingualism and the Survival of the Inuit Language: Heritage - Versus Second-Language Education. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 92: 63-84. Available online at:



<http://www.sfu.ca/psyc/faculty/wrights/Publications/JEP%202000.pdf>.  
Accessed 5 December 2008.

Wurm, Stephen A., ed. (2001). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing*. Second edition. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

Zepeda, Ofelia. (1995). The Continuum of Literacy in American Indian Communities. *The Bilingual Research Journal* 19(1): 5-15.



## GLOSSARY

The following definitions explain the ways in which certain terms are used in this paper. We have used intuitive vocabulary and descriptions as much as possible, and tried to avoid academic jargon. Where terms are used that are also used in academic writings, we have used these terms with their broadest possible meanings.

### *Advanced language skills*

The ability to use language in increasingly complex ways, for example: reading, writing, storytelling, poetry, use of specialized or advanced vocabulary, translating between languages. Defined in contrast to *basic language skills*.

### *Ancestral language*

The language spoken by one's ancestors. May or may not be the mother tongue.

### *Asymmetrical bilingualism*

Occurs in situations of societal bilingualism where one group learns the other group's language, and uses that language in communication with the other group, but the reverse is not also true (i.e. when the second group does not learn the first group's language, or does not use the first group's language).

### *Auxiliary written standard*

An auxiliary written standard is a common way of writing that is used for inter-regional or international communication but that does not replace current ways of writing for local communication. [See *written standard*]

### *Basic language skills*

Refers to language abilities that are acquired first and that form the foundation for other language learning, such as ability to understand general conversation or ability to speak about everyday topics. Defined in contrast to *advanced language skills*.

### *Balanced bilingual*

Refers to an individual who uses two languages with relatively equal proficiency and frequency. The individual may have different types of skills in both languages, and may use the two languages in different contexts, but there is a general sense that both languages play an equal role in the person's life.

### *Bilingualism*

Knowledge and use of two languages. Can occur in individuals and/or in communities.

### *Consecutive bilingualism*

Occurs when an individual acquires a second language after having acquired a firm grounding in his or her first language. Also called *sequential* or *successive bilingualism*.

### *Default language*

Refers to the language that is most widely used, or perceived as the "normal" or "automatic" language, in a particular bilingual context. Also referred to in academic writings as the "*unmarked*" language. When the language is preferred because it is the more widely understood language, researchers call this "*language accommodation*".

### *Dialect*

A way of speaking that is specific to a particular group of people (often based on where they live). People speaking different dialects of a single language may use different pronunciations, words, or grammar, but usually are able to understand each other to some extent.

### *Diglossia*

A stable bilingual situation where each of the two languages are assigned particular domains of use.

### *Domain*

A social context in which language is used, including places, people, and topics associated with that context. For example, the school “domain” includes interactions *at* school, *about* school, and *between* people associated with the school.

### *English-dominant bilingual*

Refers to an individual who is able to speak English and another language, but who uses English with the greatest proficiency and frequency.

### *Exposure (to language)*

Refers to any occasion in which one hears or sees language in use.

### *Inuit language-dominant bilingual*

Refers to an individual who is able to speak the Inuit language and another language, but who uses the Inuit language with the greatest proficiency and frequency.

### *Language accommodation*

Occurs when a bilingual individual chooses which language to use based on the known or believed preferences of the listener.

### *Language skills*

The ability to use language in particular ways. The four main language skills identified in most research are understanding, speaking, reading and writing.

### *Literacy*

See Appendix D.

### *Minimum standard of bilingualism*

Standards for what skills one must have in each of two languages to be considered “bilingual” will vary from one context to another. The research presented here suggests that role models consider minimum standards for bilingualism in Nunavut to include:

- ability to understand basic conversation in English and the Inuit language
- ability to speak enough in both languages to make all people feel welcome.

### *Monolingualism*

When an individual is only able to communicate using language skills from a single language; may also refer to contexts in which only one language is used.

### *Mother tongue*

First language learned, generally in the home. Individuals may have two mother tongues when they grow up surrounded by two languages.

### *Passive bilingualism*

Passive bilingualism occurs when an individual is able to *understand* (or receive messages in) two or more languages, but is only able to *speak* (or produce messages in) one language.

### *Productive competence*

Refers to an individual's ability to *produce* messages in a given language, i.e. through speaking and/or writing.

### *Receptive competence*

Refers to an individual's ability to *receive* messages in a given language, i.e. through understanding and/or reading.

### *Simultaneous bilingualism*

When a child learns two or more languages as a first language, usually before the age of three years old.

### *Stable bilingualism*

Characterized by sustained language abilities and practices over time. May occur in a given context or in a given individual.

