Community Perceptions of a Cree Immersion Program at Cumberland House

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Abstract

This thesis contributes to the literature on language revitalization, a hopeful branch of research that counters the foreboding conclusions of language shift studies. It is based on data collected in May, 1998, at Cumberland House, an Aboriginal community in northeastern Saskatchewan. Fifty-five community members participated in six focus groups organized by the following criteria: administrators, school board trustees, elders, parents, students and teachers. These research participants expressed their vision, expectations, and needs related to an Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program proposed by the Northern Lights School Division. Community members envisioned an education that contributes to their children's Cree and Anglo-Canadian bicultural competence. They expected the Cree immersion program in the provincial school would develop their children's Cree and English bilingual fluency. They needed training, administrative support, materials and ongoing communication between school and community. Factors that instill a sense of optimism about this language revitalization effort, include the role and status of the school, and the strong bonds of kinship and friendship in this community context. The process and content of the research project records the development and product of a research relationship between Aboriginal people. It attests to the value of community involvement in language planning and illustrates the beneficial attributes of community-based participatory action research. Overall, the

thesis informs the topic of decolonization at the personal, community, and institutional level.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to children,
who provide us with a sense of purpose and hope.

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List of Abbreviations

A	Administrators' Focus Group
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
ALIPP	Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program
ALIPPC	Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee
BT	Board Trustees' Focus Group
E	Elders' Focus Group
GIDS	Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale
MBC	Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation
NLSD	Northern Lights School Division
P	Parents' Focus Group
Phys Ed	Physical Education
RLS	Reversing Language Shift
Rr	Researcher
S	Students' Focus Group
Sask Ed	Saskatchewan Education and Training
T	Teachers' Focus Group

CHAPTER ONE

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM:
"Listen to what they want"

1.1 Introduction

When I began the work towards a master's degree, I set out with the purpose of doing something that would benefit Aboriginal children and youth in education. The Indian and Northern Education Program at the University of Saskatchewan held promise of helping me to realize that goal. Based on my experience that Aboriginal knowledge is routinely ignored or marginalized in schools and my belief that the resources of Aboriginal knowledge reside not in the academy but in the Aboriginal communities, I looked for a research focus. I was guided by the concept of decolonizing Aboriginal education, the principles of participatory action research, and the idea of the research relationships in an Aboriginal community. Although I had set out with the intention of studying the Aboriginal community involvement in curriculum, my research direction took a dramatic shift on November 21, 1997, when I met members of the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee (ALIPPC) from Northern Lights School Division. Josie Searson, Rita Lowenberg, and Larry Ahenakew had come to Dr. Battiste's office to discuss their Aboriginal Language Immersion research and their needs for building an immersion program.

Within the week Dr. Battiste presented the opportunity for me to work with the language advocates. The principles of participatory action research, my personal commitment to Aboriginal education, and the applied nature of the research weighed heavily in favour of changing course. By December 22, I had resolved to change my research focus to Aboriginal language immersion, and a meeting was set for January 13, 1998, with the representatives from NLSD to discuss their research needs. Thus

the research presented here began as a convergence of the research needs of three parties: the researcher, the Northern Lights School Division (NLSD), and the Cree language advocates from Cumberland House.

The following paragraphs introduce the three parties involved in the research relationship and describe the research study's development and refinement. I begin by placing myself as researcher in the work, and identifying my subjectivity and biases at the onset. This information, useful in critical reading and reflection, alerts my audience and me that the researchers' interests and interpretation have the potential to eclipse the participants' own.

My understanding of home, knowledge of my ancestors, family relationships and my life experiences have influenced my perspective of issues relevant to my thesis topic. Home is physical, spiritual, and emotional all at once. It is the residence of my sense of beginning and belonging and as such connects me to generations of my family members. Point to the hub of Lakes Superior, Huron and Michigan on a map and you have located my home. A day trip in any direction joins a series of landmarks distinguished by family stories. My personal mapping of the landscape is recorded by my birth place at Thessalon, my father's great-grandparents' farm at Alma Heights, my grandmother's reserve at Garden River, school-and-shopping-but-never-living in "The Soo", and the rolling hills in which my parents' place nestles.

I am aware of six generations of ancestors on both my mother's and father's sides of my family. I know them to be Anishnawbe, French, Scottish, English, and Irish. They lived and raised their children in the Great Lakes region for the past two hundred years working as farmers, loggers, trappers, traders, teachers, cooks, housekeepers, truckers, and sawmill and railway workers. In their families and territories, they endured the lines of separation imposed by the Indian Act, the international border and racial stratification.

Whereas my home and family contributed positively to a sense of belonging, school and community did not. My elementary school curriculum aggressively assimilated us to be Anglo-Canadians. As a child I naively accepted that school learning was about things foreign and unrelated to my home and me. I learned that speaking a language other than English in public was rude and that being "part Indian" was a point of pride but best kept private. Adults told us children to stay in school, that we would be better off using our brains rather than our backs to earn a living. I learned the lessons well and my education and employment choices lead me far away from home. I traveled and worked in large urban centres across Canada and abroad. I learned about other cultures and ways of life. Over time I realized that I valued my own culture and that there was so much that I did not know about my family, our history, and myself. I returned home and tried to recover what I had lost through assimilation.

Thus my subjectivity is rooted in my identity, my values, and experiences. I believe that school learning should respect local realities and prepare youth with imagination and skills so they are not restricted by having to choose between living at home or making a living. The elders and teachers who nurtured me in my restoration of self taught me the importance of giving back. It is my hope that this research contributes to Aboriginal people's effort toward cultural survival, to the body of knowledge concerning maintenance of Aboriginal languages, and to a record of experience that may be useful to others who have similar aspirations.

In 1997, the Northern Lights School Division had a plan to develop an Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program (ALIPP) to run for a period of five years. The school principals at Pine House, La Loche, and Cumberland House had expressed an interest in hosting the immersion program. Phase One, the Research and Program Development Phase, commenced in September 1997. In the first year,

the ALIPPC proposed to select a pilot school and develop a kindergarten program with materials, unit and lesson plans, and procedures for assessment and evaluation. The Northern Lights School Division required a studied approach to the design, implementation, and evaluation of the immersion program. The intention was to develop a model of immersion that could be used by other sites to set up a local immersion program. Dr. Battiste and I met with the ALIPPC to discuss the implementation of the immersion program, the scope of the research project, and the researcher's role.

In response to the perceived need for a linguist on the research team, Dr. Battiste advised the committee to consider that the language specialists are in the communities. Although a linguist may contribute to the program's repute, a local Language Advisory Committee would contribute more to the program's success. The Language Advisory Committee would be comprised of an Elder who has specialist language knowledge, an "internal" language expert from the community, someone with curriculum foundations, and someone with a background in program planning or administration. In that first meeting it was determined that I, as researcher, would design a longitudinal study, with the needs analysis framing my thesis. The Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee selected Cumberland House as the site of my research. Subsequently, in June 1998, the ALIPPC announced that Cumberland House was selected as the location for the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program. Hence, the program in Cumberland House has been commonly referred to as the Cree Immersion Program. Both names are used alternately in this thesis document.

Between January 13 and the next meeting on March 10, 1998 the plan for the research was refined in response to information gained about language planning in Cumberland House and NLSD's expectations of the immersion program's

longitudinal study. The ALIPPC provided me with a copy of Heather Blair's (1997) research report on the policy and planning of Indian languages in Saskatchewan, which related the in-depth research of the initiatives in four communities. The report includes a description of the status planning, corpus planning and the community recommendations in Cumberland House. Blair (1997) describes what the teachers and administrators said about supporting language development in the community and school:

> 1. "One respondent said: And so many elders in the school would help influence the young people because, I feel that young people are really. . .I wouldn't want to say that they're ashamed but teens, they kind of lose interest, eh - that connections between elders and the young people. The gap is getting bigger, and somehow we need to bring them together" (Blair, 1997: 60).
>
> 2. "There was some concern about the liaison between the school and community regarding the goals of Cree language and literacy development. Some teachers believed the parents needed to be made aware of the seriousness of the situation. One teacher said "I think we have to try to get the message back to the parents and start speaking Cree more to their children at home" (Blair, 1997: 60).
>
> 3. "It was suggested that the bilingual teachers might benefit from an increased understanding of bilingual language acquisition and second language acquisition. Workshops that explore ways to teach, using two languages in the classroom as well as in increased understanding of the linguistic system of the Cree language, might also be helpful" (Blair, 1997: 61).
>
> 4. "One interviewee suggested that the administration needs to find ways to increase the amount of time for Cree in each classroom and monitor that it is taught everyday in all classrooms" (Blair, 1997: 61).
>
> 5. "There was also some discussion with respect to the administration looking at alternative kinds of programming, such as Cree immersion, or other kinds of bilingual education. This was something that would need to be explored in further depth" (Blair, 1997: 61).

My thesis co-supervisors Dr. Battiste and Dr. Ward, and I met with the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee on March 10 to discuss

the longitudinal study[1]. A longitudinal study would report the evidence of the immersion program's impact on students. Larry Ahenakew, superintendent of NLSD, said that the questions that need to be answered are, "Will the Aboriginal language immersion program have a positive impact on the kids?" and "Will the Aboriginal language immersion students encounter negative effects when they transfer to the English program?" The ensuing discussion covered the topics of the suitability of qualitative and quantitative studies, testing, test groups and control groups, and the purpose of the immersion program. At the conclusion of the meeting, it was determined that a qualitative approach seemed advisable based on the information presented by Dr. Ward. In summary these are:

1. Statistics would be virtually meaningless due to the small sample of students being tested.
2. There is not a control group with which the test group is commensurable.
3. In addition, standardized tests have been demonstrated to be culturally inappropriate.
4. The impact of the immersion program can not be judged in the short term.
5. Considering that it is unfair to test the children's English language skills if they are learning in a Cree immersion program, the test should measure how well they are speaking Cree.
6. The community members are the evaluators of success and will have a tremendous impact on the immersion program; therefore it is worthwhile to ask the groups in the community to express their understanding of the indicators of success.

A participatory model of research required asking the interested groups to express what they need to support an immersion program. From this meeting it was decided that I, as the researcher, would gather the data about community indicators of

success and provide a report to Northern Lights School Division. Their longitudinal study would evolve from this. Thus it was through these consultations and discussions that the scope of the research and its applicability to the needs of the Northern Lights School Division was collaboratively determined. The NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee maintained ownership of this applied research project and at the conclusion held copyright of the research report and the proposal for the longitudinal study.

The third party in this research, the language advocates, are community members of Cumberland House. Their family and community histories tell of their ancestors' ability to adapt to societal changes and promote their cultural survival. Cumberland House, located in northeastern Saskatchewan, has the longest history of urbanization of any Saskatchewan town (Waldram, 1988). It was the site of a Hudson Bay trading post in 1774, and it was a destination of Métis families dispersed from Red River between 1870 and 1880. In the late 1940s, Cumberland House was the location of the provincial government's farm and fishing co-operatives. The community's returning Aboriginal veterans from World War II were successful in establishing the first all-Native Royal Canadian Legion (Dobbin, 1981). Distinguished residents of Cumberland House have included community activist, Jim Brady; four time Olympic canoeing champion, Solomon Carriere; and Member of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Keith Goulet,. In the 1960's, community members organized a community development project to establish a co-operative to operate a fur lease which they expanded to an outfitting business known as the Delta Outfitters Mutual Limited. In 1966, they established a Local Community Authority to meet their needs of local government (A history of Cumberland House, as told by its own citizens 1774-1974, 1974).

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[1] The longitudinal study, though peripheral to the thesis research, is discussed here for the benefit of

In "A history of Cumberland House as told by its own citizens, 1774-1974" (1974), it was noted that the community's first school was established in 1842 by Henry Budd, the first Native ordained Anglican minister in western Canada. The Anglican teacher taught the children to read and write in syllabics as a means to convert them to the Anglican faith. In response to the interruptions in education experienced by children of fur-trapping families, Thomas Cook in the 1860's taught syllabics to the women who subsequently taught literacy to their children. Father Charlebois built a Roman Catholic church in 1884 and a log schoolhouse in 1890 (A history of Cumberland House, as told by its own citizens 1774-1974, 1974: pp. 8-10). Some children from the community attended the Anglican residential school at The Pas. With the establishment of the Northern Lights School Division in 1965, formal education in the community has been guided by the school divisions' mandate of equitable education for northerners (Blair, 1997: 51-52). In addition, Cumberland House First Nation is located six miles from the town of Cumberland House. At the time of the research, people anticipated the opening of a new school on the reserve in the fall of 1999 that might draw students away from Charlebois School in the community of Cumberland House.

Statistics Canada (1999, 1994) describes the demographic, ethnic and linguistic characteristics of Cumberland House. The 1996 population was 836, showing a 13.3% increase since the 1991 census. In 1996, males 15 years and older earned an average income of $15,199 and a median income of $10,624. Females in the same age category earned an average income of $12, 951 and a median income of $9,990. An indication of the stability of the community is in the lack of mobility of its population. Of the 820 people aged 1 year old and over, 445 were resident at the same address as five years earlier (Statistics Canada, 1999: 779). Of the 290 people

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the reader interested in the process of establishing an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program.

who had moved, 205 were northerners who had moved within the same census subdivision, 70 moved from another Saskatchewan census subdivision, and 15 moved from outside Saskatchewan. In 1996, the total Aboriginal population in Cumberland House was 780 and total non-Aboriginal population was 60 (Statistics Canada, 1999). The 1991 census which recorded people's reported ethnic origins shows the total population of Cumberland House with Aboriginal origins was 710: with 610 single responses (one ethnic origin reported), 90 multiple responses, 230 registered under the Indian Act, and 210 members of Indian Band/First Nation (Statistics Canada, 1994: 64). Métis origins were reported by 360 people as a single response, by 80 people in multiple responses, by 35 people who were registered under the Indian Act, and 30 people who were members of an Indian Band/First Nation (Statistics Canada, 1994: 65). It should be noted that for the ethnic origin question there was a global non-response rate higher than or equal to 5% and lower than 25%. This global non-response rate is "a global rate equal to the percentage of required responses left unanswered by respondents" (Statistics Canada, 1994: 107). One interpretation of this global non-response rate is that complexity of identity can not be comprehensively described by census categories; perhaps people choose to give no response rather than an inaccurate response.

Of the 836 people counted in the 1996 census, 725 had single responses when they reported their mother tongue. Of these, 395 reported English as their mother tongue, and 325 reported Cree as their mother tongue. Of the multiple responses, 105 reported English and a non-official language as their mother tongue. Responses by home language showed 695 single responses with English being the home language in 475 instances and Cree being the home language in 215 reports. Multiple responses of home language were numbered at 140. Knowledge of English

was recorded in 825 responses, knowledge of English and French in 10 responses, and knowledge of Cree in 530 responses (Statistics Canada, 1999: 779).

In her sociolinguistic and needs assessment of Cumberland House, Blair (1997) identifies the condition of the Cree language and the local people's concern for its survival. The people speak the Cree N dialect, and there is evidence that "[t]he shift from Cree to English dominance has been swift, but considering the two hundred year history of languages in contact, it could be said the shift was a long time coming" (Blair, 1997: 53). Blair reports that "Cree is spoken in a few places around the community but primarily only by the older generations" (p. 54). Based on the teachers' and administrators' interviews, Blair states that

> the children start school in Cumberland House with English as their mother tongue. One or two may understand some Cree but they do not speak it. Children in the middle years are reported to be English dominant as well... There was however, more bilingualism among the high school students but the Cree speakers were still a small minority (Blair, 1997: 53).

Fredeen (1991) provided data showing loss of the Cree language among the younger generation and concluded that the Cree language in Cumberland House was in serious condition at that time. This is consistent with the "Declining" category of language condition used by the Assembly of First Nations (1992) which adapted the categories from Bauman (1980). A language is deemed to be declining where the greatest proportion of fluent Indigenous language speakers are in the older age groups and the proportions dramatically lessening in each younger group.

The teachers and administrators, interviewed by Blair (1997), concluded that the older generation is primarily concerned about the condition of Cree language in Cumberland House, but for parents "language was not high on the list of priorities of things they needed to do with their children" (p. 54). Nonetheless community support of Cree language programs has been evidenced by their sustained interest in

the inclusion of Cree in the educational program. Blair (1997) quoted a school administrator who said,

> On interview day, we had a sign-up sheet of people in the community who'd be interested in seeing the Cree language as part of the curriculum here. And there was outstanding support. And I have a list in my files of all those people who signed in support of Cree language, for it to be included as part of the instruction . . . (p. 55)

Further evidence of community support for the Cree language programs was noted by the Aboriginal Language Consultant for NLSD, who reported on community members' attendance at the March 19, 1998, school and community meeting to discuss the immersion program. "The meeting at Cumberland House went just fine. There were about 50 people in attendance. The response was good and some key questions were asked" (Lowenberg, 1998, personal communication). From this it is concluded that the principle of consultation and listening is valued and in the case of this research, it is an imperative. A school administrator and resident of Cumberland House makes this clear in the following statement regarding language planning, "In order to recognize the needs of the community first of all I think it's important that you listen to what they want" (Blair, 1997: 55). The research described here was guided by this principle.

1.2 Background

Aboriginal languages in Canada are in decline (Assembly of First Nations Language and Literacy Secretariat, 1992; Fredeen, 1991). To clarify the term, Edwards (1994) writes, "a language is in decline if it is no longer passed on to children" (p. 126). In Cumberland House, the evidence of language decline is illustrated in the many changing uses and functions of language. In particular, the majority of children entering kindergarten are monolingual English speakers (Blair,

1997: 53; Lowenberg, personal communication 1998). In order to reverse this language decline, planned language recovery, restoration and maintenance is required.

> If, for example, the children do not speak the language, then the only way to bring the language back into living, fluent use by the children is to put them in some kind of immersion program, rather than to schedule fifteen minutes a day of writing the names for animals on a blackboard (Kraus, 1996: 21)

The context of the community must be considered in creating and implementing policies for Aboriginal language renewal (Ayoungman & Brandt, 1989: Churchill, 1986; St. Clair & Leap, 1982; Leap, 1981; and Bauman, 1980). The context of the community is also relevant to program evaluation (Hébert, 1987) and student assessment (Bauman, 1980). In her review of the literature regarding language maintenance, development and enhancement, Burnaby (1996) concludes, "no matter what the circumstances, the Aboriginal community must be the central decision maker in any initiative on Aboriginal language maintenance" (p. 33). Community members of Cumberland House who have a stake in language maintenance are the youth, the parents of kindergarten children, the teachers, the administrators at Charlebois School, and the administrators on the NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Committee, elders and board trustees. These aforementioned groups will be referred to as stakeholders and community members alternately.

In summary, the circumstances that make this research relevant include the following: the condition of the Aboriginal language in Cumberland House, the plan for an Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program by NLSD, and the need for community consultation and input. Further, Cumberland House has a diverse demographic with residents who are categorized on the census as non-Aboriginal, non-status Indian, status Indian and Métis. It is a community where decision-making power in education rests with a provincial school division and not a local education council, as is the case in First Nations' communities. The insiders' understanding of the community context of Cumberland House for the ALIPP provides valuable

information to the language planners designing the immersion program, teachers and administrators implementing the program, and the researcher designing a longitudinal study to evaluate the program.

1.3 Description of the Study

This qualitative study focused on the insiders' description of the community context of Cumberland House as it related to the proposed ALIPP. As a researcher, I sought to understand the community members' perceptions, needs and resources relevant to the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program. Recording focus group discussions conducted with six stakeholder groups accessed this information. These focus groups were comprised of the following groups of individuals: administrators, school board trustees, elders, parents, students, and teachers. The description of the study, based on focus group data represents a needs analysis. It identified community needs in the design and implementation of the immersion program, and it delineated goals and objectives that guided the recommendations for a longitudinal study of program evaluation and student assessment.

1.4 Research Questions

There are three major research questions of this inquiry into the community context for the ALIPP in Cumberland House.

1. What are community members' perceptions of the importance and role of the Cree language in the education of students in Cumberland House?
2. What do these stake holders need in order to participate in the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program?
3. What are the processes of delivery which may facilitate the success of the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program in Cumberland House?

The supplementary questions, which guided the inquiry, were:

1. What are community members' indicators of success in school and community?
2. What are community member's indicators of success for a Cree immersion program in Cumberland House?
3. What are the indicators of student success in a Cree immersion program after five years? After 3 years? After 1 year?
4. What are the needs of the individual groups of stakeholders who will be involved in the design and delivery of the immersion program?
5. What factors will aid the success of the Cree immersion program?
6. How may the school and community form a working relationship that will support the language program?

1.5 Benefits of the Study

The research stands to benefit the Northern Lights School Division, the community members of Cumberland House involved in the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program, the researcher and the academy.

Benefit to the Northern Lights School Division

The data gathered described the community's goals and expectations of the ALIPP. These community goals were then used to set indicators to help the NLSD in student assessment and program evaluation. The research could provide a basis for comparison between northern Saskatchewan community contexts in other sites where an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program is desired. This comparison may potentially lend itself to analysis in predictive behaviour to determine the community's receptivity and support of an immersion program.

Benefit to the community members of Cumberland House

The concerns of community members regarding the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program were systematically recorded and reported to the Northern

Lights School Division. In this way the community members may have gained a sense of participation in, contribution to, and ownership of the program and policy of evaluation of the language program in their community.

Benefit to the researcher

I gained experience in conducting applied research in a collaborative research relationship. Working on this project provided me with the personal and professional satisfaction of being involved in meaningful scholarly work and in research that may impact on local governance decision-making. The research study also met the research requirement for the fulfillment of the Master of Education degree.

Benefit to the academy

This study relates to previous studies done on language loss and language maintenance at the national and local level. It expands the field of knowledge by recording the efforts of Aboriginal language maintenance in Canada. It addresses the imbalance of attention on language loss rather than language maintenance (Fishman, 1992: 367), and it provides an Aboriginal perspective in the academic literature and published research which has been interpreted as being dominated by a Western European/North American perspective (de Bot & Hueber, 1992). It also addresses the imbalance of attention of research in First Nations rather than Aboriginal settlements (Hébert, 1995). The language movement in Northern Lights School Division may be counted among the numerous language movements around the world. Fishman states that "[e]ach of these has its success to report, little ones and big ones, which together amount to a legion of cases from which science and society have a great deal to learn" (1992: 397).

1.6 Background of the Researcher

The following aspects of my background have relevance to the study. I am a teacher. I value cultural identity. I believe that Aboriginal language retention is worthwhile. I have experienced the integrity of living in a small community. I have witnessed formal and informal education that prepares youth for success by academic and community standards. My experience has been that although education provided the best option for a degree of self-sufficiency and independence, it also limited the possibility for educated youth of returning to a small home community. These ideas formed my conviction that education should provide for success, not limit it.

I have learned Aboriginal identities are diverse and more complex than implied by Canadian legal definitions of Aboriginal people. Fishman states that ethnicity is perspectival and the 'variability in perceived and experienced ethnicity also leads to variability in its association with language" (Fishman, 1997: 329). I am familiar with the insularity of a small community and the accompanying distrust of outsiders who assume the role of expert or authority. This understanding prepared me to take the role of a visitor to this community and to request guidance from my associates in NLSD and Charlebois School regarding local protocol.

1.7 Researcher in Relation to the Study

I see my role as researcher in this study as an advocate for the revitalization of Aboriginal languages. My use of the word 'advocacy' lies outside the definition of the term provided by Van Esterik (1993) as "the act of interceding or speaking on behalf of another person or group" (Van Esterik, 1993: 60). I am not interceding or speaking on behalf of others. My participation in the research is to produce data that may benefit the effort to revitalize Aboriginal languages in general. The nature of this

advocacy is congruent with Schensul and Schensul's (1978) description of the researchers' role to produce data that the community may use to seek change according to their own agenda. "In this perspective the professional is not a leader or a pleader but plays a background and supportive role. Courses of action, and decisions, are made by the indigenous lay advocates" (Schensul and Schensul, 1978: 122-123, cited in Waldram, 1993: 294). At all stages of the research project I was conscious of the need to check my subjective view of reversing language shift and to keep this separate from my recording and interpretation of community members' perceptions, needs and processes of delivery. The focus group discussions provided data that informed NLSD language planners, teachers, and the community members of Cumberland House of the opinions and expectations shared by each other. This information in turn may have been useful to individuals in the focus groups who contemplated their roles in the immersion program. My activity in the research study was limited to listening, recording, reporting and interpreting people's discussion as it relates to the plan for an Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program.

Identifying my role as advocate alerted me to ethical decisions I faced in the reporting of the focus group discussions. In particular when reporting information or opinions that are unfavourable to the idea of language maintenance, I endeavoured to present these opinions in a balanced way. Avery, Streible, Auvine and Weiss (1981) assert that conflict is "a cooperative effort to bring out all perspectives" and such equal treatment will be the "means of becoming aware of the strengths and weaknesses of all ideas so a strong and workable solution can emerge" (p. 20). Ultimately the frank record of conflicting views benefits the efforts of language planners at this site and others.

I do not presume to be giving voice to the people of Cumberland House. I perceive it to be a privilege to have heard, and with their confirmation, to have

interpreted and recorded their words in the report. In addition, I do not believe that my role is to enlighten people on the need for social change. This applied research may produce information that others may use in their efforts to plan Aboriginal language programs and thereby it could contribute to the survival of Aboriginal languages. This follows Patton's (1990) advice that "[t]he purpose of applied research and evaluation is to inform action, enhance decision making, and apply knowledge to solve human and social problems" (p. 12). The assistant moderators had the opportunity to learn the skills of moderating focus groups and may use these skills in the follow-up program evaluation in the longitudinal study.

1.8 Researcher Assumptions

As a researcher I approached this study with the assumptions that:

1. Cumberland House community members are Aboriginal people of Cree heritage.
2. Cumberland House community members have an opinion about Cree language maintenance that they will express in focus group discussions.
3. Community groups representing administrators, school board trustees, elders parents, youth, and teachers are able to speak about their perceptions of the following: success in community and school; their expectations of a Cree immersion program; their roles in the Cree language immersion program; and their needs relative to those roles.
4. Community concerns and perceptions should be at the core of planning and policy making.
5. Community contexts are distinct and language planning must take these into consideration.
6. Cumberland House community members can best describe their insight into their community context.

7. The information required to write a needs assessment for the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program is the range of opinions and concerns held by community members rather than select in-depth information from individual community members.

8. Focus groups could generate the required information for the needs assessment. Cumberland House community members perceived me as an outsider.

1.9 Delimitations

This study describes only the perceptions of some community members of Cumberland House.

1. Cumberland House is an Aboriginal community, not a First Nation community. Significant differences are in government and administration of education programs. Cumberland House has a municipal government. The education programs in this community are administered by the Northern Lights School Division system that is part of Saskatchewan Education and Training.

2. Community members are defined as those people resident in Cumberland House but also NLSD's Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee members who are active participants and stake holders in the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program.

3. Context is defined as the circumstances, facts and opinions which are relevant to the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program.

4. The participants chosen to participate in the focus groups were delimited to residents of Cumberland House and Northern Lights School Division' ALIPP committee members.

5. There were six focus groups comprised of:

i) Administrators of Charlebois School and AILLPC members,

ii) Local school board trustees,

iii) Elders, identified by teachers and administrators of Charlebois School, as showing interest in language issues and educational initiatives,

iv) Parents or guardians of pre-kindergarten aged children,

v) Youth aged 14 to 17 years, and

vi) Teachers who are Cree speakers,

6. Focus groups were limited to a maximum of 13 people.

1.10 Limitations

Restrictive weaknesses in the study include the following conditions:

1. Focus group participation was determined by residency of Cumberland House and or administrative involvement in the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program.
2. Focus group participation was determined by invitation by teachers and administrators of Charlebois School, specifically the Cree Language Developer, two Guidance Counselors, the Community School Co-ordinator, a secretary, and the Vice-Principal.
3. Among the 55 participants the ratios were 37 female: 18 male, 38 Cree speakers: 17 non-Cree speakers (13 of whom reported passive bilingualism or hearing Cree spoken to them), 53 Aboriginal: 2 non-Aboriginal.
4. I was neither a community member of Cumberland House, nor a colleague of the educational staff of NLSD, and as such was unknown to the participants of the focus groups.

1.11 Definition of Terms

Aboriginal is a term used to refer to "those people who are self declared as being descendent from the original inhabitants of the region now designated as Canada, regardless of legal status conferred by the federal government of

Canada" (Blessé, 1997). It also refers to that which belongs to the cultural and political entities resident with those people identified as aboriginal.

additive bilingualism is learning of a second or subsequent language in addition to a first language already spoken.

bicultural refers to the ability to operate in two cultures and to understand the different expectations and values of each.

bilingual refers to the ability to use two languages, a person who has this ability, and a program designed to foster this ability.

Bill C31 is a label to identify a person whose Indian status was reinstated following by a bill passed by Canadian parliament in 1985. Bill C 31 6(1) and 6(2) are further distinctions of individuals who may and may not pass on federally recognized Indian status to their children.

community is the aggregate of individuals who are oriented to maintaining relationships in a place.

community members are the stakeholders who have unique interests, perspectives and needs in relation to the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program. For the purpose of this study community members are represented by the youth aged 14 to 17, parents of kindergarten-aged children, teachers, administrators of Charlebois School and the Northern Lights School Division.

context is the circumstances, facts and opinions relevant to something under consideration.

culture is defined as "[t]he collection of rules, values, and attitudes held by a society which allows people to communicate, to interpret behaviour [sic] and to attach meaning to behavior [sic] and events" (Brizinski, 1993: 409).

culture clash refers to the confusion or inability to discern the cultural values or expectations of a given situation.

early partial immersion is a program where the target language is used up to 100% of the time in kindergarten and up to 50% of the time in grades one and on.

early total immersion program is

> a type of immersion program which begins in kindergarten and is normally characterized by the use of the target language as the language of instruction for 100 percent of the school day during at least the first two years of the school program, and thereafter, for varying proportions of the school program. Literacy is first taught in the target language, and subsequently, used in grade 2 or 3, in the first language (Fredeen, 1988: 10).

ethnicity is a term to "signify the macro-group 'belongingness' or *identificational dimension of culture*, whether individuals or of aggregates per se. Ethnicity is narrower than culture and more perspectival than culture. "The perspectival quality of ethnicity means that its specification or attribution is fundamentally subjective, variable and very possibly non-consensual" (original italics) (Fishman 1997: 329).

extensiveness of the participants' responses is measured by the number of people in each focus group who talked about a particular idea.

first language is the language acquired by an individual in early childhood.

frequency of the participants' responses is measured by the number of times a particular idea surfaced in each focus group discussion.

immersion program is taught by teachers who are bilingual in the majority language and the target language. It is

> a type of bilingual program intended for students whose first language is normally a majority language, and which is characterized by a home -school language switch. The target language is used as the primary language of instruction for all or some school subjects" (Fredeen, 1988: 11).

Indian is a legal term in the Canadian federal relationship with Indigenous people. Due to the legal and historical usage it continues to exist as a generic term to refer to Aboriginal people and is heard in the informal speech of Aboriginal

people to self identify in relation to non-Aboriginal society, culture or language.

intensity of the participants' responses is measured by participants' changes of speech pattern, wait time, and overlap responses when they talked about a particular idea.

language attitude defined by Cooper & Fishman (1974) in terms of its referent which they have "amplified to include language, language behavior [sic] and referents for which language behavior [sic] is a marker or symbol" (Cooper & Fishman, 1974: 6). Thus examples of language attitude include attitudes toward the language, attitudes toward a feature of the language, attitudes toward language use and attitudes toward language as a group marker. It is a hypothetical construct of a set of "stimulus-response relationships" which may be thought of in different ways. One theoretical analysis of the structure of language attitude is a "means-end analysis" which "defines a person's attitude toward a referent as a composite of the perceived usefulness of the referent with respect to his goals weighted by the relative value he places on each goal" (Cooper & Fishman, 1974: 7).

language decline occurs when the language is not transmitted to the children (Edwards, 1994: 126).

language death occurs when the last speakers of a language die and the language is not spoken anywhere else in the world.

language condition refers to the "health" or resiliency of the language based on the number and age of speakers and the circumstances (time, place, manner, cause, occasion etc.) in which the language is used. A measure of the ratio of the census reports on mother tongue and actual home use is a measure of language vitality (Drapeau, 1997).

language maintenance implies a

> continuity of the ordinary spoken medium and this, in turn, highlights the importance of uninterrupted domestic language transmission from one generation to the next. If this transmission is sustained, then language maintenance - at some level- is assured; if this transmission falters or ends, then the language becomes vulnerable and its maintenance threatened (Edwards: 1997: 34).

language revernacularization is the full societal revival of a language from its written form (Fishman, 1996: 188).

language revitalization is any effort or plan to make the condition of the language stronger or healthier. Spolsky (1995) uses this term to refer to "a situation where people start again to use a language as the language of the home and in particular to speak it to newborn children after a period where these uses were extinct" (p. 178)

language revival is synonymous with language revitalization (Edwards, 1994). However, Cooper (1989) defines this term more narrowly, contending that for a language to be revived it must have passed out of all use whatsoever (p. 19-20 Spolsky (1995) uses the term broadly to refer to language planning efforts which have as intended outcomes an increase in the number of speakers and an enhancement of its status. Thus Spolsky's definition language revitalization is one kind of language revival.

language shift is a term used to describe the situation where a generation of children learns the majority language (e.g. English) as their first language rather than the minority language spoken by their parents (e.g. Cree).

majority language refers to the dominant spoken by a majority of speakers, and used in government, commerce and education within a country or geographical area.

Métis refers to a person of Aboriginal heritage who self-identifies as a Métis, and to culture of that self-identified group.

minority status refers to a language in relation to a majority language. It may be defined by numbers, concentration and geographical placement. A common feature is the potential risk to the minority group's stability posed by power and status. Edwards (1997) attempts to classify the minority language situations by making three distinctions: the number of speakers, the type of connections between the speakers and the spatial cohesion between the speakers.

needs assessment is a report based on data collection that describes the community needs and states explicitly the goals and objectives of the program designed to provide for those needs. The resulting report of the data is intended to describe the community members' needs relative to the Aboriginal Language Immersion Program and their perceived goals and objectives of program evaluation and student assessment.

plain English is written English "language that the intended audience can understand and act upon from a single reading" (http://www.plainenglish.co.uk).

processes of delivery refers to the available resources and perceived responsibilities of individuals in the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program.

reversal of language shift refers to strategies to increase the number of first-language speakers of an Aboriginal language.

self-esteem is "an expression of a harmonious relationship between a person's personality and environment and it leads to a belief that the environment is manageable and beneficent" (Bauman, 1980: 30).

status-Indian is a person defined as an Indian under the terms of the Indian Act.

target language is the second language taught to children through an educational program.

traditional refers to that which originates from the indigenous culture and it "does not consist of static practices and institutions that existed in the distant past. It is an evolving body of ways of life that adapts to changing situations and readily integrates new attitudes and practices" (Canada, 1996: Volume 2, 116-117). In Cumberland House it is used to refer to the Cree cultural practices of hunting, fishing, trapping and maintaining relationships with the elders.

1.12 Summary

The introduction of the three parties involved in this research study described the orientation and participation of the researcher, the Northern Lights School Division and the language advocates of Cumberland House. The purpose of the study and the research questions have been outlined. I have provided background information about myself as researcher and my relationship to the study. The qualitative approach of the study has been identified as the means to gain Cumberland House community members' understanding of their community context. I have explained that the report of the findings may be interpreted as a needs assessment of the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program specific to the Cumberland House context.

The subsequent chapters of the thesis are organized in this way. Chapter two presents a literature review. Chapter three describes the research methodology. Chapter fourreports the research findings. Conclusions and recommendations for further research appear in chapter five. Next is the list of references followed by the appendices which include the quantitative data tables, a reflection of the RCAP's recommendation for research, Cumberland House Community members' written response to the interim report of the findings, and the Ethics committee approval of the research proposal.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW:
"The fundamental reasons why we're here about the Cree Immersion"

> In qualitative inquiry reviewing the literature is on ongoing process that cannot be completed before data collection and analysis. The data often suggest the need to review previously unexamined literature of both substantive and theoretical nature (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992: 18).

I followed this guidance in the literature review that began prior to the data gathering stage and concluded after the data analysis by adding unforeseen topics of concern and rearranging the existing ones in a new order of importance. Hence the topics reviewed here are colonization, decolonization, identity and language, cognitive and cultural competence, language shift and language revitalization, Aboriginal community involvement in language planning, first and second language acquisition, language immersion programs, and Aboriginal language programs.

2.1 Colonization

All Indigenous people who have endured colonial relationships with foreign oppressors share similarities in their contact and conflict with colonizers, and their struggle for survival and autonomy (Darnell and Hoem, 1996; Dyck, 1985; Mead, 1996). Memmi (1965) states that "colonization is above all economic and political exploitation" (p. 49). The interdependent relationship between the colonized and the colonizer is characterized by an inequitable power distribution.

Five steps in the process of colonization described by Laenui (2000) reveal how the power relationship utterly abrogates the Indigenous culture on physical and psychological levels. He explains that the first step, "Denial and Withdrawal" involves the rejection of the indigenous culture. The colonial people summarily deny the value of the Indigenous culture and some Indigenous people themselves withdraw

from cultural practices and criticize Indigenous culture. Step two, "Destruction /Eradication", is characterized by the destruction or removal of physical symbols of Indigenous cultures. In step three, "Denigration/Belittlement/Insult", social institutions such as health care, church, and justice, operate as colonial agents replacing Indigenous cultural practices. Step four, "Surface Accommodation/Tokenism", sees the surviving remnants of Indigenous cultures given surface accommodation by the colonial people as evidence of their beneficent leniency to the Native "backward ways". Step five, "Transformation/Exploitation", witnesses the surviving elements of Indigenous culture transformed into the culture of the dominating colonial society. This occurs as a result of the use of Indigenous language in Christian churches, Indigenous art used for economic exploitation, Indigenous symbols in fashion, and Indigenous musical instruments in mainstream music production (Laenui, 2000: 150-151).

Perley (1993) draws a parallel between Aboriginal education in Canada and the process of colonization. He identifies four basic components of colonialism that are evident in the history of the education of Aboriginal people in Canada. These are:

> a) the forced involuntary entry of the colonized group into the dominant society;
> b) the colonizing power adopting policies that suppress, transform or destroy native values, orientations, and ways of life;
> c) manipulation and management of the colonized by agents of the colonizing groups, and;
> d) domination, exploration and oppression justified by an ideology of racism, which defined the colonized group as inferior (1993, p. 119).

In this view, the colonizer's educational system is a principal means to effect the psychological oppression of Indigenous peoples and should be considered one of the institutions used as colonial agents described in Laenui's third step in the process of colonization. As Miller (1987, 1996) has illustrated, the residential school system under the Indian Act has been largely destructive to Aboriginal individuals, families and cultures. Residential schools for Canadian Indians, developed in the nineteenth century, were deemed by Canadian politicians to be an efficient means to assimilate

Indigenous peoples to Euro-Canadian lifestyle and value systems. Although Aboriginal leaders and parents initially pressed to have schools set up to instruct their children to assist them in adapting to the changing world, once the schools were established and the objective of assimilation was evident, Aboriginal leaders and parents objected (Miller, 1987). In his assessment of the residential schools, Miller (1996) concludes that they served an injustice to Aboriginal people in Canada.

> For the students of the schools, and in many cases for the staff as well, what mattered about the residential school experience was its impact on the children and their communities, and whether it achieved their objectives. In the areas of academic instruction and vocational training, treatment of Aboriginal culture, influence on the gender identity of schoolchildren, care and supervision, it seems clear that the schools performed inadequately in most respects, and in a few areas, wrought profoundly destructive effects on many of their students. For students who experienced the residential schools, what was important was the poor instruction, cultural oppression, inadequate care, overwork, severe discipline, and in all too many cases, outright abuse (Miller, 1996: 418).

In the AFN (1994) document, "Breaking the silence", adult survivors of the residential schools provide testimony to the destructive impact the experience has had on their lives and the lives of their children.

Federally-funded residential schools were not the only sites of cultural oppression in the guise of education of Aboriginal children. Provincial schools, firmly rooted in Euro-Canadian culture, have had an implicit curriculum, which by exclusion, token representation, and a view of archaic and vanquished Aboriginal cultures, privileges the mainstream culture to the detriment of Indigenous cultures. This implicit curriculum effects unintentional psychological oppression and may be seen to conform to cognitive imperialism. Battiste (2000) defines cognitive imperialism as "a form of cognitive manipulation used to disclaim other knowledge bases and values" and explains that it "denies people their language and cultural integrity by maintaining the legitimacy of only one language, one culture, and one frame of reference" (p. 198). For those who are looking to recovery, resistance and survival, Aboriginal languages are an indispensable weapon to counter the linguistic and cultural genocide of cognitive imperialism. Battiste (2000) explains "Aboriginal

languages are the basic media for the transmission and survival of Aboriginal consciousness, cultures, literature, histories, religions, political institutions, and values" (p.199).

2.2 Decolonization

Memmi (1965) states that "the colonized liberation must be carried out through a recovery of self and autonomous dignity" (p. 128) and that by putting a "new order in oneself" a new order of things with the colonizer may be found (p. 147). Laenui (2000) specifies the process of decolonization through the five phases of "Rediscovery and Recovery", " Mourning", "Dreaming", "Commitment", and "Action". These phases may be experienced sequentially, simultaneously, or in combination. In the first phase the Indigenous person rediscovers his/her own history and recovers his/her culture, language and identity. The second phase is one of healing wherein people "lament their victimization" (Laenui, 2000: p. 154). The third phase is when the Indigenous person explores and expresses the "full range of possibilities which eventually become the flooring for the creation of a new social order" (Laenui, 2000: p.155). The fourth phase, "Commitment" sees the person or people commit to a "single direction in which the society must move" (Laenui, 2000: p. 157). And finally the "Action" phase is taken when there is "consensus of commitment in the fourth phase" (Laenui, 2000: p. 158).

Decolonization is not a revolution, but a gradual process rife with contradictions and compromise. As Henderson (2000) points out "on the various paths to decolonization, colonized Aboriginal people must participate in Eurocentric society and knowledge" (Henderson, 2000: 248). The consequence of becoming literate and engaging in post-colonial writing and research is the risk of becoming isolated and alienated and being perceived as a collaborator (Memmi, 1965). Henderson (2000) recommends that educated Aboriginal thinkers should share Eurocentric thought and discourse where necessary, but they should rely on

traditional devices--Aboriginal thought, world views, languages, and knowledge so as to renew Aboriginal order, kinship and law and thereby renew the new social order (p. 249-274).

When considering the topic of decolonizing Aboriginal education, one must recognize the distinction between Aboriginal education and education of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal education has been referred to as cultural education, traditional education, and tribal education. The difference of educational goals and methods is noted by Saulteaux (Akan, 1992), the North Baffin Inuit (Stairs, 1995), the Alaskan Yupik (Kawagley, 1993), Saskatchewan Cree (Ermine 1995) and Tewa (Cajete, 1994). From the discussions of traditional Aboriginal education by writers from distinct Aboriginal cultures, general characteristics may be discerned. Aboriginal education is a contextualized education that is both ecological and spiritual. The context of education is daily family and community activities. It is ecological in that the interrelatedness of all things is the core of learning. It is spiritual in that the goal of education is the development of a person's self-knowledge and ability to fulfill their purpose to live harmoniously in the environment, which includes the spiritual, physical and social realms. The manner of learning is through observation, contemplation, ceremony, cultural activities, imitation and accomplishing tasks of graduated complexity and difficulty.

In contrast, education of Aboriginal people, sometimes referred to as formal schooling, and Western education, is a decontextualized education which is seen to be fragmentary and secular. It is decontextualized in that it is set in isolation from daily family and community activities. Because age, perceived ability and performance separate people, and subjects of learning are compartmentalized and investigated without relation to other subjects, this education is fragmentary in nature and in its effect on the participants. It is secular in that the education and religious instruction are separate subjects. Education is primarily concerned with developing the mental

capacities of the individual. The goal of education is to prepare a person to participate in the economic marketplace by developing specialized skills, to live in a democratic society and to develop the individual's intellectual and emotional potential by learning the cultural archive of history and thought through verbal mediation and literacy skills. The manner of learning is through abstract thinking, scientific inquiry, and memorization. Thus it may be argued that Aboriginal education needs to be revitalized, whereas the education of Aboriginal people needs to be decolonized.

Decolonizing the education system is neither a return to a vestige of the past nor a rejection of all that is contemporary. It is not the tokenism of recontextualized cultural content to fit the factory model of schooling, nor the replacement of agents of colonization with Aboriginal teachers and administrators to deliver the Western model of education. Rather, it is a move to establish self-determination so that the imbalance of power may be righted and the structures, power relationships, pedagogy, curriculum and goals of education reflect the Aboriginal worldview. With decolonizing the education system, schools and their activities would reflect Aboriginal cultures and society and would strengthen the youth's identification with their culture.

2.3 Identity and Language

On the topic of the relationship between identity and culture, the words of the Aboriginal elders are echoed in the academic literature. Charlie George, an Elder from Sandy Bay First Nation in Manitoba, spoke at a conference and told the people,

> It is true it is up to us to preserve and teach our language to the young ones because there they will learn the pride and respect that we have for each other. Through the language is where all our answers are. We have to teach it to our young children. Pray for them for strength so that they too will understand our language because it is a living thing (The voice of the land is in our language, 1993: 36).

Eli Taylor, an Elder from the Sioux Valley First Nation, said,

> Our Native language embodies a value system about how we ought to live and relate to each other...it gives a name to relations among kin, to roles and

> responsibilities among family members, to ties with a broader clan group...there are no English words for these relationships...Now, if you destroy our languages you not only break down these relationships, but you also destroy other aspects of our Indian way of life and culture, especially those that describe man's connection with nature, the Great Spirit, and the order of things. Without our languages, we will cease to exist as a separate people (Assembly of First Nations, 1992: 14).

The elders speak about the importance of Aboriginal languages as a medium of the culture. Fishman (1997) too discusses the two-way link between language-ethnicity and the three way link between language-ethnicity-religion (pp. 329-332). Ethnicity is the identificational dimension of culture, but it is perspectival in the sense that "its specification, or attribution is fundamentally subjective, variable and very possibly non-consensual" (Fishman, 1997: 329). In addition, the links between language-ethnicity and language-ethnicity-religion are themselves perspectival, situational and variable. The acknowledgment of the unique history of culture contact (Blair, 1997) and the ecological context of the Aboriginal community cautions the researcher and the reader not to make assumptions about the Cumberland House people's perspective of their ethnicity and the relation of the Cree language to that identity.

Identity, for the purpose of this study, is defined by a behavioural definition of a sense of self, separate from the environment and connected to a culture (LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1995). The sense of self "develops, in relationship to the individual's psychosocial experience, to the point where a psychologically healthy individual has a secure sense of who he or she is or is not" (LaFromboise, *et al*, 1995: 509, with reference to De La Torre, 1977). The cultural identity refers to "the evolution of a sense of self in relation to a culture of origin and who one is within and without that cultural context" (LaFromboise, *et al*, 1995: 509).

A strong sense of identity and language are required dimensions for both cultural competence and bicultural competence in the models proposed by LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton (1995). A personal identity and a cultural identity, and the ability to communicate ideas and feelings effectively in the language of the

culture, promote a person's wellbeing and ability to function in the environment. Bauman's (1980) definition of self-esteem is closely related to this as is his view of the relationship between language and identity.

> Self-esteem is an expression of a harmonious relationship between a person's personality and environment and it leads to a belief that the environment is manageable and beneficent. In practical terms it promotes a sense of confidence in one's worth and abilities and expresses itself in a high level of motivation. Indian communities make the argument that their members have damaged or underdeveloped self-concepts stemming from the treatment they have received historically and, in some cases from the adverse treatment they still receive. The remedy as they see it is to educate the community in the intrinsic worth of its Indian heritage (Bauman, 1980: 31).

Further, identity and language both have an impact on the stress an individual will experience in a bicultural situation. LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1995) report that the stage models of ethnic identity development which they reviewed generate the hypothesis that a minority individual who is monocultural either in the minority or majority groups will experience the negative psychological effects of bicultural contact (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1995: 510, with reference to Gonzalez, 1986; Murphy, 1977; Rosenthal, 1987, and Gutierrez, 1981). Research findings show that ethnic identification and second language proficiency are closely related (Young & Gardner, 1990). Participants who had a weak ethnic identification resisted learning the second language, but "participants who had a positive attitude toward both cultures or identified with both cultures were proficient in both languages or were eager to improve their skills in the second language" (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1995: 517). Communication ability is essential to an individual's ability to communicate ideas in both cultures. Thus bilingual language programs that encourage individuals to retain the language of their culture of origin while learning the second language, encourage stable identity development. The individual learns language skills to facilitate communication in a bicultural context, but does so without having to compromise his or her sense of cultural identity. The logical question is, "How are these cognitive and cultural competencies developed"? The answer

required further research into competence, language acquisition theories, language immersion programs in general, and Aboriginal language immersion programs in particular.