### *Subsistence activities*

“Subsistence activities” is used in this paper to refer to so-called “Inuit traditional practices” associated with life on the land, such as hunting, berry-picking, preparing skins, sewing, building shelters, etc.

### *Subtractive bilingualism*

Subtractive bilingualism occurs when an individual's learning and use of a second language leads to decreased knowledge and use of the mother tongue.

### *Unstable bilingualism*

Characterized by shifting language abilities and practices; when abilities and frequency of use of one language increase while abilities and frequency of use of the other language decrease.

### *Written standard*

A written standard language is an agreed-upon way of writing the language, using the same symbols and spellings, shared across regions and political boundaries.



## APPENDIX A – PARAMETERS OF LITERATURE REVIEW

### Purpose of literature search:

- ◆ Identify academic studies that support or refute commonly held assumptions about language to use in awareness campaign.
- ◆ Provide a ‘theoretical’ basis for the development of community-based research and analysis of resulting data
- ◆ All studies considered must be relevant to the theoretical focus of our project, and to the specific linguistic context in Nunavut.

### Theoretical focus:

- ◆ Link between language beliefs and linguistic behaviour.
- ◆ Link between parental linguistic behaviour and children’s language competence.
- ◆ Link between first language skills and literacy development.
- ◆ Link between literacy development and social inclusion?

### Contextual focus:

- ◆ Bilingual individuals *and* communities
  - ⇒ where parents speak two or more languages/two or more languages are used in the home
  - ⇒ where two or more languages are widely used in the community
- ◆ Settings where non-indigenous (generally second) language associated with power and socioeconomic advancement (i.e. is “dominant”)
- ◆ Settings where indigenous language (and its speakers) have been (are?) suppressed
- ◆ Where the majority language (indigenous) is not the same as the school language
- ◆ Various stages in language shift or maintenance

The indigenous language may be:

- ⇒ learned as the first language OR
- ⇒ learned simultaneously from early childhood as a co-first language OR
- ⇒ learned only once children start school, as a second language

A ND

The non-indigenous language may be:

- ⇒ learned only once children start school, as a second language OR
- ⇒ learned simultaneously from early childhood as a co-first language OR
- ⇒ learned as the first language

EXAMPLE CONTEXTS: immigrant communities (being aware that they chose to join dominant society); indigenous communities (forced to join dominant society) e.g. Saami; Maori.

## APPENDIX B – USEFUL WEBSITES

Advocates for Indigenous California Languages Survival

<http://www.aicls.org/>

Alaskool - Online materials about Alaska Native history, education, languages, and cultures

<http://www.alaskool.org/>

Arctic Indigenous Languages Symposium

<http://www.arcticlanguages.com>

Asuilaak ~ Inuktitut Living Dictionary ~ Dictionnaire Vivant (Nunavut)

<http://www.livingdictionary.com/>

Bilingual/Immersion Education: Indicators of Good Practice (New Zealand)

<http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/schooling/5079>

Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute

<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/cilldi/>

Ethnologue: Languages of the World

<http://www.ethnologue.com/>

First People's Cultural Foundation

[www.fpcf.ca/](http://www.fpcf.ca/)

Foundation for Endangered Languages

[www.ogmios.org](http://www.ogmios.org)

The Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project

<http://www.hrelp.org/languages/>

Indigenous Language Institute

<http://www.indigenous-language.org/>

Inuktitut Project (University of Toronto)

<http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~inuit/index.html>

Interactive Inupiaq Dictionary

<http://www.alaskool.org/language/dictionaries/inupiaq/dictionary.htm?submit=Inupiaq+On-line+Dictionary>

Language Attrition Research Archive

<http://w3.byuh.edu/academics/lang/attritionbiblio/intro.htm>

Language Planning for Inuit and Saami Languages

<http://husky1.smu.ca/~stulloch/welcome.html>

Language Policy Research Unit (Arizona State University)

<http://www.language-policy.org/blog/>

I Teach I Learn.com - Educational Ideas and Solutions

<http://www.iteachilearn.com/>

Index of Native American Language Resources on the Internet

<http://www.hanksville.org/NAresources/indices/NAlanguage.html>

Language Planning, Language Policy and Language Research in Canada

<http://www.languagestore.com/canada/>

Language Policy Website and Emporium (James Crawford)

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JWCRAWFORD/>

Languages Commissioner of Nunavut

<http://www.langcom.nu.ca/>

Linguistic Rights

<http://www.egt.ie/udhr/udlr.html>

Living Dictionary

<http://www.livingdictionary.com>

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/>

Nunavut Literacy Council

<http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca>

Oqaasileriffik (Greenland Language Council)

<http://www.oqaasileriffik.gl/content/us>

Teaching Indigenous Languages (Northern Arizona University)