2.4 Cognitive and Cultural Competence

The idea that resources for Aboriginal knowledge reside in Aboriginal communities rather than in the academy is supported by a Charlebois School administrator. She said, "In order to recognize the needs of the community first of all I think it's important that you listen to what they want" (Blair, 1997: 55). This is this consistent with Burnaby's conclusion that "no matter what the circumstances, the Aboriginal community must be the central decision maker in any initiative on Aboriginal language maintenance" (Burnaby 1996: 33). It is also supported by the theoretical literature dealing with the topics of competence and Aboriginal community-based language programs.

Competence is broadly defined as the functional and instrumental skills required to perform cultural tasks. Because cultures vary and the attendant tasks required for subsistence are diverse, it stands to reason the knowledge, skills and attributes which define competence are not universal. The effort to identify the competencies valued by a particular group is informed by the work of Ogbu (1995), LeVine (1967), Berry, (1975; 1976; 1980; 1984; 1988) and Murdoch (1988). The assumptions in Ogbu's cultural ecological perspective of child rearing were useful in developing discussion group questions to discover the competencies valued by Cumberland House community members. In exploring the origin of human competence, Ogbu (1995) makes the following points:

> First, the origins of human competence - specific and general skills-prevalent in a given population lie in the nature of adult cultural tasks.
>
> Second, the nature of the instrumental competencies influences child-rearing techniques and outcomes by sharing people's success models, their theories of success and child-rearing, and their social organization for child-rearing.

> Third, child rearing ideas and techniques in a given culture are shared by the home/family and other institutions or settings containing the child in such a way as to make child rearing a kind of culturally organized formula to ensure competence and survival (Ogbu, 1995: 269-270).

LeVine's (1967) native theory of success, a component in Ogbu's cultural ecological perspective of child-rearing, postulates that within every population there is a shared knowledge of the range of available cultural tasks, their relative importance, and the competencies and strategies for attaining these positions or tasks. The native theory of success provides an important clue about what knowledge, skills, and attributes the adults in the society consciously nurture in their children, and what kind of adults they want their children to be (Ogbu, 1995: 258- 263).

Berry's work on cognitive competence affirmed the need to approach the research with the understanding that the cultural ecological context of Cumberland House affects the cognitive goals shared by community members. In Berry's studies to discover the meaning of intelligence, he concluded that children from different cultures are directed towards qualitatively different cognitive competence (Berry, 1984; Berry, 1988). The results show a "wide and diverse set of cognitive goals, often diverging sharply from the Western 'quick, analytic, abstract' cluster so much inculcated by our school system and so thoroughly incorporated into our assessment devices" (Berry, 1988: 12). An approach to understanding the transmission of cognitive skills is described by Berry as an ecological analysis.

> Whether from anthropological or psychological sources, the essence of this ecological approach (Berry 1975; 1980) is one that views cognitive (and other psychological) functioning as situated in an ecological and cultural context; the task is to specify the general life requirements for the group as a whole, and then to identify how these are communicated to the developing individual (Berry, 1988: 15).

Berry (1988) states that work of the cultural ecological sort should be conducted before beginning any assessment because "it is basically making sure that we know the cognitive values or goals are being pursued by a particular cultural group before assessment is begun" (Berry, 1988: 15). An individual's cognitive competence then

is a measure of his or her progress toward a number of culturally valued cognitive goals.

Murdoch (1988) speaks directly to the topic of Cree cognition in natural and educational environments and relates these to implications for education. He contends that the Cree hunter-gatherer culture of northern Quebec indeed does have a cognitive style distinct from the Western industrial cognitive style. He outlines that the basis for this difference includes the differing world views, different strategies and cues to achieve abstraction, cognitive abilities related to occupational tasks, and the Cree topologically ordered conception of time and social relations (Murdoch, 1988: 232-236). He states that whereas the "industrial cognitive style focuses on isolates or important principles derived from experience, Cree cognition focuses on implications, relationships, and effects generated" (Murdoch, 1988: 236). He outlines basic principles for Indigenous education based on Cree life and development: school life should be designed to be congruous with Cree sociocultural norms; formal education should have

> a role and performance more supportive of Cree sociocultural behaviour and aspirations for the future....Programme and curriculum development must proceed on the premise that Cree parents (and the large family) have a contribution to make and have a part to play in the program's eventual delivery ....Furthermore, the potential motivation of many Cree students to perform at school pivots on the potential of a future career in their community or region (Murdoch, 1988: 251-252).

Thus Murdoch holds that the goals of the school programme should be congruent with the cognitive goals of the Cree community members.

Cultural competence and bicultural competence are two topics relevant to the issues discussed by the community members. In a review of the literature on the psychological impact of biculturalism, LaFromboise, *et al,* (1995) drew from the fields of psychology, education, sociology and ethnology and defined the required dimensions for cultural competence and bicultural competence. LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton's (1995) review offers points of intersection with the issues of

learning an Aboriginal language. The authors employ a behaviourally focused definition of culture which is based on the belief that behaviour is a result of the continuous interaction of "cultural structure, individual cognitive and affective processes, biology and social environment" and that behaviour is "influenced by and influences a person's cognition and social environment" (LaFromboise, *et al*: 491). The behavioural model of culture suggests that in order to be culturally competent an individual would have to:

> a) possess a strong personal identity
> b) have a knowledge of and facility with the beliefs and values of the culture
> c) display sensitivity to the affective processes of the culture
> d) communicate clearly in the language of the given cultural group
> e) perform socially sanctioned behaviour
> f) maintain active social relations within the cultural group, and
> g) negotiate the institutional structures of that culture. (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1995: 492).

According to the authors, the internal sense of self and a cultural identity are two facets of identity development that have an impact on the ability to become biculturally competent. The skills needed for bicultural competence are:

> a) knowledge of cultural beliefs and values,
>
> b) positive attitudes toward both majority and minority groups,
>
> c) bicultural efficacy (the belief that one may live between two cultures without compromising one's cultural identity),
>
> d) communication ability,
>
> e) role repertoire (roles or behaviours that are culturally or situationally appropriate), and
>
> f) a sense of being grounded (the experience of having a well-developed social support system) (LaFromboise, *et al,* 1995).

These dimensions of cultural and bicultural competence give a framework for analyzing the community members' discussion of the desired goals of the Cree Immersion Program. Specifically it guides the interpretation of the data to look at the relationship between these skills, and an individual's effectiveness in the

environments of community and school (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1995: 524).

Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), in arguing the moral justification for the protection of Indigenous languages, operationalizes cultural competence in four components and asserts that language is a cultural core value. In the cognitive/intellectual/scholastic/literary component of cultural competence, knowledge of the language of the relevant culture is requisite. The consequence of language loss amounts to cultural genocide. Skutnabb-Kangas states that

> Several of the researchers worried about loss of linguistic diversity claim, basing themselves on empirical evidence, that a culture cannot survive even for a couple of generations if the language is lost. This is because what has to be transmitted to subsequent generations of children cannot be reduced to 'folkloric festivals' or 'romantic musings of the past' (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000: 117-118).

The second component of Skutnabb-Kangas' operationalized model of cultural competence is the affective/empathetic/identificational component that relates to an individual's feelings and attitudes about the culture and his/her insider's understanding of it. Rejection or forced alienation of one's cultural norms and values, according to Skutnabb-Kangas, "may require a lot of emotional effort" Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000: 120). The behavioural component, the third component of cultural competence, relates to the ability to interact with members of a cultural group in culturally sanctioned ways. The fourth component of cultural competence, metacultural and metalinguistic awareness, is the individual's ability to objectively understand his/her own culture's distinctiveness in relation to other cultures. The range of this awareness extends from the basic knowledge of one's ethnic descent to ethnicity being a dynamic force that mobilizes and solidifies the cultural collectivity (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, with reference to Fishman, 1977).

Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) advocates that metalinguistic consciousness be a part of the status planning (planning and policy) and not only the corpus planning (the forms of a specific language) (p. 122). She sees integration not as a product, but

as a "**process** and socially constructed **relation** which the minority and the majority have to negotiate reciprocally, and where **both** have to change" (original emphasis) (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000: 131). She states that "[i]ntegration of societies, not assimilation of dominated groups, is a pre-requisite for cultural (and linguistic) diversity to be maintained" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000: 131).

The literature contains studies and theories that justify the importance of Indigenous languages as a part of Indigenous children's education. Not only does the language education serve to develop the cultural competence valued by the cultural group but it also nurtures the children's cultural identity and wellbeing. Further, an education that develops the Indigenous cultural competence lays the groundwork for bicultural competence. Thus the education institutions which support the co-existence of programs supportive of Indigenous cultural competence are in fact functioning in the process identified by Skutnabb-Kangas that integrates societies and promotes cultural and linguistic diversity.

The imperative of school programs that nurture Indigenous cultural competence through language is upheld by the knowledge that an increasing number of young parents do not have the ability to transmit the Indigenous language to their children. The next section summarizes the information about language loss and recovery.

2.5 Language Shift and Language Revitalization

The body of literature on language shift and language revitalization has a broad scope, due to scholars' attention to the alarming acceleration of language death on a global scale in the twentieth century. Research has shown that Aboriginal languages in Canada are generally in decline (Maurais, 1996; Drapeau, 1997; Assembly of First Nations, 1992; Saskatchewan Indigenous Languages Committee, 1991).

Language shift is defined as "the process whereby a linguistic group loses its linguistic self-reproductive ability" (Drapeau, 1997). It may be experienced on a small scale within a family or on larger scale within a community or nation. It may be a gradual shift to the dominant language spread over the lifetimes of several generations, or it may be an abrupt shift with a single generation of children not learning their parents' mother tongue. Linguistic studies of this phenomenon are placed on a continuum ranging from negative to positive. Research emphasizing loss, uses terms such as language murder, language suicide, death, loss, attrition, shift and endangerment. The studies focusing on gain uses terms such as revival, revernacularization, restoration, restabilization, revitalization, renewal, maintenance and conservation. The terms, used by researchers, although intended to delineate precisely a researcher's perspective of the situation, are variously defined according to the researchers' criteria of the outcomes of language planning, language condition, and language functions (Spolsky, 1995; Cooper, 1989; Edwards, 1994). Nonetheless, there is agreement that the causes of language shift are a complex of social, political, demographic, cultural, and linguistic factors (Drapeau 1997; Fishman, 1991; Conklin & Lourie, 1983).

The causes of language shift are multiple, and therefore, the attempts to reverse language shift (RLS) should not be singular, isolated, or imposed. Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) is a guide for matching the degree to which a language is threatened to appropriate language planning and strategies to reverse language shift. He warns that it is important to concentrate on the stages dealing with intergenerational transmission before jumping to the latter stages of literacy and formal compulsory education. Many failed attempts to reverse language shift have been due to an expectation that outside agencies such as school or government could effect reversal of language shift without the commitment and involvement of home and community (Fishman, 1991; Anonby, 1997; Ahenakew,

Blair, & Fredeen, 1994;). The pessimistic view notes that characteristic to most language revival efforts are "strong external linguistic pressure, insufficient or enfeebled popular will, estranged or decontextualized leadership, [and] the transitory nature of bilingualism" (Edwards, 1994: 131). Nonetheless advocates remain resolute, encouraging the effort of setting realistic goals of language revival. Fishman (1991) declares,

> reversing language shift deals with a good problem because it is itself a potential contribution to overcoming some of the endemic sociocultural dislocation of modernity. In this sense, then, RLS is potentially a contribution to the solution of problems that are greater than the one that is first on its own agenda (Fishman, 1991: 6-7).

In her review of the literature on Aboriginal language maintenance, development and enhancement, Burnaby (1996) concludes that among the points to be taken is that "no matter what the circumstances, the Aboriginal community must be the central decision maker in any initiative on Aboriginal language maintenance" (p. 33). This topic is explored in the following section.

2.6 Aboriginal Community Involvement in Language Planning

The position stating the need for community-based approaches to language revitalization is common to papers presented to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Drapeau, 1997; Norton and Fettes, 1994; Ahenakew *et al,* 1994); conference proceedings (Martin, 1991); and journal articles and publications (Ryan & Robinson, 1990; Ayoungman & Brandt, 1989; Blondin, 1989; Bauman, 1980). The fact that any language revitalization effort requires a collective will is echoed in the identified need to mobilize the community members to support the effort. This is closely related to the understanding that institutions alone can not affect language revernacularization or language revitalization. The unique context must be considered when setting goals and designing programs for a language revitalization effort.

Ayoungman and Brandt's (1989) article presents a guide to the process of language renewal and language maintenance based on their practical knowledge and a

review of the literature. The process is divided into seven stages with accompanying exercises to be completed with community members and the language committee. This is useful to the present research because there are strong parallels to the process that the Northern Lights School Division has undertaken. Also the purpose of the exercises recommended by Brandt and Ayoungman (1989) relate to the purpose of this study. "The results of the planning process and [sic] will reveal areas where the community has valuable knowledge, areas where information is needed, and needs and obstacles which must be addressed in the planning process" (Ayoungman & Brandt, 1989: 46).

The Zhahti Koe program is offered as a model for community-based language renewal (Blondin, 1989). It was developed by Zhahti Koe community members and drew extensively from elders for guidance. The success of the program was attributed to the support and commitment of the community, the practices of traditional approaches to decision-making, the commitment of the school staff, the development of different kinds of learning materials, and the effective use of political support at the community and territorial level. The need to respect the context of the site is a core principle in the design and implementation of the program.

The mission statement for the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education was developed at a meeting of elders and young members of the Dogrib nation (Martin, 1991). Elders speaking in the Dogrib language articulated the cognitive values and goals that define cultural competence and bicultural competence in the Dogrib context. In addition they identify those factors which are contributing to language shift and the factors that relate to language revitalization. The wisdom of the elders and the requisite knowledge is in the communities. The elders and the academics direct us to attend to what is being said in the community context.

However, the knowledge generated by linguistic experts is to be valued for it may assist language planners to design the program to best meet the expected

outcomes, and it may temper community members' expectations of the immersion program as well as quell their fears.

2.7 First and Second Language Acquisition

Theories explaining children's first language development belong to three general camps. First, behavourists explain the routine aspects of language. Second, innatists explain the acquisition of complex grammar. And third, the interactionists explain how children relate form and meaning in language, how they interact in conversation, and how they use language appropriately (Lightbrown and Spada, 1995: 16). These theories are related to the theories of learning a second language which to varying degrees focus on the learners' innate characteristics, the role of the environment, and the integration of learner characteristics. The behavourist theory of second language development (Lado, 1964) is based on the assumption that language development is the acquisition of a set of habits, and so acquiring a second language requires learning a new set of habits. In this view, errors are the result of the learner depending on old habits from the first language. McLaughlin explains the cognitive theory of second language learning as the building up of a knowledge system which results when new knowledge interacts with and thereby restructures the existing knowledge system of the individual learning the second language (McLaughlin, 1987). The creative constructionist theory posits that the learner constructs his or her own rule system of the target language in slow predictable stages. Krashen's (1982) monitor model is one such creative constructionist theory and has been influential in the focus of communicative language teaching. The second language interactionist theory (Long, 1985) identifies the modified input as a crucial element in the process of language acquisition and native speakers' interaction with the learner (Lightbrown & Spada, 1995: 1-31).

These theories of second language acquisition relate to principles that guide classroom practice. The behaviourist approach focusing on learning new habits is

implemented by repetition and rote learning and has an emphasis on correct form. The creative constructionist approach focusing on the process of language acquisition is implemented by engaging the speaker in meaning making with an emphasis on communication rather than form. The second language interactionist approach focuses on the teacher's input that is modified to meet the ability of the student. These theories are useful to the reflective teacher who considers the various elements that affect the second language acquisition in the classroom. An absolute view is not advisable. Lightbrown and Spada (1995) in their review of the research literature conclude that,

> form focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of a communicative program are more effective in promoting second language learning than programs which are limited to an exclusive emphasis on either accuracy on the one hand or an exclusive emphasis on fluency on the other (p. 105).

It is a balanced view of the elements of environment, instruction and meaning that provides the rationale of the immersion programs as an optimal site for second language learning. Ayoungman and Brandt (1989) summarize it this way:

> Language renewal and maintenance is easy. It only requires that speakers of a language spend a lot of time speaking to others in that language in a way that what we are saying can be figured out by those who do not know the language and that those who are spoken to respond to [sic] (p. 44).

An immersion program provides the necessary elements that promote second language acquisition and language revitalization.

2.8 Language Immersion Programs

In the literature discussing language immersion programs, the various models are distinct in their assumptions, goals, and intended outcomes. The following four models are described here, English immersion, the transitional model of language immersion, language maintenance model, and enrichment or two-way immersion programs. English immersion, sometimes referred to as English submersion, is an English-only program in which minority language students receive no instruction in

their first language. The assumption is that the child's capacity to learn languages is limited and learning two languages would cause confusion. The goal is English language proficiency and the outcome is subtractive bilingualism, where the first language is replaced by the second language. The transitional model of language immersion operates from the assumption that the minority language student who has limited English proficiency will move toward mastery of English language skills if he or she receives instruction in the first language for a period of one to three years. The goal is English language proficiency for the student, and the outcome is subtractive bilingualism where the child's first language is replaced by the second language. Language maintenance programs are offered to minority students who have communicative competence in their first language. The goal is English language proficiency without the loss of the first language. The outcome is additive bilingualism. Enrichment or two-way immersion programs are targeted to monolingual English speaking children and minority language speaking children with limited proficiency in English. The assumption is that exposure to the second language will promote higher levels of proficiency which benefit both groups of children. The goal is additive bilingualism and biliteracy for majority language and minority language students.

The four key features of immersion programming based on the model of foreign language for language majority students are 1) the target language is the medium of instruction, 2) learners benefit by separation from the native speakers and receive specialized instruction suited to their language needs and abilities, 3) the goal is additive bilingualism so that the child's first language is not replaced, and 4) the sequence and intensity of instruction in the language changes over time, typically with an increase in English language instruction in grades four to six. The goals of this type of immersion are scholastic achievement, English language development, second

language development and attitudinal development. The research studies evaluating the success of immersion programs focus on these goals with varying emphasis.

The most common means of evaluating student achievement and thereby program success is the use of standardized tests. Scholastic achievement of French immersion students in Canada has been measured by standardized tests in subject matter areas such as mathematics, English reading and science. The tests were administered in English, disregarding the fact that the children may have learned the subject matter in the target language, yet the results show that immersion students do as well or better than their monolingual counterparts (Campbell, 1984; Lapkin & Swain, 1984 cited in Snow, 1990). In the evaluation of English language development, there is an expected lag in the immersion students' performance in the first few years but this disappears by grade two, three or four when English language arts are introduced into the program. In second language development, immersion students outperform in all categories those students who learn in the core language program (Campbell, Gray, Rhodes, & Snow, 1985). However in comparing immersion students with native speakers of the target language, there are consistent differences in their receptive and productive language skills. The immersion students have native-like receptive skills by the end of elementary school, but their productive skills, their fluency and their grammatical accuracy and lexical variety are not native-like (Campbell, *et al,* 1985, cited in Snow, 1990). In measuring attitudinal development, studies have attended to attitudes toward representatives of the second language and perceived psychological distance from the second language group. Snow (1990), in her summary of the research, notes that attitudes typically become less positive as the students progress though the immersion program. The complexity of language attitude is revealed in Baker's (1992) research on Welsh youth's language attitude which uses a model of possible sequence of causation among the variables including gender, age, language background, type of school,

language ability, and youth culture. Baker's research concluded that the youth's cultural contexts such as television viewing and playing sport, in which speaking the ancestral language was regarded as unimportant, were at once powerfully influential in the youth's lives and strong determinants in the formation of negative attitudes toward the language (Baker, 1992; 49-75).

2.9 Aboriginal Language Immersion Programs

There is a wealth of research literature relating to foreign language immersion programs in Canada and the United States. However, it must be noted that although the research is informative to the present study, there are limitations which restrict drawing too fine a parallel between the foreign language immersion programs and the Aboriginal language immersion programs. The context for learning the target language is vastly different. This is due to the circumstances of a colonial education system (Battiste, 1994: Perley, 1993) and aggressive assimilationist education and social policy that have had a profoundly negative effect on the status of the Aboriginal languages on a national and local level (Assembly of First Nations, 1998). The ancestral languages are in various stages of language shift. The language may be lost to a community, yet the elements of the Aboriginal culture persist. That the Aboriginal language is rarely seen in the written form hinders the efforts to promote literacy. The goal of Aboriginal language immersion programs is additive bilingualism, developing communicative competence while simultaneously developing the cognitive competence required for successful living in a bicultural context.

Comparison to the Maori (Spolsky, 1995; 1989), Navajo (Holm & Holm, 1995, House, 1997), Mohawk (Hoover, 1992), Dene (Blondin, 1989) Yupik (Hartley & Johnson, 1995), Cree (Fredeen, 1988) among other indigenous languages address the unique contexts of the individual language revitalization efforts through immersion programs.

2.10 Summary

In summary, those topics which have relevance to the community context for an Aboriginal language program in Cumberland House, have been reviewed. Colonization and decolonization were terms defined in reference to the experience of Aboriginal people in Canada. The link between identity and language was expressed through the oratory of Cree elders and was explored from a theoretical basis and related to the psychological well being of the individual. The concept of competence was defined and related to cognitive competence, cultural competence and bicultural competence and related to the moral imperative of preserving cultural and linguistic diversity. Language shift and language revitalization, two topics truly germane to the condition of Aboriginal languages in Canada were surveyed. In exploring the aspect of community involvement in language planning, an example and a model of community-based programs were described. The survey of the literature on immersion programs related to theories of language acquisition; the assumptions, goals and outcomes of a number of types of immersion programs; the evaluation of foreign language immersion programs in relation to these goals; and the unique contexts of Aboriginal language immersion programs.

The literature review supports the present research in three important ways. First, the topic of exploring the context of an Aboriginal language immersion program relates to, but does not replicate studies conducted on Aboriginal language revival efforts. Second, the literature review presents a survey of literature that does not include the insiders' description of community members' needs and expectations of an Aboriginal language immersion program in an Aboriginal settlement. Third, the material surveyed informed the research design and interview questions.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

"Healing the wounds in a process that is community oriented"

Central to the methodology of this research project are the concerns about autonomy, cultural protocol, and reciprocity. Negotiating the research question with the members of the NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Committee, seeking the insiders' understanding, and using focus groups as a research method comprised an effort to attend to these concerns. A community-based participatory research methodology is one which addresses the following four research issues: the intent and purpose of the research, the nature of the human relationships in the research process, data analysis and interpretation, and the use of findings and results (St. Denis, 1989: 30-41). The research presented here is a partnership between the researcher, the NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee, and the language advocates in Cumberland House. Negotiation, consultation, and approval were part of the research process from the inception of the research questions, and through the approval of the research proposal and interview questions, review of transcripts, and the interim report. In this limited way, the research follows the principles of community-based participatory research. The benefit of this research methodology in an Aboriginal community was revealed when the topic of imposed and compulsory education was discussed in the administrators' group.

> A13 ... They did everything they could to make us - our ancestors - learn the English language. They said it learn it or else. Why can't we say, "Learn it or else" to our kids today? Can we not make that stand that strong ...why couldn't Sask Ed make it a prerequisite ... to graduate from grade 12...You know, could we not do a proposal like that?
>
> A10 I think the beauty of this particular program is that a hundred years ago it was forced upon us that we had to learn the [English] language, our grandparents, our parents had no choice but to learn the [English] language.

> But now we are... keeping it free for people to make that option, to make that choice, eh? "These are the programs we'd like to offer the school. "What do you think about them?", "What is your opinion?", "Do you support it and if you support it, then we'll implement it". Like this research that we're doing, this very interview, is just a reflection of us recognizing that the Cree language is important but then along with that we are delving into many other issues that affect education. So my point here ... we can sort of bandage the wound and kind of help the wounds that have been inflicted and we're doing it in a process that is community oriented.

Thus the qualitative methodological approach and the focus group method was congruent with the values and aspirations of the research partners and participants. A survey of the characteristics of qualitative research and community-based participatory research follows.

3.1 Theory and Methodology of Community Based Participatory Research

Applied research with an Aboriginal community requires an approach which meets the objective of the research and also is culturally compatible. Community-based participatory research defined here stems from a research orientation that meets this need. Community-based participatory research is a qualitative research methodology, which belongs to the post-positivist paradigm. "Methodology refers to the process of doing research, which includes choosing particular research problems, approaching the problem from a particular perspective, and using particular techniques to consider the problem" (St. Denis, 1989, p. 9). The post-positivists began the counter-movement to positivist theory by challenging the concepts of objectivity in cultural studies and the existence of universal social laws (Smith, 1983). Research as methodology and research serving a social aim divide post-positivist critiques of research into two main branches. The methodology of positivist research is primarily technicist and quantitative using "numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect (Babbie, 1986, p. 558). Qualitative methodology is "research procedures which produce descriptive data: people's own written or spoken words and observable behaviour" (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975, cited

in St. Denis, 1989, p.13). Many critics advocate the use of quantitative methodology to be complemented with qualitative methodology (St. Denis, 1989, pp. 19-21). The following is a list of qualitative methodology characteristics inventoried by Smith (1983) and reported by St. Denis (1989):

1. Qualitative research methodology focuses on "what we know and then moves to construct an outer reality from that point" (St. Denis, 1989: 9);
2. the research "process must be internal" and "part of the researcher's active participation in shaping the world" (p. 9);
3. the research "instruments are a way to achieve accurate reflection or measurement of an independently existing object" (p. 9);
4. the language of the research text is "expressed in language used in everyday life" (p. 9);
5. truth is not that which corresponds to independently existing reality. Reality is seen to be "shaped by the mind" or "created by the mind" so that measuring truth by correspondence to an independently existing reality is unacceptable (p. 10);
6. "Truth can be seen simply as different ways of constituting reality based on different social and historical conditions" (p. 10);
7. "...social investigation is a process that is socially and historically bound . . . resulting in objectivity being nothing more than social agreement" (p. 10); and
8. "The purpose of investigation is to establish understanding which requires a hermeneutical approach . . . hermeneutics demonstrates that understanding cannot be pursued in absence of context or of an interpretative framework . . . this interpretation is expressed in language of the situation rather than in a neutral scientific language (p.12).

The idea of research serving a social aim is the foundation for post-positivist critiques of the positivist paradigm that is perceived as patriarchal and hegemonic. Lather uses the term "praxis-oriented" to "classify the critical and empowering roots

of a research paradigm openly committed to critiquing the status quo and building a more just society" (1986, p. 258). Three features of the post-positivist paradigm are 1. reciprocity, 2. the goal of participant reflection and change, and 3. data validation through participant involvement in the research process. Reciprocity defines the research wherein the people being researched are participants and subjects of the research rather than objects. There is a mutual negotiation of meaning and power between the researcher and the researched at the level of description and interpretation. The goal is to have participants self-reflect and change their situations. Data validation is established through consultation with the research participants, accessing a wide selection of sources of data, building theory with participants rather than imposing theory, and measuring the degree to which participants are reoriented and energized to change.

The methodology of community-based participatory research, described by St. Denis (1989) and Bopp and Bopp (1985), adheres to the features of a post-positivist/qualitative methodology identified by Smith (1983) and Lather (1986). St. Denis' (1989) four aspects of community-based participatory research organize these features under the headings: the intent and purpose of the research; the nature of the human relationships in the research process; data analysis and interpretation; and the use of findings and results (p.30-41).

3.2 Focus Groups as Qualitative Research

Morgan (1998) states that focus groups have increasingly been used in qualitative research because they

> draw on three fundamental strengths that are shared by all qualitative methods: 1) exploration and discovery, 2) context and depth, and, 3) interpretation. For each of these three general strengths come from collecting qualitative data through group discussions (p. 11).

The research question seeking the insiders' view of success in school and community required a research method with the strengths of exploration, discovery, context, depth

and interpretation. For this reason the focus group was a preferred means of data collection.

3.3 Focus Groups in this Research Context

Focus groups as a research method elicited a guided group discussion where the participants explored the meaning of success in school and community and talked about their own needs and roles in the program. Through sharing and comparing their thoughts with each other, group members had the opportunity to discover new understandings and reveal new insights to the researcher. This may have also contributed to community members' support of the immersion program. The discussion provided rich data about the context in which the participants operate and about those matters most important to them. The group discussion enabled the researcher to interpret how people think about the immersion program and why they think and act the way they do. Two common uses of focus groups which relate to the research are the identification of problems and planning (Morgan, 1998). The purpose in the present research was to identify what matters most to the participants themselves and to describe their vision, expectations, and needs of the program. The focus group provided an efficient way to get at the range of experiences and opinions in the community, rather than in-depth explorations of individual experiences. The data from the focus groups framed two reports to NLSD (MacKay, 1998; MacKay, 1999) which identified program needs and proposed instruments to assess children's academic progress and language development in the Cree Immersion Program. These reports were not a part of the thesis work.

3.4 Selecting Participants

In the research proposal, my initial strategy was to have the Charlebois School administrators recruit subjects to be involved in the focus groups' discussions for two reasons. First, the administrators were familiar with the community members, and

second, they had a list of people who had expressed interest in having Cree language in the school curriculum. In fact, the selection of participants involved several people in a collaborative process. On May 04, 1998, the first day I went to the school, the vice-principal called a meeting of teaching and non-teaching staff (including Cree Materials Developer, Community School Co-ordinator, two guidance counselors, and a secretary) to introduce me as the researcher and ask for their help in recruiting participants. I asked the people assembled to perform the task of recruiters and to use their knowledge of community members to select the optimal mix of people to create a safe environment for dynamic discussions. I encouraged them to contact people who had expressed their support and those who had expressed a dissenting opinion about the program. The sample would thereby represent diverse voices in the community and contribute to the identification of problems and issues. Following the research proposal, I suggested that we set fifteen as the number of people to be contacted, with the expectation that six to ten people per group would attend. The recruiters together made a list of people to contact for each group identified. Then six recruiters each chose a list of people to personally extend an invitation to the focus group interview.

This purposive sampling achieved through the participant selection and recruitment by the teaching and non-teaching staff in the Charlebois School is justified because as recruiters they were familiar with the community members. In focus groups, the research team uses its judgment to select "purposive samples" of participants who meet the needs of a particular project (Morgan, 1998: 30). This is advisable because it

> is essential that the participants in a group be compatible. This compatibility is more than a matter of demographic similarity. Each participant needs to feel that the other people around the table will understand and respect what she or he has to say (Morgan, 1998: 61).

The recruiters represented by the school's teaching and non-teaching staff were best qualified to select participants because they were aware of potential friction among

community members and their selection of possible participants ensured a degree of compatibility in the focus groups.

There were six focus groups of participants. Except for the parents' group, each focus group included both men and women. All but two participants were Aboriginal. Each group was homogenous in age, interests, occupation, and/or life experiences of the participants. Thus the groups included administrators, board trustees, elders, primary maternal caregivers of prospective kindergarten children (parents), students aged fourteen to seventeen years, and teachers. The size of the groups, although initially proposed to be from six to ten people, actually ranged in size from four to thirteen because in some groups all people contacted came to the focus group interview and no one was turned away.

The following is a description of the focus groups.

i) The administrators' group was composed of twelve people, including the school-based administrators, language programmers, and co-ordinators. The group consisted of eight female participants and four male participants. Eleven participants had Cree and English language facility. One participant was non-Aboriginal and spoke English but not Cree.

ii) The board trustees' group included four present school board trustees. Here there were one female participant and three male participants. All participants spoke English. Two participants were bilingual speakers of Cree and English; two participants spoke English only. One participant was non-Aboriginal.

iii) The elders' group included thirteen fluent Cree speakers who ranged in age from their mid-fifties to mid-eighties and were known as elders in the community. This group had nine female participants and four male participants. The participants spoke in Cree, responding to questions from the question route that the assistant moderator had translated to Cree. That a number of elders required translation of the consent form suggested their English facility was secondary to their Cree language ability.

iv) The parents' group included five mothers and one grandmother of pre-kindergarten aged children. The three levels of Cree language ability in the group were fluency experienced by one participant, passive bilingualism experienced by four people who understood spoken Cree but lacked the fluency and confidence required to sustain a conversation, and the experience of a non-Cree speaker who understood individual Cree words and phrases. All participants spoke English.

v) The students' group was composed of ten current Charlebois School students between the ages of fourteen and seventeen whom the recruiters had identified as "knowledgeable and not shy". This group included four female participants and six male participants. The members of this group reported hearing Cree spoken by family, teachers and friends in the school, community and in the bush. All participants spoke English.

vi) The teachers' group included ten Cree speaking teachers who were currently teaching grades kindergarten to grade eight at Charlebois School. Nine female participants and one male participant attended the focus group. All participants were bilingual speakers of Cree and English.

In total 55 people were interviewed.

3.5 Moderating the Focus Groups

Except the elders' focus group, all focus group interviews were held in the office shared by the Cree Language Developer and the Community School Coordinator at Charlebois School. The room is located behind the gymnasium, and although it offered privacy, there were the interruptions of announcements over the public address system and the noise of the children's physical education class that filtered through the walls. Arranging the participants' chairs in a circle and placing refreshments in the centre created a comfortable atmosphere. The teachers' focus group was conducted after school and all other groups were held during school hours. The elders' focus group was unique because it was held in the Charlebois

School library that had easier access, and was followed by luncheon served by the teachers and administrators. The elders sat at tables arranged in a circle and before the moderator began the introduction, a young boy said the Lord's Prayer in Cree.

Using the focus group technique, I collected data from each group. I moderated five of the groups with the help of a member of the ALIPPC or Charlebois School staff member who completed the duties of assistant moderator. In the elders' focus group two members of the NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee performed the duties of moderator and assistant moderator.

Each focus group began with an introduction of the research and researcher. The first question was an invitation to the participants to introduce themselves in turn and state where they hear Cree spoken. The moderator encouraged people to speak freely, to respond to what they heard in the group interview, and to not feel bound to answer in the order of speakers established in the round of introductions. The diverse discourse styles of the focus groups required the moderator to be flexible in following the questioning route. For example, as moderator in the student group, I expressly asked fifteen probing questions in addition to the fifteen questions on the question route. I spoke 107 times and waited up to twenty-five seconds for participant response. The students gave brief and direct answers to explicitly stated questions, and waited for a probing question or a change of topic. In contrast, as moderator in the administrators' group, I asked only seven questions of the question route with one clarifying question and spoke a total of eighteen times. The administrators talked at length and without interruption in response to a few explicitly asked questions. Their responses, rich in detail, answered the question they initially addressed but went further providing answers to questions from the questioning route not yet asked, and information about other issues and topics not raised by the original question. Other participants picked up the related topics and contributed their thoughts. As moderator, I listened to the discussion and made a mental note of the

questions answered and did not interject with my prepared questions because they corresponded to the content of their spontaneous discussion (see Appendix A: Questions Asked and Answered). This way of interviewing gave the community members a chance to address topics they perceived as most important. Innes (2000) explains the benefit of an unobtrusive approach to interviewing Aboriginal people.

> Some Aboriginal informants do not respond well to the standard question and answer interview. These respondents provide answers that are more like stories. These stories may contain the answers to numerous questions... If, however, the informant is allowed to speak in the manner to which he/she is accustomed , such as storytelling or conversational style, it will be less obtrusive and the researcher will probably gain more information ... Further, when interviewing Aboriginal people, researchers should note that many may not be accustomed to the barrage of questions typical of an interview schedule. It becomes incumbent upon the interviewer to be patient and allow them the leeway to complete their answers, especially if the answers are in a story. Many elders prefer to tell their stories without interruption (Innes, in press).

The sessions lasted between 90 and 120 minutes and were tape-recorded. The assistant moderator recorded the chronological order of speakers and transcribed abbreviated notes of the content of the participants' responses. These notes would have served as a substitute record of the sessions if the recording equipment failed. The notes were an immediate reference for the debriefing session with the assistant moderator and a subsequent reference for the transcription of the tape-recorded discussions

In the elders' focus group, the participants, moderator and assistant moderator spoke entirely in Cree. The member of the ALIPPC who performed the duties of moderator also translated to Cree the explanation of the research, the content of the consent forms and the questioning route. The other member of the ALIPPC who acted as assistant moderator operated the tape recorder and later translated and transcribed the data to English. The administrators requested that a copy of the elders' tape-recorded discussion be kept and archived by the NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Committee. I prepared forms, which the elders signed to give their consent to have the tapes preserved.

The table in Appendix A: "Questions Asked and Answered" provides an overview of the adaptations I made to the moderating style in response to the participants' discourse styles. It shows that strict adherence to the questioning route is unnecessary in all groups of people.

3.6 Assistant Moderator Training

I instructed the assistant moderators about their role by reviewing with them the purpose of the study and the questions on the questioning route, and explaining the questions' relevance to the objectives of the research. Other topics of this instruction included the consent process, confidentiality, in addition to how to take notes of the proceedings and operate the recording equipment. I explained that the moderator's debriefing process with the focus group participants would be conducted at the closing of the focus group session, and the debriefing process with the assistant moderator would be subsequent to the focus group sessions.

3.7 Triangulation

Methodological triangulation was achieved by using multiple observers of the focus group discussions; using multiple groups of participants; using the same questioning route and method; and using a research journal to record and monitor my own observations, insights, and subjectivity. These two excerpts from the research journal illustrate how I recorded my impressions for these purposes.

> May 5, 1998: I feel that I like to hear what *** and *** have to say about language and the culture, and teaching morals and values.
>
> I am cool to *** defensive answers using research statistics to persuade focus group members of the value of the program.

> May 07, 1998: Today I am observing the elders' focus group. There is much planning for an elders' gathering. Things to consider – TIME is most important – don't rush, have patience and go slowly, plan well.
>
> There are 13 elders here today…A teacher/parent brought a child in. He was carrying the box of gifts (he looks pleased to have the responsibility.) Another boy said the Lord's Prayer in Cree. The boys are sitting and listening to the elders speaking Cree.
>
> (Later in reflection) These little details are so natural that they seem unremarkable but I realize they illustrate the context of Cumberland House. The way the community members treat the elders with love and reverence.

> Their spiritual life is practised in their everyday. (I recall that the community meeting in the winter also started with a prayer). Children are included in the elders' gathering. Children are given responsibility and know to listen quietly

I provided opportunities for participants to verify and clarify the content of their discussion. I employed qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the data.

3.8 Analyzing Focus Group Data

The transcriptions were coded to preserve participants' anonymity. Upper case initials identified focus groups. The administrators' group is indicated by A, board trustees by BT, elders by E, parents by P, students by S, and Teachers by T. The researcher is identified by Rr. The number following the upper case initial denotes an individual participant of that focus group.

Three processes achieved the qualitative analysis. First, during the debriefing phase with each focus group, I identified key themes and ideas generated by the discussion I had heard. Second, using the written transcripts, I developed a classification of topics and subtopics by identifying recurring themes and ideas within and across groups. Third, I coded the data using the following broad headings of

- Vision
- Expectations
- Needs
- Resources

Thus, I sorted the data into three levels of classification: category, topic (theme) and subtopic (idea). An example is the subtopic (idea) of Language Recovery that relates to the topic (theme) Colonization/decolonization , which in turn belongs to the category of people's Vision of Education. I used this classification in the quantitative measures of the data (see Appendices B, C, and D).

The quantitative analysis focused on the frequency, extensiveness, and intensity of the participants' responses to the topics and ideas identified in the quantitative analysis. I listened to the tape-recorded focus group discussions and

used the coded and categorized transcriptions. I noted the wait time, overlap responses and changes in speech pattern for each research participant's response. I assessed the frequency of topic discussion by counting the number of times a related idea surfaced in each focus group discussion (see Appendix B: "Frequency of Topic Discussion by Focus Group"). I determined the extensiveness of topic discussion by counting the number of people in each focus group who talked about the idea (see Appendix C: "Extensiveness of Topic Discussion by Focus Group"). Finally I measured the intensity of participant response by tabulating wait time, overlap responses and changes in speech patterns for each topic discussed (see Appendix D: "Intensity of Topic Discussion"). I determined each participant's mean average wait time to respond and where the wait time deviated by more than two seconds from his or her individual mean average, I highlighted the topic as one which was discussed with intensity. Likewise, when participants spoke simultaneously about a topic, interrupted each other or began to speak before another person was finished, I identified the topic discussion as intense. Changes in speech patterns as a measure of intensity were identified when participants changed the topic and when a participant who infrequently spoke contributed his or her thoughts and feelings. Appendix E: "Measures of Intensity by Focus Group" contains the recorded instances of intense topic discussion. These tables reporting the frequency, extensiveness and intensity of topic discussion illustrate the range of topic discussion within and across the focus groups, as well as the different priorities identified in the individual focus groups. Finally central tendency and variability of participants' response rates were measured by calculating the mean average number of responses, the standard deviation, median, mode and range of response rate (see Appendix F: "Measures of Central Tendency and Variability"). A comparison of these data from the six focus groups was useful in describing the different discourse styles and topic discussion in the six focus groups (see Appendix G: "Measures of Central Tendency and Variability by Focus

Group"). A definition of terms used in appendices E and F is included in Appendix H.

3.9 Risk or Deception

In order to avoid any foreseeable risks to participants and to eliminate any element of deception in the study, I made efforts to fully inform the participants of the study and all its processes, outcomes and benefits. I did this using plain English in all written and spoken communication. I informed the participants about: the purpose of the study; the arrangements which had been made to ensure their personal confidentiality; the benefit which I would receive by conducting the study; their right to participate in those portions of the focus group discussions with which they feel comfortable; and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. I informed participants that the recording equipment would be used during the focus group interview session and that transcripts would be typed only by me or by bondable office service personnel, with the exception of the Cree elders' transcripts that would be typed and translated by members of the ALIPPC. In turn, I explained that audio tapes, transcripts and notes would be kept in a safe place in my home during the writing of the thesis, and in the office of my thesis co-advisor, Dr. Ward, for a five year period following the completion of the thesis, after which time the tapes will be destroyed. The NLSD copy of the elders' focus group discussion will be archived by the NLSD. Student's protection from risk or deception was additionally ensured by the attendance of a Charlebois School guidance counselor in their focus group. The risk of deception for the participants was further decreased by each participant's opportunity to review the coded transcripts from their focus group.

3.10 Confidentiality

Absolute confidentiality in this study was not possible because the research method required face to face and interactive discussions, and the focus group participants knew each other. Further the community and the school have relatively

small and therefore identifiable populations. I strove to protect the participants' privacy and anonymity by introducing the questioning route at the beginning of the focus group interview and guiding participants to talk about how they will protect their own privacy in the focus group discussions. I stored the tapes, transcripts and notes in a secure place, coded transcriptions so that individuals' names do not appear in the transcriptions. I excluded from the thesis, reports, articles or presentations based on this study, any people's names, locations, dates or any information that identifies focus group participants.

3.11 Consent

I gave information letters that outlined the details of the study and requested their participation in the project to recruited adult and student participants, and to parents of student participants. Adult participants, student participants, and parents or guardians of student participants received guidelines for consent and consent forms. They signed and returned the consent forms. The Cree elders received this information in writing but also through a Cree translator at the beginning of their focus group interview.

3.12 Debriefing and Feedback

The focus group format offered an excellent opportunity for debriefing and immediate feedback in response to my interpretation of the content of the participants' discussion. As a moderator I asked the participants to conclude with their comments on any points not yet discussed in the group. I presented an oral summary and then asked if it was comprehensive and accurate in identifying the major themes and key ideas from the discussion. I asked participants to add anything to this summary that they felt I had missed. In the parents', students' and teachers' focus groups participants did contribute additional ideas, and clarified or emphasized their point of view. After formally concluding the focus group session, a representative from NLSD presented the participants with a card of thanks and a

twenty-dollar gratuity provided by the Northern Lights School Division. In addition, elders were provided with a lunch and gifts of useful articles such as socks, sewing needles, and tea towels among other things.

Tape recording the focus group interviews and subsequently transcribing the audio tapes offered another important process to provide feedback. Muriel Innes, a retired office assistant, transcribed the recorded focus group discussions. I reviewed the completed transcripts to assess the need for contacting individual participants and requesting additional clarification. I sent all participants a self-addressed stamped envelope and a coded transcript of their focus group interview and asked them to review his or her contribution for accuracy and further clarification. Individual participants had the opportunity to request me to delete any portion of their individual contribution that they did not wish to have quoted in the study.

In December 1998, I wrote an interim report that summarized the results of the interviews under the headings of Vision, Expectations, Needs, and Resources. I sent two copies of this report to NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee members and one copy to the teachers and administrators at Charlebois School. The ALIPPC members spoke to me by phone to clarify the content and an administrator of Charlebois school in consultation with teachers and an elder, composed a written response with suggestions for word choice and qualification of some focus group members' contrasting opinions (see Appendix I).

3.13 Ethical Research

I approached this research project with a conscientious concern to follow the guidelines for ethical research which are established by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and adhered to by the University of Saskatchewan (See Appendix J: Research Proposal Approval and Renewal by University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Human Experimentation). Further, being sensitive to Aboriginal peoples' concerns about research in relation to

Indigenous knowledge and intellectual property rights, I designed the study to be consistent with the guidelines for ethical research as outlined by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Appendix K includes a summary of my efforts to follow the guidelines set down in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

This chapter has described in detail the research methodology. Chapter four reports the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

"This community here supports one another... we don't do things alone."

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) argue that "data analysis involves organizing what you have seen, heard and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned" (p.27). This chapter reports the research findings and aims to resolve the quandaries encountered in a thesis research project using a participatory research method. In most cases, the perplexity was how to complying with the limitations of a thesis project and strive for the ideals of reciprocity, mutual negotiation of power and meaning and research serving a social aim. At the risk of compromising the principles of qualitative research methodology and participatory action research, I have chosen to present participant responses in the form of quantitative data in addition to a descriptive narrative weaving their words into my report. My concerns have been to report data that answers the research question, to present the voice of the participants, to represent the full range of participant responses, to check my bias and to stay within the prescribed length of a thesis. The combination of the qualitative and quantitative data helped me to address these concerns.

4.1 Administrators' Focus Group Discussion

Thirteen people attended the administrators' focus group conducted Tuesday morning May 05, 1998, in the office of the Community School Co-ordinator and Cree Language Materials Developer. One person arrived late and another had to leave temporarily in order to complete school-related duties, but these interruptions did not interfere with the flow of discussion. Participants' familiarity and comfort with each other in the focus group was evident by their laughter, affirmation of each others' ideas and tactful presentation of alternate views. People in the administrators' group

spoke at length in response to seven questions from the questioning route. Through discourse, they explored the complexity of the initial questions, raised new topics and issues, and posed questions for other participants. The discussion revealed what administrators viewed as important issues regarding the education of children in Cumberland House.

Administrators spoke at greatest length about topics related to their vision of education. The question, "What does a person need to live well in this part of the world?" elicited responses which alluded to Cree cultural competence and bicultural competence, and the ability to meet the physical needs of food, shelter and income. Participant A9 began by saying that,

> the first thing that a person needs to do is to go and give thanks to the Creator and wake up. The next thing you do is give thanks again to the Creator before you sit down for the food that you are going to be eating because it came from your hard work, whatever it was that you did. And it's always that understanding that it came from somewhere and you always give thanks to that understanding. Because it is so important that we never lose sight of where creation came from and how we understand and how we came about.
>
> But in reality what I really like, people that get along with one another. That is the first thing getting to know them that much more and sharing the things that we have in common ... My mother gave me that value system, the Judeo-Christian value system. My father gave me the understanding of Indian spirituality that everything has spirits and that's where respect comes from. Both values play [inaudible] that it's so much it's necessary for all things to live in harmony with one another. That to me is living well.

Other group members alternately identified the importance of maintaining relationships and providing for a family's financial needs.

> A13 I think in order to live well in Cumberland House one of the things you really have to do is conform. You can't be an individual 'cause if you're an individual then you will be just that and you will be alone. But what you will have to do is conform to others. If there's a lifestyle that is lived within the community you have to conform to that lifestyle. If you don't then you can be on the outside looking in and that can be a difficult place to be.

> A8 As a person who came into the community, well I've been here about *** years, but I think that there's some universal truths that have to be considered ... But I think to the degree that people contribute to the society, to the community, to the family, there's going to be that degree of success and if you've got something to contribute in terms of the skill, well that's got to look after the financial needs in spite of finances not being important ...but in this day and age it's hard to get by without some kind of financial base.

A12 But I believe that to live well you need to be educated. You need to not only keep you education but to help others to possibly follow your lead. You know to be a role model ...

Another participant reflected upon what others had said and summarized her thoughts this way.