<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/TIL.html>

Terralingua

<http://www.terralingua.org/>

Tusaalanga Inuktitut (on-line learning resource from Pirurvik.ca)

<http://www.tusaalanga.ca/>

Two Languages from Day One (Welsh Language Board)

<http://www.twfcymru.com>

Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights

<http://www.linguistic-declaration.org/index-gb.htm>

Yukon Native Language Centre

<http://www.ynlc.ca/>

UNESCO – Languages and Multilingualism

[www.unesco.org/en/languages](http://www.unesco.org/en/languages)

## APPENDIX C – ROLE MODELS INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

*Interviews were semi-directed. Order and phrasing of the questions, as well as which questions were asked and which were omitted, was at the discretion of the interviewers.*

### **Introduction**

“I want to find out about language use in your home, especially about language learning. I’m going to ask you about your children’s language use and learning as well as your own. We can talk about your children one by one if they have different experiences of and uses of language.”

### **Background information**

Interviewer(s):

Date of interview:

Role model:

People present at interview:

Interview location:

Number of cassettes:

Recording time:

Gender:

Age:

Place of residence:

Year of arrival:

Where person was born:

Other places person has lived:

Is the person Inuk? Qallunaat? Both? Other?

Is his/her spouse Inuk? Qallunaat? Both? Other?

Where are his/her parents from?

Highest diploma/grade level achieved:

Occupation/Place of work:

Other jobs?

First language learned/Mother tongue:

Languages spoken:

Languages written:

Languages read:

### Questions:

1. **“Which language do you speak at home and how well do you speak it?”**

Self-rating of **Inuktitut** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, I don't speak Inuktitut

Self-rating of **English** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, I don't speak English

a) *Do you have a spouse? Which languages does he / she speak?  
How well?*

Rating of spouse's **Inuktitut** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, doesn't speak it

Rating of spouse's **English** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, doesn't speak it

a) *How many children do you have? Which languages do they speak? How well?*

Rating of **child 1's Inuktitut** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, doesn't speak it

Rating of **child 1's English** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, doesn't speak it



Rating of **child 2's Inuktitut** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, doesn't speak it

Rating of **child 2's English** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, doesn't speak it

Rating of **child 3's Inuktitut** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, doesn't speak it

Rating of **child 3's English** knowledge: Excellent, good, elementary, doesn't speak it

- a. *Which language(s) do/did your parents know how to speak?*
- b. *Which languages do you use at home to your kids, to your spouse, to their friends?*
- c. **Why?** *What motivates you to speak this way? (Because of your own comfort/kids understanding? Pride? Advice from others/others' example? Desire to teach kids?)*
- d. *Which language(s) does your kids speak when they talk to you, to your spouse to their siblings, or to their friends?*
- e. *Do you ever think that when you talk to your children that they don't clearly understand what you're saying?*
- f. *When you speak to your child (in Inuktitut or in English), how do you get the message across clearly?*

2. **"I want to find out about how your children are learning language/how they learned language."**

- a. *Are they learning/did they learn language at home? Which language(s)?*
- b. *Which skills in these languages are they developing (did they develop) at home?*
- c. *Which skills do you want them to (did you want them to) develop in each language?*
- d. *What do you do to help them to learn language?*
  - i. *What blocks you from doing it?*

- ii. What activities do you do in Inuktitut/English with your children at home? Sing? Play games? Read to them? Other?
- e. What other way helps (helped) them to learn?( e.g: tv. books, radio,visiting elders, friends, family members, story telling, traditional songs, lullabies, board games) In what way did \_\_\_\_\_ help them to learn?

3. **“What do you see as your role (what was your role) in teaching your children language?”**

- a. What has helped you to understand what your role is in teaching your child language?
- b. Who/what else has/had a role?
- c. How is (X – answer to previous question) teaching/did X teach your child language?
- d. What is your child doing to learn the language on her own? (e.g. going to elder)
- e. What evidence have you seen because of the efforts you put into teaching your child language?
- f. **What do you want for your children in terms of knowing and using language? Why?**
- g. What skills do you think will be most important for your children or grandchildren in the future?
- h. What are the best ways for them to achieve those skills?
- i. How do you feel when a job description says that they need a (younger) person that speaks Inuktitut and English?

4. **“Can you tell me about how you learned language?”**

- a. How did your parents use language with you?
- b. What helped you to learn this language?
- c. How is this, the same or different from the way your children are learning?