A10 It makes you really think because what do you need to know in order to live well in Cumberland House. You can break it down to saying that there are things that are - according to what standards do we live - in order to live well in Cumberland House. The basic ones of course are making sure that you have food on a daily basis. You have shelter you know that you have some kind of income. Your basic needs. Then there's your support systems and I guess if you go from a psychological point of view all of those - all of those rest around the basis of love and support systems so you just need your shelter, your love and those kinds of things to make sure that you're living well. Depends who you are, some people are just as comfortable being given a house and have no other options but to stay in government housing that is provided with government assistance and feel that by living in that type of a home and being ensured that they get some sort of an allowance on a monthly basis that covers their needs then they feel that that's living well. And that's a reality in this community because there's many people that are unemployed and don't have any kind of jobs and ... there's a great number of us who live on that borderline, and living at the poverty level or just below the poverty level. That's a reality in this community if you judge it according to national standards. And there is people who feel they can live well in the community if you have like the American dream as [A3] put it, you've got your family, good support system, you've got your house and your car. So I guess depending on what standard you're talking about you will have different points of view of living well by the people in the community. I feel essentially that if those basic needs are met that you can live in the community quite well. And you have enough you know basic needs to look after yourself as an individual or your family if you have a family. That goes for the entire community. But to know the question is...What do you need to know in order to live well? Yeah. I think [A12] covered quite a bit of it by saying that you have to first of all know yourself - understand yourself and know where you fit in to the community and then on the outlook of looking at how the community fits in around you. It's important to know that in order to live well in Cumberland that you have to try and live a good life yourself. You have to be concerned about other people, whether they be from the community or are living in the community but are not originally from there. To live well in the community you have to be a contributing member and then be part of the community. And set standards, I think for yourself and have an overall vision. Certainly part of that is the spiritual aspect that [A9] mentioned, knowing your Creator ... Just looking at that aspect of the spiritual component and the physical component and the emotional component all of those are part of what makes us a community. In order to live well I think you have to do as well we can in each of those areas as individuals and as community members. ... To know, that [A10] mentioned earlier, that element of respect that needs to be carried on and that needs to be full-fledged in our community and we can take opportunity out of the fact that we are in the school system and we can try and reinforce it along with other ties we have with the community. And also to

> know as part of that our culture, our traditions, our customs, and through some of the programs that we have at the school like that [A3] runs. We've got those more tangible things like square-dancing, you know. There's teaching the Cree you know, that language. Those are important to know. To know ourselves not only as individuals but to know ourselves as distinct people that are from this community and we are recognized by our distinctions, by our contributions and taking pride in ourselves as a community. Representing our community as best as we can to try to make life a lot better for others.

The administrators spoke about Cree language as being a core value of Cree cultural competence. Participant A8, a non-Native person, recalled his observation that his Cree and Dene friends "definitely demonstrate that it is a significant loss to them when they're unable to understand the people from their own ethnic background." Participant A10, talking about the condition of language in the community, referred to the fluent and novice speakers of Cree "demonstrating an awareness of their level of language and also their level of understanding of the culture and their community as well." She went on to illustrate how limited Cree fluency "is a good example of the loss of culture and the loss of language because the two are, like, together in many ways and reinforce one another." Two other respondents described key integral cultural values that are conveyed through the medium of Cree language facility. A12 spoke of how the Cree language helped to form her identity and gave her an understanding of her relationships with people. She said:

> That's how we learned Cree. Everyone spoke to you in the language. You never felt out of place. You were always with everyone because of the language. That's what it did - brought us - you know- gave you a sense of belonging.

Respondent A13 described how youth who have not learned the Cree language also have not learned respect as a Cree cultural value that instructs them how to behave in culturally appropriate ways. He explored the topic this way:

> There is no fear within the children. You know, with us there was fear instilled in us that if we messed up we were going to get it. Today there is no fear, you know. What's the consequence for these youth? Nothing. You know, there's no consequence and I think some fear has to be instilled back in them again. But the norm has definitely changed. The norm which was what me and [A3] described, that was the norm. But the norm I see is deteriorating and it's become less. So somehow the norm has to change. And the same way the

> norm for people - Aboriginal people speaking their language is - the norm today is, "Speak Cree - get laughed at". "Speak Cree - and totally butcher it". You know that's the norm ...

Participant A12 reflected on these ideas and said,

> What [A13] is saying is the loss of pride you know like we need to have that pride back. When you have pride you don't laugh at somebody you know... the fear - because the fear is gone, well when there's fear there's respect - I'm not talking about the "eebie jeebie" fear you know. I'm talking about when there is fear of your parents it's the respect that you have, you know. The fear of God is the respect that you have. The fear of teachers is the respect you're supposed to have. So the fear is gone and the respect is gone is what I'm trying to say.

Administrators expressed expectation that the Cree Immersion Program would reinforce Cree cultural and bicultural competence, develop Cree fluency and literacy, and be delivered in a manner consistent with Cree cultural values. Participant A13 concluded his thoughts about the societal changes resulting from the loss of Cree language and the attendant loss of Cree cultural values by stating hopeful expectations of the Cree Immersion Program.

> You know somehow that norm has to change and I think it's going to change when we have that immersion program in our school and I think that norm will again be established to be, you know, what it was before.

Participant A12, responding to the same topic, expressed the expectation that the Cree Immersion Program would develop the characteristics, attributes and skills needed for Cree cultural competence. She said it this way,

> Well here again we have to go back to ... you can teach your language but then you got to do more than that. I've been grappling with this thing for years, you know. I've been an educator for eighteen years and I've seen a lot of things come and go. It's the <u>whole</u> child, eh? That's where it starts. Your language is important ... So that's what we have to do. We have to include that in there you know the pride of your language, the pride of your culture, the pride of your *kaneniyin* , like you know, your "Creeness", those kinds of things. So how do you teach pride then? I think you got to again look at different ways. You know proud of your parents. All these things. When you're looking at this immersion program you're going to have to look at it, you know, from a circle just spiraling to different areas ... You have to touch the heart of the child and that's going to touch all areas.

Administrators expected that the Cree immersion Program would provide an opportunity for children to learn functional Cree fluency, thereby countering language

shift. Indirectly discussing the issue of second language acquisition and language shift, participant A13 raised the topic of humour and shyness as an inhibitor for adolescents and adults learning Cree as a second language. Participant A12 explained the importance of humour in Cree culture and how this impacts a language learner:

> To people who are learning the language we are often so hard on them. Instead of encouraging and teaching and saying "OK this is how you say..." yeah we do discourage them. Maybe, and maybe not so much in words but sometimes just in our face, but that's part of our culture too. We love to laugh at people. We do. We like looking at people we like to - part of our sense of humour is always making fun of somebody. We get a really good laugh out of somebody's mistake. That's just how we are. (laughter) Sad to say if someone were to get up here and somebody tripped over this coffee table, we'd probably have a really good laugh (laughter) you know rather than saying "Oh did you get hurt?" That's just the way we are. So when someone is speaking the language too, like we'll often, we will make fun of them.

Participant A3 recounted his personal experience of language loss and being teased:

> ...Because when I was with my friends we used to talk Cree - *** is such a Cree place. All the little kids still today speak Cree over there. And come here and then our dialects change and then I have to - I stop talking my language 'cause I can't speak their way 'cause they laugh at me. Of course, I would laugh at them "Hey, you're saying it wrong". And then everybody is talking differently and maybe I'm saying it wrong. So I stopped my language and then I admit now I lost it. I'm not - I can't - I have to think about it first. And when someone speaks to me I get real ... like a cold sweat, "Oh no - how do I respond to this? - OK that's how".

Participant A10 reflected on the dilemma facing young parents and related the ideas of language loss, the resultant language shift and the role of the school in teaching Cree.

> I was giving a ride to [A3] last week... and Cree was one of the things we talked about, eh? And he said that he'd really like to teach his daughter how to speak but [A3] can't carry on a full conversation in Cree and neither can *** [his girlfriend]. So there's that generation that has lost the language. And one more thing language should be first taught at home. Where are the resources there when the parents have lost the language themselves? How can they promote the language when they're not able to carry a fluent conversation in Cree. And no wonder we're being looked at as a school, as an institution, to try to do our best in bringing back this language and doing what we can at the classroom level to either revive it or rejuvenate it.

On another occasion, participant A10 expressed her expectations of the Cree Immersion Program.

> I'm interested in knowing and want the program plan in place to ensure that the role the school plays in educating my child, and just as a parent from a personal point of view, I would want my child to learn Cree and English. And I think if we go into an immersion program that's always the goal: to have this child know both languages. They won't be deprived of one or the other. I would like my child to know the importance of the spiritual, the emotional, the physical and the intellectual components of any given lesson and any given any subject area. Just as I would if [they went] into an English program. I want my child to know what is right from wrong. I want my child to know how to use computers. I want my child to play Phys. Ed. like everybody else does. And I think coming along with it is just my understanding that a Cree immersion program, if we were to ever have one here at the school, is it just to learn in Cree? But at the same time begin to speak English at a certain grade level and eventually be able to speak both. But to expand education horizons in more ways than just learning Cree, knowing Cree, knowing where [inaudible] from and where to go.

The design and delivery of the program was also a topic of concern to administrators. The focus group discussion presented alternate views about the delivery of the Cree Immersion Program. One participant citing the history of cultural and linguistic oppression experienced by the people of Cumberland House, presented a hypothetical plan making the Cree Immersion Program mandatory and circumventing people's choice. In response, participant A10 presented her views that the community-oriented process of planning, designing and delivering the program in effect heals the wounds inflicted by cultural and linguistic oppression. Participant A9, in response to my summarized interpretation of what I had heard the administrators say, kindly added:

> Cree humour. Cree humour is one thing that you missed, and certainly love is another thing that you missed there. 'Cause that's one thing that a teacher has to have, is to be an inviting teacher and an inviting teacher is love. You can overcome a lot of things if we show that a lot of time.

Thus, administrators expressed the expectation that Cree cultural values would be central to the explicit and implicit curriculum of the Cree Immersion Program.

The discussion of needs was abbreviated in lieu of the extended detail of administrators' discussion of their vision and expectations. With the lunch bell ringing and people preparing to go for lunch and return to work responsibilities, participant A9 persevered in stating the dire need for appealing teaching materials.

> Another thing. When we go to teach the Cree language you know for some reason or another little kids when they watch these things they like to look at children of their age or else muppets or whatever but that kind of stuff has to be placed.

In the administrators' view, elders, the school and community are resources to draw upon to ensure the success of the Cree Immersion Program. Participant A10 recalled the valued assistance of elders in the Cree program at Charlebois School.

> I know *** started them off with material that we developed here at the school, that Cree Lord's Prayer back there. And it's just a clear example of one little thing that you do at the school and how widespread it can be. It started by that Cree translation being done here, [A9] went to see the elders in the community and they gave us guidance on the translation and then *** took initiative in getting students down there to say the Cree prayer in English and Cree and it just grew from there.

Participant A9, detailing the elements that contribute to living well in Cumberland House, spoke of the Cree cultural values of communal support and gave examples of working harmoniously in town council meetings and community development.

> This community here supports one another ... We don't do things alone. There's always a family member. There's always a friend. There's always a stranger too - there's always somebody around that you can help.

The following is the recorded content of my debriefing of the administrator's group.

> At the beginning of the conversation people talked a great deal about what it is that is needed for children to learn to live well in this society that Cumberland House is a part of. And a lot of the things you talked about are the things in terms of self-knowledge, and sharing, and giving thanks, knowing how you are connected in the community, and having "spiritual education"... being connected spiritually also. And then in terms of the school, the things that the school needs to teach are respect for the teachers and teaching the <u>whole</u> child, teaching for the success. And the school in terms how it relates to Cree immersion, that there is some opinion that for Cree the school should have a secondary role, that the real responsibility is in the home, but also it was mentioned that the reality of the situation is such that the parents in the home don't necessarily have fluency so the role of the school changes from being a secondary role to ... more of a primary role. In terms of what is needed in the immersion program, you need more materials, you need support, you need commitment from people, having a shared understanding about what is it that you are trying to do here. But at the same time it's important to give people that aspect of choice - that it can't be the way that it was where people punished ... The goal is different. Not to erase English in the way the old education system was meant to erase Cree, that the purpose of the education is to have the children bilingual so that they know both languages.

Thus it is clear that the administrators' view of the Cree Immersion Program is one of hopeful expectation, that it will reverse language shift, contribute to the preservation of Cree cultural values, promote people's well being and will draw upon strengths already in place in the community.

4.2 Board Trustees' Focus Group Discussion

Four people attended the board trustees' focus group Wednesday afternoon, May 06, 1998 in the shared office of the Community School Co-ordinator and the Cree Language Developer. This was the fifth of six focus groups conducted in the community. The participants of this focus group were familiar and comfortable with each other. Of their total 167 responses, eighty-two were recorded instances of overlap talking. The participants talked simultaneously to joke, and to correct or clarify details in each other's responses. The board trustees appeared to share a common view of the value of Cree language and the role of the school in Cree language learning. The similar dissent and co-ordinated introduction of spontaneous topics suggested that the focus group participants had prepared their points of discussion before coming into the focus group. As individuals they each talked about English language facility helping a person in post-secondary education and in employment. Their discussion related mostly to topics about vision, but also addressed the topic of needs.

In their discussion of what a person needs to know in order to live well in this society, the board trustees focused on bicultural competence and emphasized post-secondary education, English fluency, and understanding both cultures' values and beliefs, and bicultural efficacy. For example participant BT1 reflected on her personal experience of learning bicultural competence and how she transmits this to her own children. She said that,

> ...From what my grandparents and my parents taught me, sure Cree and your culture is very important...what they taught me is - "We've taught you all the

> things that our culture has. We've taught you Cree. You're fluent in Cree, but you need to make a living with a pen.

She restated this valued lesson in describing her children's upbringing:

> I feel that it's important for my kids to know what their culture is and to understand their language and maybe later on to learn it but I think it's more important for them to be able to be fluent in English anyway and whatever other language is recognized by all of Canada so that they can continue on in what ever field they want to get into.

Participant BT4 said, "I'd like to see our children back into our community, but what I'd like to see them do first is to get a good education and go out to see the world. Then in five or six years come back as administrators, town administrators or as trades people."

The board trustees' discussion, initiated by the general question that asked what was needed in order to live well in this part of the world, revealed resistance to the Cree Immersion Program. This dissenting opinion first surfaced ten minutes into the session when participant BT2 said to BT3, "You go first. I'll follow." At which point participant BT3 raised the question about the relevance and value of Cree language learning. Withstanding a number of interruptions and overlap talking, he presented the full scope of his question in these words:

> What good is the Cree language in the school if we do not recognize it? ...There is honestly a question, "Is it important to teach Cree in our schools?" You know unless it's used right at work, unless it's recognized by [inaudible] today's society ... It's no longer used in the outside world. You know if you're going to the universities to further your education and the jobs you're in, you need this English or French in order to get your goals. I think I want to ask everybody here, "What if there's Cree in our schools ? Where is it going to take us?".

The board trustees expressed their misgivings about the Cree Immersion Program by affirming each other's statements that the Cree language gives a person no advantage in school or employment. Similarly, the four participants responded positively to the suggestion that parents are primarily responsible to teach Cree to their children. Participant BT3 reflecting on his own experience of being a monolingual Cree speaker in a grade one English submersion program, expressed the value of having a

bilingual teacher able to explain concepts in the child's first language. Based on personal experience he would wish to have English be a part of the program. The board trustees' challenged information about the endangered language condition in Cumberland House, language shift, and language acquisition. Participant BT4 said,

> There's still a lot of people that speak Cree in the community. That's all they speak to their kids so actually there's still is a good percentage of kids that Cree is their first language. But I think that the place for that is like we have pre-school.

Participant BT4 agreed when BT3 stated that teenagers are able to learn Cree language informally.

> When they're younger as soon as they start going into their teens then they come home and if there's a new word in Cree and they're more aware that there is another language, that there is a Cree language. I think they pick up a lot from just being with other teenagers. They start talking more and more Cree.

Participant BT4 framed his apprehension by citing his view of difficulties endured by Cree speakers. First he negatively interpreted the fact that humour communicated by Cree language cannot be translated to English. In his view, monolingual English speakers feel alienated in a social context, such as on the job, where bilingual Cree and English speakers share humour in Cree. He further expressed doubt that children have bilingual ability. Other obstacles he perceived are language change, the development of short forms of Cree words, and the various Cree dialects. He also said to his way of thinking it was impolite for people to speak Cree in the presence of a non-Cree speaking person. Finally, he cautioned that people would not support anything new if they did not understand it. In a similar vein, participant BT2 cited evidence to support her reservations about Cree immersion by relating negative effects of Cree language fluency surpassing English fluency. She told of how a relative's children, more fluent in Cree than English, were not motivated to complete their high school education but preferred to return to their home community to do commercial fishing, hunting, and trapping for a living.

In addition to the numerous instances of their redirecting the discussion to oppositional statements, the discourse style of the board trustees required the moderator to adapt the questioning route to ask direct questions. The following two exchanges stand as examples of this deviation from the questioning route.

> Rr Am I right in interpreting that what you're saying is that the immersion program might cause ...
>
> BT1 ... a hindrance on their education
>
> Rr ... English to be ... Cree will replace English because of the immersion program?
>
> BT1 I can see a part of that happening because I see it with *** and ***. They don't want to go to do their education because they don't understand what the people are saying.

Another such question was asked and answered in this way.

> Rr Can I just ask a really blunt question then? Do you support the Cree Immersion Program? From Kindergarten to Grade Three?
>
> BT1 For me I'm a bit leery about it. Maybe it's because of the way I was brought up because I was brought up where my grandparents only spoke Cree to me. I understood it but yet they both emphasized the importance of being able to speak English and being very articulate in speaking it. Now when you say Cree Immersion, I jump up and I kind of get defensive because I'm thinking, "Oh, my God! They're going to teach Cree Immersion in there. Geez, these can't [inaudible] most of them can't even understand English, let alone going directly into Cree." And that's how I really wonder how it's going to work out or work itself out ... How can this Cree Immersion program clear those differences up? How can a child come out of grade 3, go in to grade 4 and supposed to learn and understand everything in English when they've been taught Cree? That's what's really bothering my mind at the present time.
>
> BT3 That's what I'm trying to clarify here. Anything that is being taught in the school in Cree should also be taught in English. That was my understanding of this Cree Immersion. I thought that was the way it was going to be taught. Whatever you teach in English or whatever you teach in Cree it should it be taught in Cree or English also, both languages. That's my understanding. I may not be clear on it. I agree with her. I don't think it would be fair just to teach our kids in Cree [inaudible] Immersion Cree. Like she said, if that's the case then when they start teaching them in English at a higher level then it would be just like starting over. I would think anyway ...
>
> BT4 I can't really answer that question because first of all I really firmly strongly believe that I want my children to learn English and French. If there is an English program like they speak English now, if there was a French program I would want them to speak French. I want them to know their

> language and culture as well, but I don't know enough about the program to honestly say, "Well I think this is going to be good for my kids."

Thus, in the board trustees' vision, education should develop bicultural competence, prepare students for post-secondary education and training with the goal of making them employable. They consistently redirected the discussion to express their apprehensions which in the analysis of the transcriptions, I categorized the information into expectations and perceived needs of the program. They expected that the Cree Immersion Program should not hinder the child's English fluency and literacy development. They wished it to be a bilingual immersion program with English also a language of instruction. Addressing topics related to needs, the board trustees presented a range of questions and concerns about which people required answers and reassurance. This group's statement of the need to keep the community informed and involved is significant. As for resources, the board trustees saw the fluent Cree-speaking teachers from Cumberland House as a valuable resource for the program. They expressed an interest in their self-involvement by participating in classroom visits, storytelling, and a parallel Junior Achievement Program wherein community members and role models speak to youth to prepare them for their adult roles in society.

4.3 Elders' Focus Group Discussion

On the morning of May 07, 1998, thirteen elders gathered in the library at Charlebois School. Before this sixth and final focus group could commence, two members of ALIPPC, the teachers, administrators and helpers seated the elders comfortably at tables arranged in a circle. These assistants interpreted and translated to Cree the consent forms for the elders' focus group discussion and for NLSD to archive the elders' tape recorded discussion. The tape recorder placed on the central table was turned on and recorded the elders' pleasant talk and laughter while helpers completed the final arrangements for the focus group discussion. A teacher escorted

two young boys into the room. One boy carried a box of gifts and looked pleased to have the responsibility. He, along with the elders, helpers and all attending, stood quietly with head bowed while the other boy recited the Lord's Prayer in Cree. Upon completing their duties, the boys sat and listened to the elders. During the focus group discussion, elders spoke Cree interspersed with the occasional English word. The session lasted approximately seventy-five minutes. Four participants spoke only once but the average number of responses for the group was four. Participants of this group spoke at length in response to a few questions. Their discourse style was characterized by a patient pause before speaking. Often their responses took the form of a story, personal experiences, local history, or illustrations of how Cree cultural knowledge helps a person to live a good life. Upon the conclusion of the focus group discussion, teachers and administrators distributed gifts to the elders and served lunch.

Elders spoke most frequently about topics related to vision. In speaking about what a person needs to know to live well in this part of the world, they detailed the required knowledge and attitudes for Cree cultural competence. Elders spoke about Cree identity, leading a spiritual life, understanding Cree cultural beliefs and values, behaving in culturally appropriate ways, maintaining relationships and speaking Cree fluently.

The participants discussed the topic of "Speak Cree Fluently" frequently, extensively and with intensity. Thus it may be interpreted that Cree language is integral to their vision of Cree cultural competence. Participant E13 explained the importance of Cree language and its role in identity formation:

> Your identity, it's very important to know who you are. If we do not teach them this, and that learning English is more important than your Cree language, how are they to know who they really are when they come from both English and Cree backgrounds? I think that our identity is very important. There are so many that are losing their language. We are teaching them English as soon as they begin to speak. They are losing their identity. They are shy to speak their language.

Elders spoke of the importance of spiritual values, beliefs and practices. This is evident in participant E5's statement that, "I think it's important to have a belief and to pray for children, to teach them their language, and also respect when it's Sunday, that's what I believe." At another juncture, participant E6 referred to the role Cree language has in maintaining relationships.

> I have seen the importance for a child to be taught how to speak Cree but also that the parents of the child need to teach their children Cree well ... I feel it is important to teach a child Cree. Because it is very difficult in our community when a child does not understand when he is spoken to in Cree ...

Elders talked about children needing to learn how to behave in culturally appropriate ways. For example, Participant E12 spoke about the loss of Cree cultural values saying that it was the generation after his that "the children became focused on things that are not meaningful. Television and other things take up so much of their time that they neglect their children." He concluded by saying that, "Respect that is another thing that must be taught." He and participant E7 had an exchange which revealed the importance of the Cree language in transmitting the cultural value of respect, and their belief that children are sometimes not learning these things at home and that the school has the potential to play a role in the cultural revitalization:

> E12 Today, if you are in the children's way they swear at you. They do not have respect.
>
> E7 Not all children show disrespect. If he, or she, is taught well to respect at home, he is respectful to people. You know right away if a child is not doing the right thing, he is not being taught to respect others at home.
>
> E12 That's what we want to show at Preschool, the idea of respect and apologizing to one another when there are disagreements.

The intensity of elders' support for the Cree Immersion Program was evident when five people responded affirmatively and simultaneously. Elder E13 said,

> Yes, I think teaching Cree is a very good idea to revive the language. The Whiteman was able to take away our language and teach us English. I ask, can't we do that too? We could teach the kindergarten in strictly Cree, because in their homes they are already learning English.

Elders' expectation of the Cree Immersion Program were evident in their expressed understanding of Cree Language education. They agreed that early childhood is the optimum age for language learning and that shyness and humour are sometimes inhibitors. Thus they view the Cree Immersion Program in grades Kindergarten to Grade Three to be an exceptional opportunity to transmit effectively the Cree language and cultural values to children.

In their discussion, elders only mentioned the need for materials on two occasions. As for resources, they identified themselves as a resources for the school and praised the efforts and results of the Head Start Pre-School Program.

> E1 We [me and husband] get invited to go to the Band School where we teach the children things ... After school for about a half hour with other elders, my husband and I volunteer to work at the school and help the student's learn Cree ...We do not get paid for the work we do after school. We are appreciated by the other elders there and the principal. We do this about three times a year. I think this could be done in Cumberland, too. Maybe a half an hour, everyday?

Elders most frequently addressed the topic of their vision for the education of Cumberland House's children. Details of needs and resources were topics secondary to their expressed vision.

4.4 Parents' Focus Group Discussion

The fourth focus group was held on Wednesday morning, May 06, 1998 and was attended by five mothers and one grandmother who had pre-kindergarten-aged children at home. These parents ranged in age from early twenties to early forties. The four younger women spoke collaboratively, rarely interrupting each other but interjecting thoughts and finishing each other's sentences when a pause afforded a space. The older women spoke less frequently and at greater length, detailing their exploration and explanation of a topic. The participants knew each other well, and their soft spoken anecdotes, joking, and laughter made a cheerful atmosphere. They most frequently talked about topics related to vision (105 responses), but they also frequently addressed topics related to their expectations (72 responses). The parents'

understanding and concerns provide insight into the experience of belonging to the generation which bridges their fluent Cree speaking parents and their monolingual English speaking children. As participant P4 said, "It's hard when you can't speak it yourself. Let alone try to teach your own children how to speak it." Participant P2 shared her experience of loss in this way: "Like my mom and dad are gone. And it's really hard for me to teach my son Cree because we don't have that guidance from my own parents, because they're gone now. Our grandparents are all gone."

Speaking about topics related to their vision of education, parents reflected on their own experience of cultural oppression and the resulting language loss, language shift and condition of the Cree language in Cumberland House. They describe two generations' experience of loss.

> P4 I don't really hear it anywhere.
>
> P6 Because most of us are in the same age group. When we go out we don't speak Cree. It's mostly English. That's what I notice. Because I don't know why that is - school or something. We never had the time to learn or something.
>
> P2 That's the way with most kids. That's why the older kids have a hard time speaking Cree.
>
> P3 But what I don't understand is why our parents never taught Cree to us.
>
> P2 They can. But it's the kids that don't want to learn. Because my in-laws, they are old today. They've been talking to ... my oldest is 24 and my youngest is 22 ... but it's my kids that don't want to learn that Cree.
>
> P6 But I think what it was too, when we were growing up at school, you had to speak English.
>
> P4 Isn't it true? My mom said that when she was in residential schools, they weren't really allowed to speak their language too. So she very much grew up not speaking her language too.
>
> P2 Well that's the way, same thing with us, with that Sister. So if you tried to even talk to your friend, like if you wanted something. If you asked something from your friend in Cree, she heard it right away. And she'd go, "OUT!" She didn't even give you time to explain if that word was bad or if you said something about her. But she always attacked you right away. She said, "Out!", and you had no choice but to leave, because that's the way she was.

Throughout the conversation, participants shared their understanding that children experienced the effects of cultural oppression in the home as well as at school. One woman P3, recounted her husband's feeling of regret about losing his ability to speak Cree. She said that,

> My husband, he lived here for the first eight years of his life and he spoke nothing but Cree. He lived with his grandparents and then just out of the blue, he moved with his mom in ***. His mom was fluent in Cree, but he never knew her. He never knew she could talk Cree ... He would get a slap behind the head if he tried to talk Cree. "Talk English. No one can understand you." And now today, when he moved back to Cumberland, she started coming around *** and he can hear her talk Cree. He said, "Mom, I never knew you could talk Cree. Why did you never talk to me in Cree and always punish me for talking Cree?" He feels really cheated that he lost it for nothing really.

Another participant added that children placed in adoptive homes shared a similar loss. She said,

> I know a couple of people that were adopted, relatives of mine. When they were growing up, until they were six, seven years old, there was just total Cree. Then when they had to move, or whatever, away from their hometowns ... Today, all they speak is English. They don't speak a word of Cree.

These parents spoke candidly about their hope for their children to learn Cree cultural competence. Among the members of this group there was a common expression of their own limited understanding about their culture and language. Participant P3 said, "I don't really know anything about my culture. I've never seen anybody do - I don't even know what it's called when you fix up a fish (laughter) - or pluck a duck or whatever. I don't even know how to cook wild meat or wild food." At another time, participant P1 reflected humbly,

> But the thing is, I don't even know what my culture is and I'm already at this age. What is my culture? Look at a lot of these places. They have Pow-Wow dancers and everything.

Nonetheless the parents in the group are very much aware of the Cree cultural values and have an astute understanding of what is required to behave in culturally appropriate ways. This is implicit in their indirect references to their practice of traditional adoption, socialization of their children, instilling in children an

understanding of their place in family and community and how to maintain harmonious relationships. They identified the Cree language as a core value of cultural competence and an important vehicle for transmitting cultural knowledge. These beliefs, in conjunction with their limited Cree language ability, lead the parents to look to the school and community as resources to teach the children what they themselves can not. One mother, P2, described the situation in the community:

> Well that's why we started the culture week classes a long time ago, eh? Because they were worried, like here in the school, they were worried the kids were losing their language. There's not very many fishermen, now. There's still the older people like our elders are also dying. They don't have too many like that. Like my mom and dad are gone. And it's really hard for me to teach my son Cree because we don't have that guidance from my own parents because they're gone now. Our grandparents are all gone.

The parents' focus group discussion was significant because interest was balanced between philosophical vision and practical expectations. They were keen to discuss their expectations of the Cree Immersion Program to help realize their hopes and vision for their children's future.

Parents spoke frequently about the role of the Cree Immersion Program in effecting the reversal of language shift. Of this, they described their indicators of success. Often, they referred to children's fluency in spoken Cree and literacy in written Cree. Initially, the participants explored the topic of literacy, with some uncertainty. For example, participant P3 said "Sure, I don't want them reading books that are all Cree words, but English words just like this. But if someone was to talk to them, I think I would rather have them be talked to in Cree." Later, she raised the question again, asking other focus group participants, "I don't know if reading and writing Cree would be necessary for Cree immersion. You think so?" Participant P4 responded by saying,

> I think that would be good, though, reading and writing in Cree. Because when you go to church the only ones you see reading the Cree hymnbooks are the pretty much the elders, eh? And you're just staring at it wondering "OK, where are they?" "What song are they singing?"

Following the discussion about Roman orthography versus syllabics the question was asked, "Do you all think that's important then? Reading and writing in Cree?". All participants simultaneously agreed.

Five of the six parents talked about the optimum age for second language learning. Through this, they confirmed their support and expectation of the Cree Immersion Program to teach their children functional Cree fluency, Cree literacy and how to behave in culturally appropriate ways. They also posed specific questions about the design and delivery of the program. Specifically they were concerned that their children's English facility should not be compromised so as to avoid any potential disadvantage if they had to transfer to an English-only program. For this reason, they stated the opinion that English should also be used in the instruction.

As for perceived needs, parents' questions expressed their need to be reassured about the effects of immersion education. They identified the need for adequate materials in the N dialect, and they expressed concern that children should be learning formal Cree and not the abbreviated forms spoken by younger generations. They spoke of the need to encourage teachers to trust their fluency and to speak Cree to the children. Further, they said teachers need flexibility to make the program experiential and fun. Parents talked about a parallel language instruction for parents so that they could support and encourage their children's fluency.

Parents spoke enthusiastically about resources in the community that would help make the program a success. They identified elders as the most valuable resource and named various media such as radio, signs, posters, and television as potentially helpful. Churches, teachers, role models, youth conferences, were all identified as resources in the community to support the Cree immersion program.

4.5 Students' Focus Group Discussion

On the afternoon of Tuesday, May 05,1998, nine students and a guidance counselor from Charlebois School attended the third focus group. The dynamics of

student discussion began as many classroom teacher -led discussions do. In the beginning, in stifled silence, the students shuffled and settled in. They spoke discreetly to each other in quiet voices, their whispers unleashing constrained giggles. Following the introduction, my questions elicited prolonged silences by some participants and ready responses by others. In the first hour, students often responded with answers consisting of a single word, phrase or sentence. They rarely elaborated with stories or illustrations and tended not to explore a topic verbally. As time passed, student participants began to speak in dialogue with each other and with the ALIPPC representatives. Students' responses showed that they shared the community understanding that Cree cultural competence contributes to living well. Students identified the transmission of Cree language and cultural knowledge as important adult tasks in their society. Repeatedly, students identified this characteristic with people living a good life in Cumberland House.

Students' discussion most often addressed topics related to vision. They readily expressed their thoughts about Cree language and the cultural knowledge and benefits that go with Cree fluency. They identified Cree as a core value of cultural competence. For example, in response to the question whether Cree helps them to do some things that English can not, two students answered this way:

> S6 I would say it brings up your pride and dignity, your self-esteem, what you have and who you are.
>
> S5 You can understand nature and the way things are and what we are doing. You can understand nature and what effects everything else. Makes you think you can do stuff that people say you can't do.

They inferred that Cree language is central to the knowledge required to live well in Cumberland House. Speaking alternately, participants S1 and S6 described the components of Cree cultural competence. According to S6, a person should know, "Your culture. Heritage. What I mean is like how you're Native, Native past and ah like your Cree language, and trapping and fishing." Participant S1 similarly responded with, "Your background. Background is where you come from, what your

people suffered and how you can move on and learn from what they did and how to get out of their problems and make it advantages". Participant S5 explained that, "Culture [is] like trying to learn, I think, like caring and appreciating." Four participants spoke collaboratively to expound on the cultural value of respect.

S1 Respect.

S6 Respecting one another and the elders.

S5 Like respecting your language or else using it and always practicing it.

S6 By listening to what they have to say.

S9 Even though you probably might not believe in it.

That students placed importance on this cultural value is evidenced by the fact that they referred to respect in their discussion about what children should learn and how they learn these things. In response to the question, "What Cree knowledge should children have?, Participant S6 said "The same way as their parents and elders. Like how to know - how to live with nature, how to trap, hunt and fish, and the Cree languages. And respecting other sorts of people." Group members indirectly emphasized the role of respect when they described the children's learning process.

S5 Watching their parents and doing them.

S1 Copying what they say and what they do.

S9 They look up to their parents. They respect them and they want to be able to speak in Cree and do those things.

S6 Begin to listen and eventually learn.

As illustrations of the components of Cree cultural and bicultural competence, students' descriptions of Cumberland House people who live a good life follow:

S6 I would have to say one of my friends mainly because he's a Christian and still is an Indian.

S5 My dad. He keeps like traditions. He always traps and fishes and speaks Cree, teaches us and tries to encourage us to talk Cree.

> S2 My auntie. She's involved in all different kinds of cultures and she likes to hear about them and she teaches the kids a lot about it.
>
> S1 I have to say my uncle because he fishes, hunts, traps. He teaches his kids the way to live - what would happen if they didn't respect what the Lord had given them and they would like lose everything. Respecting the land that is important.
>
> S9 My uncle is an outfitter. He has a good living being an outfitter. Ah he speaks Cree a lot he, fishes and traps and tries and teach us his nieces and nephews how to speak Cree.
>
> S8 My grandpa because he's always out in the bush, [inaudible], he's always hunting, and fishing and always teaches his grandchildren how to speak Cree and he takes them out hunting shows them a lot of stuff and things.

Students in this focus group placed great value upon Cree identity, culture, history and tradition. By extension, this surfaced in their expectations of the Cree Immersion Program.

Participants' intense interest in these topics was reflected in their spontaneous discussion. When asked if there were another questions that should be asked, student S5 said, "When you go to other places, they have pow-wows and they think about old Indian ways and all they teach us here is since settlers and Métis and stuff." At the closing of the focus group, this student illustrated how the message about the importance of mainstream school education can be interpreted to denigrate Cree culture. She said,

> There is this one teacher, when you...have to understand both ways. And when she asked, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" Some kid said "A trapper," or something. She goes, "Is that all you're gonna be?" Like she is putting down our culture...it makes you feel like our culture is not all that great.

At another point, student S6 stated that he would like to have Native studies, culture and history taught in the program. Thus, students expressed expectations that the Cree Immersion Program would promote a positive sense of Cree culture.

Students also gave consideration to the content and delivery of the Cree Immersion Program. Their stated goal is functional Cree fluency, which they perceive may be reached by experiential and activity-based learning. Student S2, reflecting on

his experience of core language classes, said, "In Cree classes we have mostly just animals there, bear and moose, and mostly same old cheap animals every year, it gets boring." Student S1 made the following suggestion:

> They should take the kids, the people out into the bush and show them what to do. Out there, like if you get stranded or something like that, and just talk about what's happening. How to adapt and all that. Instead of just talking with us they should take us out to go to the bush and show them around. What are the place names in Cree instead of in the classroom which is boring sometimes. Because it will be a good day outside and you're inside just waiting and you get bored and bored and bored. They should have more activities like this.

This student related his experiences of learning Cree: "Well in school you just learn words, but when you're at home you learn how to speak in sentences." The active learning in an immersion classroom is the language learning situation that meets the students' expectation.

The students imagined that a possible obstacle to the immersion program might be teachers' fluency, and, perhaps, students not placing sufficient importance on other academic subjects such as math and science. As for resources in the community, they named community members personally committed to the language preservation. They identified the churches as places where Cree language was spoken and community cultural event where cultural awareness was promoted. They said that they would all be interested in participating as students in the Cree immersion program. When they realized that the program was planned only for Kindergarten to Grade Three students, they stated that they would be willing to be helpers.

As moderator, I recognized that students responded most readily to narrow questions and in a structured response pattern, so I adapted the questioning route and moderating style. I asked all the students to respond in turn to the questions "Where do you hear Cree spoken?" and "Could you describe someone in Cumberland House who lives a good life?" The latter question was a probe which followed the query, "What do you need to know to live well? As a result, the measures of frequency and extensiveness for the topics "Cree language condition" and "Cree

Cultural Competence" are high. Similarly elevated is the topic of bilingual instruction in the category of Expectations. In this case, the ALIPPC representative asked students to qualify their statements that English should be the language of instruction for some subjects. In question-and -answer format, students considered the language of instruction for nine school subjects.

4.6 Teachers' Focus Group Discussion

Ten Cree speaking teachers attended the first focus group on Monday May 04, 1998, from 3:30 to 5:30. Their discussion was characterized by overlap talking, speaking in dialogue, telling stories, and verbally exploring topics by asking questions and positing answers. Teachers' familiarity and comfort with each other was evident by their joking and their candid references to their family joys and sorrows.

Unlike the other focus groups, teachers spoke most frequently, extensively and intensely about topics related to needs rather than vision (see Appendices B,C, and D). This is not surprising as teachers anticipate the community seeing them as responsible for the program's delivery and accountable for its success. Participant T5, in talking about the community's expectations, said, "Yeah, I think we know... the community ... we listen to them talk. That's what they're going to expect: their kids are going to be reading and speaking both English and Cree, you know. Other than that ...Whose heads are going to be chopped off first?" In their discussion of program needs, the topic of materials and administrative support surfaced repeatedly and elicited back and forth discussion. For example, six teachers discussed the need for materials.

> T8 You need somebody making materials. Because there are materials there that you could use, like "Play and Learn" and you could just translate it. You know like visual pictures.
>
> T2 But can you do that? What is the copyright? Can you do that?
>
> T1 Just plaster a little sticker over top of it [laughter]
>
> T5 Could you have permission from the illustrator?

T8 You buy those teaching materials like for bulletins, eh? There's a picture of a moose. Now you're not going to run around and go and find the author and ask him it if you can hang the [inaudible] moose up beside it.

T2 No, and the stories. We need short stories - those simple little books to begin their nursery ... like the three bears ... Yes, those so needed to be translated.

T4 We really need books.

T8 Didn't we ask them already?

T5 We talked about it some time ago.

T1 There's some books out there I think they're called the "Okima Series" or whatever. When I got here, there's book ... I borrowed them from the library and never sent them back and I ended up having to pay for them. They're a different dialect.

T5 But the kids ... they're kind of boring though, eh? They are just black and white. They are just boring.[inaudible many people talking affirmatively]

T8 Native stories, like those picture storybooks. I found a book that was written by a young lady that lived in Brochet, Manitoba. It's called "Spring Feast" or something ... how the people in Brochet celebrate when the spring comes. And I use that as a teaching tool and my kids just love that book because - it's written in English but there are some Cree words in there that they really picked up. And the book is so colourful. It's so realistic, so familiar - the landscape is so familiar to here eh? And they really picked up on this book and they really liked it so we used to have a lot of ...We need ...

T2 See that's what I'm talking about - we need those kinds of materials to follow through with each grade what they need to be ready.

T5 What about - I know *** does a lot of stuff in grade 10 - big books - making big books - could they somehow get the older kids to make big books with big print you know as a class project so they can help...

In their discussion of administrative support, teachers suggested some possible solutions to help the immersion teachers cope with the demand of creating new materials.

T5 Could I add? That's another thing too ... kindergarten is ... [inaudible] to me I'd rather plan for half a day than in Grade 1 or 2 to plan for the whole day you know...

T1 Especially the way it used to be. They used to get out like in morning same time in the afternoon. So kids were out of school twenty minutes, half an hour earlier. And now they're in school all the time. They do a switcheroo

in the middle of the year, eh? I don't know. So give that person more time, whoever that may be.

T2 And the same thing in Grade 1 [laughter]

T5 Grade 2 and Grade 3.

NLSD1 Are you saying half time?

T5 I'm always plotting things like that, don't pay attention to me.

T2 Don't pay attention to her. Hire two teachers! One in the morning and one in the afternoon.

T8 Another concern came up when *** was talking about time - prep time - to do your materials that's another thing we're always short of in elementary.

T2 Yeah. Middle years too, middle years too - don't leave us out.

T5 Well actually we get two half hours prep and now if your kids are in gym those kids are only getting half an hour - fifteen minutes if they're in the gym break during reading time. Two half hour preps isn't ...

T1 Two years ago we had zero, so I shouldn't complain. In kindergarten, no prep-time not even a minute!

In similarly collaborative fashion, teachers explored specific questions and concerns that they had about the immersion program. They raised and discussed their questions about the goals of the immersion program and how to achieve Cree fluency and literacy in the junior grades. They also described the indicators of success in the first three grades. Further, they said that they expected students to achieve functional Cree fluency and a level of literacy in Cree and English, in addition to the expected standards of achievement set by Saskatchewan Education and Training Curriculum Guidelines.

When teachers talked about Cree cultural competence as it related to their vision, they most often spoke about the importance of children learning to behave in culturally appropriate ways. Central to this was understanding respect and self-discipline, as well as understanding one's relationships with family and community. Fluency in Cree allows people to not only understand the humour, but to feel

connected to elders and others in the community. These thoughts are poignantly illustrated by the words shared by the participants of this group.

> T5 I guess that's part of it. All this talk about relating to our grandparents and parents is to me...I ask my mom. She got cancer this past year and I lately... just really thinking like ... well ... what if she wasn't around, eh? All these little, wonderful little things that happen when she's around with our kids. We'll be just lost. They'll be just lost, you know. And it does have everything to do with how we live: our lifestyle, our culture, and our language. I guess that is part of living well it's appreciating that they're there and that is living well to have them, your mom and grandparents around.
>
> T4 That's the one part I'm sorry too. My mom and dad, they spoke Cree to us all the time too. But the next part it was my grandmother. We did a lot of things with her we went camping, cutting wood. She went trapping and we used to go with her. And the best part about it was weekends. We could go spend the night with her. She had a big family. She had that small house by the poolroom and she had an upstairs there. And we used to just rush there weekends so we could spend the night. And the first thing she would do is we would say the Lord's Prayer in Cree, the "Our Father" and then we would just all sit around there and wait for her stories. I wish I could have written them down. She had a lot of stories, and we would just sit and listen, about all the things she used to do when she was growing up.
>
> T5 The other story too, like last week, my son went over to my mom's. And my mom wanted to tell him - like recently my son was in jail - and my mom wanted to tell him from her heart, what she really felt. And she just couldn't. She started, eh? Because her Cree and English were getting mixed up and she was so frustrated...

Learning Cree as a second language is difficult for teenagers and young adults because being ridiculed can deter a person from speaking out loud. As one teacher explained,

> T1 But I can really relate to those kids that understand but <u>don't</u> <u>want</u> <u>to say</u>. Because everyone gets so much laughter and joy out of people making those [inaudible] remarks. You know it does happen, eh? [laughter]. I remember once we were outside the school here. They used to have an old school building back here. And I told my friend light up a cigarette. I said, " [Cree words]". [laughter] and they were just laughing, you know.
>
> T2 It means, "Get diarrhea." (laughter)
>
> T1 But I remember that was my first humiliating experience in Cree. And then you're a little reluctant to make those errors so you wait for a while and make sure you got it right. Those experiences become fewer and far between after awhile.

As participants in the students', administrators', and parents' focus groups had mentioned, teachers also believed that learning Cree as a second language was best achieved at a young age. When considering the program, teachers spoke about the need to have the flexibility to engage students in experiential learning. Two teachers offered their thoughts about it this way:

> T5 Or is it possible for the school to make it easy for us to be less formal - to be more experiential - What can we do? How can we structure this school, or what materials are there? Who's going to get them? How? So we can do lessons outside or you know - and how is it going to our -how can we fit those in our expected curriculum?
>
> T2 You want to actually maybe change that little book like into a little cultural camp. Like how else are you going to teach it?

In conclusion, teachers expressed their concerns about the specifics about the delivery of a Cree Immersion Program for which they will be responsible and accountable. They talked about the importance of parental involvement and support of their children's learning Cree. They spoke equally about receiving the support and commitment from the administration of the school and from the central office of Northern Lights School Division to help them attain materials, preparation time and instruction about immersion programming. Teachers ended their focus group with optimism. Participant T5 said, "I think that the most important thing I heard today was I feel good that whenever we want to do something we don't want it to be substandard. We want the best and that's the concern." Following that, T4 added "... another thing that [T8] said is that a majority of us are Cree speakers in the school but a large minority of us are right from the community too. The process of focus group discussion confirmed for participants the strengths in the community that support the program.

4.7 Interpretation of Quantitative Data

The quantitative data relate directly to the qualitative data. The reference points are the topics and sub-topics of discussion that I inductively identified in the

process of the qualitative analysis. The quantitative data contributes to the analysis of the information in three ways. First, the quantitative data demonstrates the unique characteristics of the focus groups' discussion and the moderator's interaction with the groups. Second, the quantitative data exhibits patterns within and across the focus groups. And third, it counters the researchers' bias in that the numbers representing the frequency, extensiveness and intensity of topic discussion may be used to compare and evaluate impartially the participants' responses.

Appendix A: "Questions Asked and Answered" shows which questions the participants answered through spontaneous discussion of topics and which questions the participants answered in response to the moderator's queries. The listed questions correspond to the categories used to organize the topics that emerged in the qualitative analysis. Questions 1-7 initiated a discussion of topics related to their vision of education - specifically participants' discussion of the topics related to their perception of the Cree language in Cumberland House. When participants answered questions 3, 4, and 5, they related details about the development of cultural and bicultural competencies. Answers to questions 6 and 7 related community members' perceptions of the requisites and measures of school success. Questions 8 and 9 drew from the participants' discussion of topics related to their expectations of the school programs. Participants talked about topics related to their needs and the program needs when they answered question 10. They identified resources in their answers to questions 11 and 12. Thus the focus group discussions corresponded to the categories of Vision, Expectations, Needs and Resources. The most numerous instances of spontaneous discussion in all focus groups comprised answers to the first seven questions addressing topics related to vision.

Appendices F and G give numerical expression to participant response rates and stand as concrete evidence of the variety of discourse styles. The response rate distribution was affected by the fact that in each focus group some participants rarely

spoke, while others participants responded frequently. Appendix F illustrates the distribution of responses by the fifty-five participants with a standard deviation of 25.8, median of 4.1, mode of 1 and range of 120. Comparing the figures in Appendix G, presented here, defines the degree of differing discourse styles.

Focus Group	Score of Responses	Number of Participants	Mean Avg. Score of Responses/ Participant	Median Avg.	Range
Administrators	66	13	5.1	3	13
Board Trustees	167	4	41.8	38.5	52
Elders	33	13	2.5	2.5	3
Parents	313	6	52.2	47	101
Students	250	9	27.8	11	120
Teachers	224	10	24.9	9.5	68

For example, teachers and board trustees frequently gave overlapping responses to speak collaboratively, joke, clarify details, and express their intense interest in the topic being discussed. The teachers' score of responses was 224, while the board trustees responded 167 times. Their mean average score of responses per participant was 24.9 and 41.8 respectively. In contrast, administrators and elders rarely gave overlapping responses; individuals spoke at length without interruption, while group participants punctuated the discussion with distinct pauses between speakers. Administrators responded 66 times and the elders responded 33 times. On four occasions in the elders' group, participants announced that another had something to say or they directly invited another person to speak. Administrators' mean average score of responses per participant was 5.1 and the elders' was 2.5. The range of responses also reflects two discourse styles. The teachers' range of response rate was 68 and the board trustees' was 52, whereas the administrators' range was 13 and the elders' was 3. Parents' discourse style was characterized by participants speaking collaboratively and weaving their voices together without simultaneously speaking. Typically, parent participants waited one second before interjecting their thoughts to add to the chain of ideas related to a topic. When one participant paused

or searched for a word, another would respond with a phrase or single word. Their 313 score of responses with a 52.2 mean average score of responses exhibits this interactive and collaborative discourse style. Further, the median average of 47 and range of 101 indicates that the majority of parent participants spoke frequently in this manner while one spoke much more infrequently. Students' discourse style was a combination of question/answer and dialogue. In the first hour, students responded only to explicitly stated questions and waited for probing questions. Students' answers contained pauses lasting up to twenty-five seconds. In the second hour the students conversed with each other, exploring topics and setting out details. The students' two patterns of speech contributed to a high number of concise utterances. Their score of 250 responses, 27.8 mean average score of responses per participant, mean of 11, and range of 120 illustrates the divergent response rates of individual participants and the brief and multiple responses they provided. These characteristic discourse styles, balanced with the interpretation of the frequency, extensiveness and intensity verified which topics were most important to the participants.