5. **“What are you still doing to learn language?”**

- a. *Are there aspects of language that you’re still learning?*
- b. *What are they?*
- c. *How are you learning?*
- d. *What helps you learn?*
- e. *What resources do you use?*
- f. *What motivates you/encourages you to learn?*
- g. *Why do you want to learn [these aspects of language]?*

6. **What would be/Can you describe your ideal home environment in terms of language use?**

- a. *What do you like about the way language is used in your home? (Inuktitut or English) What don’t you like about it?*
- b. *Which aspects of this ideal environment do you have right now?*
- c. *Which aspects of this ideal environment don’t you have?*
- d. **What is your image of an ideal home environment in terms of language use based on?**
- e. *What helps you to achieve/work toward your ideal home language environment? (books? TV? Radio? Visiting Friends? Family? Can you give examples? E.g.*
- f. *What books or reading material do you have in your home? (Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun/English)*
- g. *What motivates you to have these reading materials at your home? ( knowing that Inuktitut will be useful for a job?)*
- h. *What are the challenges in achieving your ideal home environment in terms of language use?*
- i. *What might you be interested in doing to achieve it?*
- j. *What would you like the literacy council to do? (i.e. in the past we’ve done story sacks, distributed books, there are libraries... do you have other ideas?)*

7. What seems to be the reason for the younger people to be picking up the English language so quickly in other communities? Why is it that other communities (children, youths) are so rich in Inuktitut and other are not?
  
8. Who do you look to as a language role model? Why?
  
9. Is there anything else you would like to add about language use with children in your community?

## APPENDIX D – NUNAVUT LITERACY COUNCIL DEFINITION OF LITERACY

Literacy is defined in different ways, by different authors, for different purposes. This is entirely appropriate, as literacy is context-specific, acquired for particular needs. Bholá (1994: 34), writing for an international audience of community-based literacy programmers and practitioners, affirms: “Each literacy project, programme or campaign needs to... come up with its own particular definition of literacy in its particular setting.”

The Nunavut Literacy Council works from the following definitions of literacy in the Nunavut context:

**“Literacy is a skill that enables people to interpret and effectively respond to the world around them. Based upon language development from birth, it includes the ability to learn, communicate, read and write, pass on knowledge and participate actively in society.” (Nunavut Literacy Council n.d.)**

Other definitions of literacy which inform the Nunavut Literacy Council’s work are available at [www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/resource/langlit/lit\\_def.pdf](http://www.nunavutliteracy.ca/english/resource/langlit/lit_def.pdf).



## APPENDIX E – SAMPLE LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL BODIES RELEVANT TO SUSTAINING BILINGUALISM IN NUNAVUT

### **UNESCO Report on the Use of Vernacular Languages in Education, 1953**

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0000/000028/002897EB/pdf>

Early evidence-based report advocating for mother tongue education for all children, including justifications and recommendations for achieving this. Recommendations include full development of varied reading material in each language, and adult literacy efforts to target the mother tongue first (see especially pp. 68-70).

### **UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1976**

[http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a\\_ceschr.htm](http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm)

Article 1.1. “All peoples have the right [to...] freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”

### **UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989**

<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>

Article 30 “Minority or indigenous children have the right to learn about and practice their own culture, language and religion.”

### **UNESCO Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, 1996**

<http://www.unesco.org/cpp/uk/declarations/linguistic.pdf>

- Addresses a full range of language-related rights including non-discrimination, language promotion, domains of use, and funding.

### **Resolution 12 of UNESCO's 30th General Conference, 1999**

[http://www.unesco.org/education/imld\\_2002/resolution\\_en.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/education/imld_2002/resolution_en.shtml)

- Recommends that Member States:

- (a) create the conditions for a social, intellectual and media environment of an international character which is conducive to linguistic pluralism;
- (b) promote, through multilingual education, democratic access to knowledge for all citizens, whatever their mother tongue, and build linguistic pluralism;
- Includes specific strategy/action recommendations

### ***UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001***

Adopted by the 31st Session of UNESCO's General Conference

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>

- Includes specific recommendations for the preservation of linguistic diversity and diverse forms of self expression, through media, internet, education among others.

### ***United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007***

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>

Article 13.1 "Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their... languages..."

Article 13.2 "States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected..."

Article 14.1 "Indigenous peoples have the right to... education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning."

Article 14.3 "States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own... language."

Article 16.1 "Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages..."



**UNPFII International Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Languages, 2008**

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/EGM\\_IL.html](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/EGM_IL.html)

Report available at:

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/No8/213/56/PDF/No821356.pdf?OpenElement>

- Report provides a framework for understanding the value of indigenous languages, includes descriptions of concerns and best practices around the world, as well as a series of recommendations for the protection of indigenous languages.

**UNPFII Expert Paper on Indigenous Children's Education and Languages, 2008**

(Magga et al. 2004, Anders-Bar et al. 2008)

Argues that children's human right to an education is not being fulfilled unless children have access to mother tongue education.