Appendices B, C, and D contain tables that express the full range of participant responses. The following excerpt from Appendix B: "Frequency of Topic Discussion" is presented here as an illustration.

TOPICS	**FOCUS GROUPS # OF RESPONSES**						
	Total 1087	**A 66**	**BT 167**	**E 33**	**P 313**	**S 250**	**T 224**
Topics Relating to Vision	**555**						
Cree Language:	*126*						
Cree Language Attitude	8	3	3	-	1	1	-
Cree Language Condition	63	15	7	4	15	12	10
Cree Language Shift	28	2	3	7	12	1	3

The left column classifies the responses in the categories of Vision, Expectations, Needs and Resources. Within these categories, topics appear in a shaded background and head a subsequent list of related subtopics. The right half of the table has seven columns, containing the word, "Total" which represents the total research sample,

and the intials "A, BT, E, P, S, T," which represent the six individual focus groups (see List of Abbreviations). These seven columns arrange numerical measures of frequency extensiveness and intensity in Appendices B, C, and D respectively.

These tables in appendices B, C, and D are useful in evaluating which topics were most important to the participants. The interpretation of each table reported here, follows the sequence of the categories of Vision, Expectations, Needs and Resources. I note the topics and subtopics that had the highest scores in each of these four categories. Topics and subtopics which were not targeted by the questioning route but which the participants discussed spontaneously are interpreted as significant and recorded as a topic discussed with intensity (See Appendix E: "Measures of Intensity by Focus Group" for a record of these topics).

Appendix B "Frequency of Topic Discussion" shows that, overall, focus group participants talked most frequently about the topic "Cree Cultural Competence" (190 responses) in the Vision category, and the topic "Cree Immersion Program" (150 responses) in the Expectations category. Topics not solicited by the questioning route but clearly important to the participants were also frequently discussed. For example, in the category of Vision, the topic of "Colonization/decolonization" surfaced in 100 responses, and in the category of Expectations, the topic "Cree Language Education" was addressed in 86 responses. In answer to the question about needs, participants spoke in 65 responses about the "Need to be reassured", and talked about topics related to specific "Program Needs" in 91 responses. Participants discussed resources in 119 responses and the most frequently identified resources were "Community Institutions" (26 responses) and "Elders" (25 responses).

Appendix B further illustrates the differences between the focus groups by showing the various topics emphasized in the individual focus groups' discussion. Administrators talked most frequently about topics in the Vision category (120

responses) with Expectations category (28 responses) coming second. Parents similarly spoke most often about topics related to vision (105 responses) and addressed topics relating to expectations (72 responses) second most frequently. Teachers, however, spoke most frequently about topics related to needs (82 responses) and second most frequently about topics related to vision (69 responses).

Appendix C: "Extensiveness of Topic Discussion" illustrates similar patterns of emphasis by the total research sample and by individual focus groups. In the Vision category 38 people discussed the "Cree Language Condition", a subtopic under "Cree Language. For two reasons, inordinate significance should not be attributed to the margin between this topic's response rate in comparison to other high response rates. First, the introductory question in the focus group interview asked people to say where they hear Cree spoken, and for ten people this was the only response they offered in the focus group interview. Further, that Fredeen (1991) and Blair (1997) conducted community interviews about this topic may have contributed to the participants' familiarity of the topic and willingness to verbalize their ideas. Nonetheless, the condition of the Cree language in Cumberland House was a subtopic participants frequently, extensively and intensely discussed. The same patterns of emphasis surface here as in Appendix B, with the most people talking about the topics of "Cree Cultural Competence" in the Vision category and the "Cree Immersion Program" in the Expectations category. A look at the high number of responses and respondents which address the subtopics under "Cree Cultural Competence" confirms that there is a shared understanding in the community about what competencies Cumberland House adults strive to transmit to their children to enable them to live well. Here are excerpts from Appendices B and C to illustrate the degree of shared understanding.

Excerpt from Appendix B
(How Many Times the Topic Surfaced in Discussion)

TOPICS	FOCUS GROUPS # OF RESPONSES						
	Total 1087	**A 66**	**BT 167**	**E 33**	**P 313**	**S 250**	**T 224**
Topics Relating to Vision	**555**						
Cree Cultural Competence:	*190*						
Cree Identity	34	6	2	9	7	8	-
Understand Beliefs & Values	23	9	4	2	1	5	2
Affective Processes (Humour & Love)	23	8	2	2	3	3	5
Speak Cree Fluently	28	3	2	6	7	5	5
Behave In Culturally Appropriate Ways	51	10	3	6	5	15	12
Maintain relationships	31	10	1	5	5	6	4

Excerpt from Appendix C
(How Many People Talked about the Topic)

TOPICS	FOCUS GROUPS & # OF PARTICIPANTS IN DISCUSSION						
	Total 55	**A 13**	**BT 4**	**E 13**	**P 6**	**S 9**	**T 10**
Topics Relating to Vision	**351**						
Cree Cultural Competence:	*118*						
Cree Identity	14	4	1	3	3	3	-
Understand Beliefs & Values	13	3	2	2	1	3	2
Affective Processes (Humour & Love)	23	4	3	2	6	3	3
Speak Cree Fluently	20	3	2	5	4	3	3
Behave In Culturally Appropriate Ways	26	5	2	3	4	6	6
Maintain relationships	22	6	1	5	1	5	4

Twenty-three people representing all six focus groups identified the sensitivity to the affective processes of culture, specifically humour and love as an important cultural competence. Twenty-six people, spanning all six groups spoke of the importance of knowing how to behave in culturally appropriate ways encompassing the concept of respect as well as the practices of hunting, fishing, trapping, and cultural transmission. As for topics in the Expectations category, individual focus groups emphasized different subtopics, but together provided a full range of the community expectations of the Cree Immersion Program. Subtopics of specific expectations of the Cree Immersion Program which were discussed by the most people were the importance of functional Cree fluency being integral to the program (19 people), the need for bilingual instruction (18 people), and Cree literacy (12

people). In the Needs category, twelve people expressed a "Need to be Reassured" by voicing questions about the Cree Immersion Program. They directed these questions towards other participants and to the attending members of the ALLIPC from Northern Lights School Division. In the Resources category, fourteen people identified elders as an important resource, fourteen people identified community institutions and thirteen people expressed interest in being personally involved in the Cree Immersion Program. People's personal experiences of language loss, cultural oppression and concern about societal change and ensuing challenges were topics not solicited by the questioning route but were discussed by fourteen people each, and are therefore recognized as significant. Similarly, an unanticipated topic of discussion was that of humour and shyness as inhibitors to learning Cree, which sixteen people addressed.

Lastly, Appendix D: "Intensity of Topic Discussion" helps determine what was most important to the focus group participants. The data in this table are consistent with the information from Appendices B and C, which identify the topics under the subheadings "Cree Cultural Competence" and the "Cree Immersion Program" as the most significant to participants. Participants spoke intensely about the topics "Knowing how to behave in culturally competent ways" (25 measures of intensity), "Cree literacy" (20 measures of intensity), and "Humour/shyness as inhibitors (14 measures of intensity). Appendix D illustrates the differing areas of concern expressed by the individual focus groups, particularly in the category of topics related to needs. Of the seventeen measures of intensity associated with questions regarding the Cree Immersion Program, five were recorded in the board trustees' group, five in the parents' group and seven in the teachers' group. Likewise, the distribution of the discussion of program needs was concentrated in the teachers' focus group. All twenty-eight measures of intensity attached to the topic of

materials were recorded in the teachers' focus group, as were the eighteen measures of intensity associated with the need for administrative support and preparation time.

Thus, the number of times a topic was discussed, the number of people who discussed a topic, and the measures of intensity in the discussion of the topic combine to indicate those topics of greatest significance to the community members. Among the conclusions that may be drawn from the quantitative data is that in the community of Cumberland House, there is a shared understanding of the vision of education with an emphasis on both Cree cultural and bicultural competence. That the condition of Cree language in the community was characterized as endangered or undergoing language shift is a matter of significant concern for people because they perceive Cree language to be a core value of Cree cultural competence. They recognize the stress imposed on Cree culture and language by societal changes and challenges. In their expectations of the Cree Immersion Program, the individual focus groups placed emphasis on different areas of concern but consistently expressed the expectation that setting the immersion program in from kindergarten to grade three would benefit children by developing functional Cree fluency while continuing to develop English language skills. They expected the program would be successful because they believed that young childhood is the optimum age for second language acquisition and the immersion setting would preclude the inhibition of shyness and humour from limiting children's learning Cree. The participants identified a need to eliminate people's fear of the unknown through reassurance about the Cree immersion program's effect on children's cognitive and social development, by keeping the community informed, and by supporting the teachers who are charged with the responsibility of delivering the program. The participants identified elders as the single most significant resource for the Cree Immersion Program. Churches, cultural festivals, the Head Start Program and Junior Achievement Programs were other identified resources under the rubric of community institutions. Teachers are highly

valued for their powerful impact on children's lives, but also because the teachers at Charlebois School are people from the community of Cumberland House who speak Cree fluently and are committed to excellence. People's enthusiasm for the Cree Immersion Program was evidenced in the frequency, extensiveness and intensity with which they expressed an interest in their self-involvement in the program.

4.8 Summary

The community members' vision of education is one in which children are able to learn through experience the values, knowledge, and social behaviour that enables them to participate competently in the Cree culture. Education involves family members, especially elders, and teaches the child to know his or her Cree language, traditions and the land. Education is also the transmission of skills and knowledge necessary for young people to be able to participate competently in mainstream culture outside of Cumberland House. Simply stated, the people of Cumberland House wish their children to have bicultural competence. Recognizing the crucial function of Cree language to Cree culture.

From all six groups there was agreement that the goal of the Cree immersion program is to make children bilingual Cree and English speakers, readers and writers. All groups agree that cultural awareness that leads to positive self-identity is an important part of the program.

Participants identified the ongoing need to have the school administrators and teachers communicate and share information with community members about the Cree immersion program. They expressed their need to be reassured about the "how to" of the program and about the predictable effects on the children. At the time of the data gathering, community members needed to be reassured that they have all the expertise and resources necessary in the community to make the Cree immersion program a success. Teachers' needs are concrete in helping them deliver the program: they need training in immersion education, they need support from the

administration of the school and of the Northern Lights School Division, they need time to prepare, they need teaching and reference materials, and they need classroom assistants.

The greatest resource available is the elders. Not only are they the keepers of much knowledge, but they are genuinely concerned for the well being of the young generations, and they are willing to do what they can to assure the survival of the Cree culture and the language. Many members of the community share this commitment. Students, parents, and board trustees also are interested in participating in the Cree immersion program. Members of all focus groups see teachers as a much-valued resource because of their ties to the community and their fluency as Cree speakers. This commitment to helping and sharing is testimony to the survival of the Cree cultural values and offers hope for the success of the Cree immersion program.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:
"Researcher's reflections"

The purpose of this research was to record the community members' perception of the Cree Immersion Program at Cumberland House. The previous chapter reported the findings by using direct quotes and paraphrased summaries of the participants' discussion. This chapter is the place where I, as a researcher, reflect on the meaning of the research. I am an outsider to Cumberland House and I respectfully acknowledge that my understanding may differ from community members' understanding of the topics that I discuss. I summarize my reflections, interpretation and analysis under the headings vision, language revitalization, progress of Cree Immersion Program, community involvement in language planning, methodology and research relationship, and decolonization. I conclude this chapter with recommendations for further research.

5.1Vision

Focus group interviews generated rich data to answer the first two research questions that guided the research study. In review these two questions were:

1. What are community members' perceptions of the importance and role of the Cree language in the education of students in Cumberland House?; and
2. What do these stake holders need in order to participate in the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program?

Research participants spoke about the cultural and bicultural competence that are required to live well in Cumberland House and described the process by which children learn this. People spoke about learning through daily family and community activities, with elders, parents and siblings contributing to a child's learning to

participate in Cree and English cultural contexts. These findings correspond to the relevance of cultural ecology to education articulated by Murdoch (1988) and Berry (1988, 1984). Focus group participants consistently identified the elements of Cree cultural competence to include:

1. Cree identity,
2. understanding beliefs and values,
3. knowing the affective processes of culture (especially humour and love)
4. Cree fluency,
5. behaving in culturally appropriate ways, and
6. maintaining relationships.

To a lesser degree importance was placed on the elements contributing to bicultural competence which included:

1. knowing both cultures' beliefs and values,
2. having a positive attitude to both cultural groups,
3. having bicultural efficacy,
4. having bilingual fluency in Cree and English,
5. valuing mainstream school education, particularly math, science and English curriculum.

These characteristics resonate with the qualities necessary for bicultural competence that are described by LaFromboise *et al,* (1995). Cree language, a crucial element in both Cree cultural and bicultural competence ultimately contributes to the Cree individual's well-being.

In response to the third research question,"What are the processes of delivery (design and implementation) which may facilitate the success of the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program in Cumberland House?," participants asked rather than answered the question. At the time of the data collection in May 1998, the immersion program was only an imagined endeavour, and the participants did not yet

have the knowledge and expertise of designing and implementing an immersion program. The literature review revealed a scarcity of academic literature on Cree immersion. By default, I sought parallels with other Indigenous linguistic groups who share the aspiration of language revitalization and found information about immersion programs in Blackfoot, Dene, Yup'ik, Navajo, Mohawk and Maori written by authors Ayoungman, & Brandt (1989), Blondin (1989), Hartley & Johnson (1995), Holm & Holm (1995), House (1997), Hoover (1992), Shafer (1988) and Spolsky (1989). Although the various groups share common elements of colonization, and the challenge of language revitalization, they each have distinct contexts which contribute to their language planning efforts generally, and their immersion programs specifically. The unique context of this northeastern Saskatchewan Aboriginal community is described in the subequent section that addresses community involvement in language planning. Although participants expressed the need for guidance about implementing an immersion program, they had opinions about second language acquisition.

Participants who had experienced second language learning in a formal school setting, expressed a knowledgeable opinion about second language acquisition. Their opinions are echoed in the academic literature by language acquisition theorists. Most participants' preferred language learning that follows a creative constructionist and interactionist approach. Lightbrown and Spada (1995) explain that the creative constructionist theory of language acquisition assumes the learner constructs his or her own rule system of the target language in slow predictable stages and is the focus of communicative language teaching. The second language interactionist theory identifies input and a native speaker's interaction with the learner as crucial elements in the second language acquisition. The research participants expect that in the Cree Immersion Program, children will be actively engaged in making and communicating meaning without being inhibited by teasing about mistakes they make in language

forms. The teacher and classroom assistant will provide input to meet the student's ability and understanding. In addition, the parents and elders said that it is important for children to learn the correct language form. Conversely, teachers, parents, and students, who have experienced the behaviourist approach to Cree language learning in a classroom setting, expressed dislike for the repetition and rote learning and stated a preference for experiential learning related to the child's frame of reference and geared to promote functional fluency. These views of second language learning are consistent with language theorists McLaughlin, (1987), Krashen, (1982) and Long (1985).

In general, participants expected the Cree immersion program to develop children's Cree fluency. Those supportive of the immersion program perceived fluency to be a measure of success of the program. Those four participants with a dissenting opinion about the immersion program anticipated that the children's Cree fluency would be a detriment to their English language skills development. Research related to the evaluation of immersion students' academic performance and native-like fluency suggests that the Cree immersion program is less likely to realize the fears of academic delay and weakened English skills, and more likely to fall short of the research participants' expectation of Cree fluency. Recall the research reported by Campbell (1984), and Lapkin and Swain, (1984) which evaluated French immersion students and determined that the initial lag in English language development disappears when the English language arts are introduced into the program. Campbell *et al* (1985) showed that although immersion students, when they heard the spoken target language were able to understand it as well as a native speaker, they were not able to speak as well as a native speaker. This information, balanced with Fishman's (2001) advice about language revitalization which counsels language planners to match their goals with the level of language loss in the community, confirms the wisdom of Cumberland House language planners and advocates move in 1999 to

adjust their expectation of fluency. The following reflective analysis of language revitalization in this context precedes a review of the Cree Immersion Program's progress.

5.2 Language Revitalization

Research participants reflected on the close ties between Cree language and identity and related the common belief that Cree language is a core cultural value contributing to a person's self-realization, belonging and well-being. Revitalizing Cree language contributes to the development of children's Cree and bicultural competence. Research participants talked about revitalization of Cree language as a means of cultural survival. Their understanding of cultural competence is aligned with Skutnabb-Kangas'(2001) operationalized model of cultural competence and her view of integration of societies as a process to achieve the harmonious co-existence of diverse cultures.

Cumberland House community members who were interviewed expressed an intimate understanding of language shift within their families and in their community. They feel the imperative of language revitalization. They are aware of the societal changes and challenges to their efforts to sustain their culture and acknowledge that the school is one, but not the only factor, in the effort to revitalize the Cree language. The proposed Cree Immersion Program, if regarded as an effort to reverse language shift, may seem to go against Fishman's (1991) warning to attend to intergenerational transmission in the home and community before addressing literacy and compulsory education. Fishman's (2001) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) represents his Reversing Language Shift (RLS) theory that helps language planners establish goals and priorities in RLS. It is the home-family, neighbourhood-community which is the crucial link between surviving as a secondary, less prestigious minority language and being revitalized as a primary, prestigious majority language. Fishman advises that schools without the community support will not

produce fluent speakers of the threatened language (Cree). However, he does acknowledge that schools with the purpose of reversing language shift are different than other second language education such as the core Cree classes experienced by the research participants in their own elementary and secondary education. Here is the hopeful message for Cumberland House residents and teachers. Fishman (2001) states that,

> The programme of study that is required for RLS is an identity formation one, an Xian-via-Xish [Creeness-via- Cree language]ideologising one, a community building one and a community membership one. The teachers, programmes and materials for such programmes are likely to be non-existent or in extremely short supply. Teachers may need to prepare their own materials for years – led by exemplary teacher trainers and curriculum/materials specialists – before there is a sufficient market for recognized publishers to enter into the preparation, and sale of such items. (p. 473)

The crucial link, in Fishman's (2001) view is between schools and community. He says that if teachers "work as hard on building linkages to 'out of school' and 'after school' as they work on their 'in school' lesson plans, then they will really be an asset to RLS rather than a detour or cul-de sac" (p. 473). The research findings illustrate the great strength of community and community-school linkages at Cumberland House and the participants' shared vision of the Cree Immersion Program is to develop Cree identity in children. At this time Cumberland House teachers have completed three years of Cree Immersion Program, breaking ground, developing materials and programmes year by year. The word of encouragement is that the teachers and community members of Cumberland House who are involved in Cree immersion are engaged in the best effort available to revitalizing Cree language in their community.

5.3 Progress of the Cree Immersion Program

The Cree Immersion Pilot Program in Cumberland House has been in place for three years. Developments include training, staffing, program design, materials, and

expectations. Informal conversations with community members recount favourable assessment.

Since the collection of the data, the Northern Lights School Division and University of Alberta have been involved in training that supports the Immersion program. Subsequent to this research, NLSD's Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee organized teacher training in preparation for the Immersion Program. First in the summer of 1998, Dorothy Lazore, a ground-breaking educator in Mohawk immersion, traveled to Cumberland House to assist teachers in developing a kindergarten program and materials. Then in April of 1999, Dr. Olinka Bilash from University of Alberta traveled to Lac La Ronge to deliver university-accredited courses to train NLSD teachers in second language teaching.

Josie Searson of NLSD recounted the developments that ensued (personal communication, August 21, 2001). In September 1998, a group of Cumberland House kindergarten children began school in an early total immersion program. The Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee continued working and planning for the upcoming years and soon realized adaptation would be need.

In focus group discussions, there was an implied assumption the four-year Cree Immersion Pilot Program would follow a pattern of adding a grade each year as the children were promoted in school. For example it seemed that in the first year there would be a Cree immersion kindergarten, then in the second year a Cree immersion kindergarten and grade one and so on. However, there were a number of factors that called this assumption under review. The difficulty of staffing was soon realized. Although there was a core of five dedicated teachers involved in training, language planners realized this group would be fully utilized by the grade two. The proposal was clear in the plan for a pilot program. And so each year there has been one group of children in a single grade who are in the Cree Immersion Pilot Program. When this group passed from kindergarten in 1999, their teacher moved with them to

teach them in grade one. The 1999 kindergarten class was instructed in English. In grade one there were two teachers who shared the responsibility of teaching, writing books, developing classroom materials, and preparing units and lessons. An elder is a valued component of the Cree Immersion Pilot Program. School administration has arranged it so the elder is present for the full day, five days a week. Funding for the classroom assistant follows the model of assistants for children with special needs.

In 1998, the Cree Immersion kindergarten was offered without a parallel English kindergarten program. No parents objected to the Cree Immersion Pilot Program. No parents chose to send their children to the English stream program at Cumberland House First Nation school nearby. A note of interest is that one parent living on Cumberland House First Nation reserve wrote NLSD to request permission to have her child attend the Cree Immersion kindergarten program at Charlebois School in the community of Cumberland House. In the three years there have been up to twenty students in the Cree Immersion pilot group. An Aboriginal student from another province transferred into the program in grade one and quickly adapted to the immersion program.

The program design was adapted from early total immersion in kindergarten to early partial immersion by grade one. The reasons for this include the language planners' noting that the research participants were concerned for their children's English language skills development. In addition provincial legislation states instruction in a non-official language (other than English or French) can only be delivered for 50% of classroom instruction time. Thus the program is described as an "integrated approach" where English and Cree are both used in the classroom.

The Northern Lights School Division has supported the ongoing production of Cree immersion materials. Two Cumberland House immersion teachers have written a number of books each year. A parent of a Cree immersion student is a skilled illustrator and has volunteered her talent to illustrate the books. Thus the

children have images and stories that relate to their frame of reference, a consequence that conforms to research participants' vision, but also relates to the guidance offered by Berry (1988) and Murdoch (1988) about cognition and cultural context.

Over time, the language planners realized the need to adapt the expectation expressed in the focus groups that the Cree immersion program would develop the children' Cree fluency. Still they adhered to the direction set by the community members in determining the indicators of success. The components for Cree cultural competence remain in the scope of their vision. These are a strong sense of a Cree identity; positive attitudes toward the Cree language and culture; and an openness to continue learning. These will figure into the assessment of the Cree Immersion Pilot Program at the end of the fourth year.

5.4 Community Involvement in Language Planning

Experienced language specialists, such as Fishman (2001), Ayoungman and Brandt (1989) and Blondin (1989) advance the importance of community context in language planning. Cumberland House is an Aboriginal community in northeastern Saskatchewan that has unique characteristics that bear influence on the goal of Cree language revitalization. The community has a long history of relationships between multi-lingual people whose identities have been influenced by a colonial history of land dispossession and dispersal, and federally legislated identity. It has residents recorded on census records as Métis, First Nations, and status and non-status Indian (Canada Statistics, 1994). Research participants unanimously expressed that Cree is a core value to their culture. Christianity is present in Cumberland House people's lives and the Churches are seen to have a positive role in language revitalization. Cumberland House has a municipal government and a provincially operated school. Teachers and administrators are accountable to the community to which they belong, but they must also follow the curriculum guidelines and institutional structure of the provincial education system. A new school built in 1999 on Cumberland House First

Nation, located six miles away, has the potential to develop parallel programs and draw students from Charlebois School.

Administrators and teachers are language advocates and leaders in their initiative and courage to implement a Cree immersion pilot program. It is reasonable to conclude that the community is supportive of this initiative because the greatest majority of research interviewees expressed a shared vision of and commitment to the program. The board trustees whose vision of education is preparation for employment in the Canadian labour market expressed a dissenting opinion. Theirs is a significant voice that must be attended to because it represents potential obstacles to the Cree Immersion Program. For example they withheld their approval of early total immersion and qualified their approval of the program if it included English as a language of instruction. In effect they were describing early partial immersion. More importantly their resistance is reflective of a fear that Cree immersion could diminish children's academic potential in mainstream school and by extension future employment opportunities and economic advantage. Also imbedded in the dissenting opinion is a lack of confidence in children's linguistic ability to acquire two languages simultaneously. Having expressed their concerns, board trustees conceded approval of the Cree Immersion program on the condition that children would continue to develop their English skills, and the school would keep the community informed about the program. Overall, community members who participated in the focus group discussion appeared to quell doubts, confirm a shared understanding, and express enthusiasm for the Cree Immersion Program.

5.5 Methodology and Research Relationship

The methodology used in this thesis research approached the ideals of participatory action research but circumstances dictated adaptation and compromise. I identified my self and my position in the research. I worked with the ALIPPC to determine the research need and goals, and gained their approval of the question

route. Research participants were variously involved in the research as recruiters, assistant moderators, translators, transcribers, and cultural protocol advisors. Participants provided feedback to my interpretation of the data by responding to my summary at the conclusion of the focus groups, by reviewing the transcriptions of their focus group discussions, and by writing a response to an interim report of findings which I sent to the ALIPPC and Charlebois School within six months of the data collection.

The rewards of the research relationship included the gratification of knowing that the research was meaningful and useful to the participants. I witnessed participants coming to a new understanding or a different opinion about issues such as the education goals of the program, bilingual instructions, community oriented decision-making, and voluntary vs. compulsory participation in the program, and the primary role of the school in teaching Cree to monolingual English speaking children.

Although participant involvement was an ideal, and they verified that I had heard key themes and ideas discussed in focus groups, I analyzed the data without their assistance. This required some adaptation of the research methodology.

I had a great concern to prevent my bias and subjectivity from colouring or distorting what participants said. I firmly believe in the value of saving threatened Indigenous languages. I value the integrity of living in a small community. I am opposed to education that devalues local realities, culture, and life-ways because it diminishes youth's self-awareness, and leads to their and their children's alienation from community. I recognized my warm reception of participants' views that corresponded with mine, and my cool response to ideas that opposed my beliefs. I felt the moral obligation of researcher to present with fairness all participant views. I recognized that a number of individual participants were outstanding in my memory because of their frequent or intense responses. I needed a way to qualify the importance participants attached to themes and ideas. There were 55 participants. I

hoped to present the data in such a way that they all would recognize some of their contribution. The quantitative measures of frequency, extensiveness and intensity were useful tools of analysis for me. Through them I assured myself that I was interpreting the participants' emphasis and matters of importance, and presenting the full range of ideas shared by participants. Also considering the extended interruptions in my task of writing the thesis, the tables in Appendices A, B, C, and D maintained my familiarity with the focus group discussions, and provided an organized and comprehensive summary of the data.

An unexpected benefit to the recording the measures of frequency, extensiveness and intensity was that they provided a way to analyze the six focus groups' different discourse styles. Consequently, the various discourse styles of the participants surfaced as an unexpected but intriguing subject of analysis. A cross-referencing of the record of focus group moderating in Appendix A and the measures of frequency, extensiveness, and intensity in appendices B, C, and D, reveal marked differences in the way that the participants spoke in focus groups interview. Factors of participants' age, education, and bicultural experiences could be seen to influence their discourse style. The instances of overlap talking, short wait times, and response rates in relation to the average reveal that the parents, teachers and board trustees shared a discourse style, and the elders and administrators presented another discourse style. The students' discourse style is distinguished by their extended wait time to respond to questions.

In retrospect, the solitary exercise of data analysis fell short of participatory research's ideal of the researcher and research participants mutually negotiating power and meaning. The relationship between the researcher and the participants was limited by the fact that I am a non-Cree-speaking outsider, who lives a day's journey away from the community. After the data collecting stage, communication with participants was limited to several telephone conversations and a written response to

my interim report of the research findings. For the quantitative analysis, I did not consult with the participants for input on the sub-topics, which related to the main categories. This compromise of the ideal egalitarian relationship between researcher and research participants is a contingency of university graduate research limited by time and cost. To consult with the 55 participants for verification of my method and organization of analysis would have required a much greater dedication of time by researcher and research participants.

5.6 Decolonization

On the personal level, individual community members had the opportunity to talk about their experience of colonization and their awareness of their own agency in decolonization. Laenui's (2000) model of colonization and decolonization informed the analysis of the participants' discussion. Examples of participant responses could be used to illustrate all stages of colonization and phases of decolonization, confirming that the stages are experienced simultaneously and sequentially. Participants from the youngest to the eldest expressed their experience of cultural oppression. Their involvement in the research process constitutes positive action toward recovering from cultural and linguistic oppression. Community members, by articulating their visions and expectations of the program, confirm their commitment and take collective action toward decolonizing the education of their children. Thus, participatory action research is beneficial to the purpose, design and implementation of an Aboriginal language immersion program in an Aboriginal community.

The researcher was also a participant in the research process and therefore stood to be personally affected by the experience. As researcher, visiting the northern Saskatchewan Aboriginal community of Cumberland House, I needed to find a way to resolve the miscellaneous ways that theories, models and labels do not conform to the complexity of the lived experience of the people in this community context. I concluded that although the language and theory of academic literature is a useful

starting point, a researcher should not use these indiscriminately. In our assumptions, questions, analysis and conclusions we need to be sensitive to the diversity of Aboriginal cultures, open to the variety of human experience and respectful of people's life-ways. Three examples of the disjointed relationship between the academic literature and the community context of Cumberland House are discussed in the following paragraphs.

First, the various theories of second language acquisition do not take into account the psychological and social impact of the loss of an Indigenous language and denigration of one's culture. Recall that Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) argues the loss of an Indigenous language amounts to cultural genocide. The theories of second language acquisition surveyed by Lightbrown and Spada (1995) do not take into account the profound effect that racism and cultural oppression have had on the generation of monolingual English-speaking parents of children who will be learning Cree in the immersion program. An example of parents' experience was described when a young woman talked about her and her husband's experiences. She recalled as a teenager, trying to hide her Native identity and being embarrassed by her Cree accent. Her husband, although speaking Cree for the first eight years of his life, lost his ability to speak the language when he was punished for speaking Cree when he moved to live with his mother in a large urban centre. His expressed desire to undergo hypnosis to regain the language, indicates the psychological block associated with the language loss. This suggests that a theory of teaching an oppressed Indigenous language should take into account the impact of parents' loss, because what is at stake is not only second language acquisition but also language revitalization and cultural survival.

Second, the models of colonization and decolonization , although useful in a survey of the relationship between colonial forces and the Indigenous peoples, should not be adhered to so strictly that the view of the world becomes binary, and people's

cultural adaptations are divided into categories of resistance or resignation. Take for example Memmi's (1965) view of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized which places people and their life choices on either side of such a divide. Similarly, Laenui's model of the stages of colonization indicates that the Christian church is a system that denigrates the Indigenous culture. Extending the logic leads to the conclusion that conversion is a stage of colonial oppression with the implication that Christian conversion is an abandonment of one's Indigenous self. This is clearly not the case for those research participants who talked about the important place that Christianity has in their lives. A student talked about his friend who lives a good life because "he is a Christian and still is an Indian". An administrator expressed the syncretic view of religion when he explained that he learned from his mother the Judeo-Christian values and from his father he learned that everything has a spirit. The binaries of colonized and colonizer, colonization and decolonization do not accommodate the understanding that,

> "[f]or most Aboriginal people, 'tradition' does not consist of static practices and institutions that existed in the distant past. It is an evolving body of ways of life that adapts to changing situations and readily integrates new attitudes and practices" (RCAP, 1996, Volume One, p. 116-117).

Thus research participants' description of their spiritual life is such an example of the dynamic and evolving body of ways of life and refutes the notion that traditional culture is static and in a more pure state that existed before the arrival of Europeans.

Third, identity labels, ascribed by outsiders to catalogue groups of Aboriginal people, are inadequate. Labels such as Métis, Registered under the Indian Act, and Member of Indian Band/First Nation and Bill C31simplify Aboriginal identities and risk stratifying individuals and communities by degrees of implied Indigenous authenticity. The categories are divisive and affect individuals, families and communities because the labels negate the sense of wholeness of the person, their relatedness through their kinship ties, the value they attach to bilingualism and multilingualism, and the unspoken solidarity among Aboriginal people. Outsiders'

ascribed identity labels do not correspond with people's own cultural self-identification. This is evidenced by the fact that on the census records (Statistics Canada, 1994), Cumberland House community members frequently left the question about ethnic origins unanswered. The 1991 census responses that were recorded show that Cumberland House had residents who reported Métis as a single ethnic origin, residents who were registered under the Indian Act, and residents who were members of an Indian Band/First Nation. It should also be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive: there were status Indians and First Nations members who reported Métis as one of a multiple responses to the ethnic origin question (Statistics Canada, 1994). My analysis of the transcriptions, community history and census records lead me to interpret that the cultural self-identification by Cumberland House residents is not defined by the outsiders' ascribed labels. Hence I resisted ascribing a specific identity label to refer to Cumberland House residents and chose instead to use the terms Cree and Aboriginal because they are inclusive.

Nonetheless, the issue of identity is relevant especially when considering the link between culture and language. Fishman (2001) asserts that "[s]pecific languages are related to specific cultures and to their attendant cultural identities at the level of doing, at the level of knowing and at the level of being" (p. 3). Authors such as LaFromboise et al (1995) and Bauman (1980) write about language contributing to an individual's identity and by extension his or her well being. Participants in their focus group discussions demonstrated a sense of self and community that is key to language revitalization efforts. In the research design, question route, and moderating of focus groups I assumed that participants were Indigenous people of Cree heritage, and I did not ask them to explain their cultural self-identification. Participants variously used the terms Cree, Indian, and Métis, when they referred to language, identity, culture, and history. Their self and cultural awareness were evidenced when they stressed the important role of Cree language in teaching cultural competence to

their children. Further, they described in detail the presence of *gemeinschaft*, which Fishman (2001) explains is "the intimate community whose members are related to one another via bonds of kinship, affection and communality of interest and purpose[and which] is the *real secret weapon of RLS"* [original emphasis] p. 459). This research would have been more comprehensive if the research design and question route had incorporated questions about individual and community cultural self-identification. The result would have introduced to the literature a description of a cultural identity that transcends the limiting labels ascribed to Aboriginal people by census records and outsiders.

At the community level, the usual criticism, that people should not place so much trust and reliance on the social institutions to remedy their difficulties, does not apply here. The concept of "the school" in this Northern Saskatchewan Aboriginal community extends beyond the dictionary definition of a school. In this community, the school is a central institution that unifies community members' efforts to make positive social contributions. Designated a community school with the attendant funds, Charlebois School provides programs to better meet the social needs of the community's students and so, on one level, it functions as a resource and a recreation centre in addition to an educational centre. I interpret that at another level, the school functions as an arena of the community's self-determination. I sensed among the interview participants an attitude of respect and ownership toward the school. That the school, as community institution, has a degree of prestige is evident in its lack of graffiti and vandalism. Further, the community-school relationship is strengthened by the fact that the majority of teachers are from the community itself. Thus "the school" is not to be seen as a social institution which indulges parents' surrender of their responsibility to transmit Cree culture to their children. Rather the school is the site of collective action in decolonization.

Because the school is central to community, school-related issues elicit the expression of different opinions. Concerns about poverty and education and training are brought into discussions about school programs that may affect young people's potential life-choices. Whereas the board trustees presented a small minority who opposed the Cree immersion program, the Northern Lights School Division and the Cumberland House community members interviewed supported the program. It would be expected that school board trustees' power could doom the future of the Cree immersion program, yet their opinion did not appear to have the expected implication of suppressing the community's enthusiasm. A possible explanation for this is that their power was counterbalanced by fact that the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program was initiated by the NLSD and supported by the Charlebois School administrators.

At the institutional level, the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program is Northern Lights School Division's contribution to decolonizing because it is an institutional response to respect the Cree culture in this northern community. At the school, community members are working towards decolonization within the bounds of the school institution. The perceived difference between revitalizing Aboriginal education and decolonizing the education of Aboriginal children corresponds to the community members' vision and their expectations of the Cree Immersion Program. Revitalizing Aboriginal education is the provision of a contextualized education that is ecological and spiritual, involving family and community activities, with the purpose to promote the individual's self awareness and cultural competence in the physical, spiritual and social realms. Decolonizing the education of Aboriginal children works within the established system yet strives to establish self-determination so that the imbalance of power may be righted and the structures, power relationships, pedagogy, curriculum and goals of education reflect the Aboriginal world view. In their description of their vision of the Cree Immersion Program they were describing the

revitalization of a traditional Cree education: they expressed the desire for elders' and community involvent, the need for experiential learning and freedom to move beyond the school structures. In their description of their expectations of the program they were describing a move to decolonize the education of Aboriginal children: to follow provincial guidelines, prepare the children to excel in mainstream school, make the school and its activities reflect Cree cultures and society, to strengthen the youth's identification with their culture.

These efforts to decolonize mainstream education and to revitalize Aboriginal education operate on a continuum. Cumberland House teachers, administrators, and community members have made great advancement toward their vision of education for their children. They recognize that there are obstacles to overcome, and the teachers in particular explored the points of conflict and negotiation to achieve the goals of bicultural competence within the curriculum and structure of the school setting. It may be anticipated that over time teachers will face the paradoxes of teaching Cree worldview, in an immersion program structured to meet the provincial educational goals. An example may be taken from another Indigenous language student and teacher's experience. For example, Corbiere, an Anishnawbe language student and teacher, explains that verbatim translation of Anishnawbe words to English gives the novice students a sense that they understand the language but in fact, it shields their appreciation of the Anishnawbe world view. Individual words have denotative meaning but also have other layers of meaning associated with ecological, spiritual and cultural knowledge (Corbiere, 2001). The provincial curriculum guidelines and time constraints may propel Cumberland House teachers to translate English nursery rhymes and songs to Cree. While the educational approach of translating mainstream culture into Cree vocabulary may help them to meet the expectations of the program, it will fall short of achieving their vision of education. One final point that relates to this is community members' resounding statement that

the elders are the most valuable resource to the Cree Immersion Program. It is an adminstrative and institutional challenge to the NLSD, the board trustees, and the school administrators to include the elders in a meaningful way in the program and to pay them a sum that correlates to their value and the esteem in which they are held.

This thesis research afforded me the opportunity to learn first-hand an important implication of conducting graduate research with Aboriginal people. Although the ethical guidelines for research set out by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples were comprehensive in preparing me to gather data in focus group interviews, I learned that consent forms are problematic for some Aboriginal elders. I observed that the elders found the consent and information forms inaccessible. Possible reasons may have been that their greatest language facility was with Cree, or that their English literacy level made it difficult to decipher the information, or that their eyesight prevented them from easily reading the pages. The teachers' response was to read, interpret and translate the forms for the elders. I sensed that the consent forms were a ludicrous imposition on the elders' intelligence, and that papers requiring their signature were just another example of the "White Man's" culturally incongruous ways. The teachers explained that I was obliged by the University of Saskatchewan to have informed consent. I interpreted the elders' patience as forgiveness of my clumsy lack of cultural understanding, and their forbearance as their polite kindness to me. The teachers' assistance in the elders' group was a bridge to shared understanding. By witnessing the teachers' interaction with the elders, I gained an appreciation of the elders' interpretation of the consent forms, and insight into my relationship as researcher to the community. The participants' generous provision of their time and discussion about a topic as intimate as their aspirations for their children impressed upon me my moral obligation to the people of Cumberland House to present this work in a way that is helpful to their efforts of

language revitalization. I concluded that community members' involvement in the research, removed the potential barriers of consent forms and the relationship with the researcher.

Final reflective thoughts bring me to a sense of gratitude to the people who have worked on this project with me. First and foremost, I acknowledge Cumberland House community members. Their kindness, humour, and warm reception has made Cumberland House an important place in my personal mapping of Saskatchewan. I hope my efforts have contributed to this community's goal of Cree language revitalization and Cree cultural survival. Josie Searson and Rita Lowenburg, members of NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program, worked tirelessly, coordinating, making arrangements, translating and transcribing. I am grateful to them for their invaluable assistance. I have been rewarded in this work in many ways. I have grown in knowledge, skills and understanding. I have felt the poignant urgency of the Cree language immersion program. I appreciate the spiritual aspect of an Indigenous language and the connection to the ethos it provides. Being engaged in a research project that is meaningful to the research participants has gratified me. This thesis research project, above all, made me experience the truth of the words spoken by a research participant; "We don't do things alone". I have learned invaluable lessons from Dr. Ward, Dr. Battiste and Professor St. Denis. I thank them for their encouragement, challenge, and inspiration that sustained me.

5.7 Recommendations for Further Research

What might language advocates and the university take from this study? For community language advocates and planners, the lesson in the value of community-based participatory research is far reaching. Ownership, ongoing support, commitment to action, and cooperative effort: all these work to strengthen the links between the community and the school and together aid a language revitalization

effort. For the university, there is a tremendous need to develop training to teach Indigenous languages in a setting that is conducive to language acquisition and not simply linguistic understanding. Language camps, immersion programs, active learning, are ways to help a student live the language.

Since 1998, Cumberland House teachers' ongoing experience in immersion programs and the training developments initiated by the Northern Lights School Division and are extending the knowledge about teaching in an Aboriginal language immersion program. Further, the University of Alberta and the Indigenous Peoples Program at the University of Saskatchewan, held in 2000 and 2001, the first and second annual Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute. There are dedicated people whose knowledge and experience may provide insight and understanding about topics related to Cree language revitalization through an immersion program.

The process and content of this thesis research identified the following topics for further research:

1. How do novice immersion teachers implement an Aboriginal language immersion program? Cumberland House teachers wished to hear the stories and see examples of people who have ventured into the unfamiliar territory of a Cree Immersion school program. These stories and experiences would be a valuable source of information and encouragement to language planners and prospective immersion teachers.
2. How have Aboriginal language immersion teachers adapted the provincial program to follow the principles and goals of Aboriginal education? Immersion teachers' stories of how they merge two distinct pedagogies to resolve the conflict between vision and program expectations would contribute to the literature of resistance and decolonization.
3. How do Cumberland House community members perceive the success of the Cree Immersion Program four years after the implementation of the pilot program?

This research would involve community members in the evaluation of the program. The result would be on-going commitment and continued action due to community members reviewing their vision and participating in generating information about the program.

4. How do Cumberland House community members conceive of their individual and collective identity? How are the local identity politics affected by factors such as: cultural challenges of language loss, media saturation and diminishing isolation, the community's shared history, interests and institutions, the 1985 reinstatement of Indian status, and proximity to a First Nation community? This research would challenge outside labeling and contribute to an understanding of Métis identity in northeastern Saskatchewan.

5. What ways can a community learn to support Aboriginal language revitalization?

The research participants in this study embody a practical optimism that builds on the work of Aboriginal language revitalization and related research topics. Cumberland House community members share a vision of education that prepares children to function in a bilingual and bicultural context and they expect that the Cree Immersion Program will promote the children's understanding and esteem of Cree language, culture and identity. Undaunted by societal challenges that threaten Cree language in their community, the language advocates are aiming not for perfection but for progress. Their conviction inspires commitment and hope.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS ASKED AND ANSWERED

Question #	A	BT	E	P	S	T
1. Give your names and in one or two sentences tell where you hear Cree spoken.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Describe how you or people you know learned to speak Cree?	➲	➲	➲	➲	➲	➲
3. What does a person need to know to live well in this part of the world?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. How do children learn these things that you have talked about?	➲	➲	➲	➲	✓	✓
5. a) What does Cree enable you to do? b) What Cree knowledge should the children have?	➲	➲	✓	✓	✓	✓
6. Tell us what knowledge, ability and personal characteristics a child needs to learn in order to do well in school?	✓	➲	-	➲	✓	✓
7. If the teachers gave no marks, what would be a sign of a students' success in school?	-	-	-	➲	✓	✓
8. What role should the school have in teaching young people Cree?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9. What would tell you that a child is successful in the Cree immersion program at different stages?	✓	➲	➲	✓	✓	✓
10. What are some problems you foresee in the delivery in the program? and How do you see overcoming them?	➲	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
11. How might you be involved in the Cree immersion program?	➲	✓	✓	✓	✓	➲
12. What is in the community that will help the Cree immersion program be a success?	➲	✓	➲	✓	✓	➲
13. Is there something else we need to know?	✓	✓	➲	➲	✓	➲
14. Of all the things we discussed here today, which one is most important to you?	-	-	-	-	-	✓
15. Moderator will give a verbal summary of her interpretation of what was said in the focus group, then ask the group "Did I miss anything?"	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Key:

✓ Indicates question was explicitly asked and answered

➲ Indicates answer was provided in spontaneous discussion

\- Indicates question was neither asked nor answered in the focus groups

APPENDIX B: FREQUENCY OF TOPIC DISCUSSION
(How Many Times the Topic Surfaced in Discussion)

TOPICS	FOCUS GROUPS # OF RESPONSES						
	Total 1088	**A 66**	**BT 167**	**E 33**	**P 313**	**S 250**	**T 224**
Topics Relating to Vision	**555**						
Cree Language:	*126*						
Cree Language Attitude	8	3	3	-	1	1	-
Cree Language Condition	63	15	7	4	15	12	10
Cree Language Shift	28	2	3	7	12	1	3
Cree is Core Value of Cultural Competence	27	6	7	2	2	9	1
School Success:	*30*						
School Success - Attitudes	15	4	4	1	-	6	-
School Success - Behaviour	10	4	4	-	-	2	2
School Success - English	5	-	5	-	-	-	-
Colonization/Decolonization:	*100*						
Language Loss	25	7	2	3	12	-	1
Cultural Oppression	29	4	3	7	14	3	1
Racism	8	2	1	2	3	-	-
Language Recovery	6	2	-	1	3	-	-
Societal Change & Challenges	21	5	1	2	8	-	5
Different Definitions of Living Well	11	4	3	-	-	4	-
Cree Cultural Competence:	*190*						
Cree Identity	34	6	2	9	7	8	-
Understand Beliefs & Values	23	9	4	2	1	5	2
Affective Processes (Humour & Love)	23	8	2	2	3	3	5
Speak Cree Fluently	28	3	2	6	7	5	5
Behave In Culturally Appropriate Ways	51	10	3	6	5	15	12
Maintain relationships	31	10	1	5	5	6	4
Bicultural Competence:	*76*						
Know Both Cultures' Beliefs & Values	13	5	5	1	-	2	-
Positive Attitude To Both Cultural Groups	13	3	3	-	-	6	1
Bicultural Efficacy	8	2	1	1	2	2	-
Speak Cree & English Fluently	22	4	6	5	6	-	1
School Education	16	1	14	-	-	-	1
Curriculum (Math, Science, English)	4	-	1	-	-	3	-
Education:	*33*						
Experiential Learning	13	-	-	-	-	1	12
Parents Responsible to Teach Cree	11	-	5	5	-	-	1
Parents Teach Attitudes & Behaviour	9	1	1	5	-	-	2
Topics Relating to Expectations	**Total 253**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Cree Language Education:	*86*						
Language Change	7	5	-	-	2	-	-
Dialect	7	2	-	-	3	-	2
Language Learning	25	1	4	5	9	3	3
Optimum Age for Language Learning	11	-	-	2	8	1	-
Humour/Shyness as Inhibitors	24	5	-	2	6	6	5
Reversing Language Shift	12	-	-	1	10	1	-

Appendix B: Frequency Of Topic Discussion
(con't.)

Topics Relating to Expectations	**Total**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
School:	*17*						
School's Primary Role in Teaching Cree	8	4	-	-	3	-	1
School's Secondary Role in Teaching Cree	2	-	2	-	-	-	-
Teachers' Valued Role	4	2	1	-	-	1	-
Accountability to Community	3	-	2	-	-	-	1
Cree Immersion Program:	*150*						
Social Development	6	1	-	-	-	-	5
Functional Cree Fluency	32	1	4	-	7	12	8
English Fluency	4	-	3	-	-	-	1
Cree Literacy	23	-	1	2	10	2	8
English Literacy	11	1	2	-	1	-	7
Cree Cultural Competence	3	2	-	-	1	-	-
Bicultural Competence	4	2	-	-	1	-	1
Bilingual Instruction	43	-	9	-	5	29	-
Teach Cultural History & Traditions	14	-	-	-	5	9	-
Program Must Be Optional	7	2	2	-	1	-	4
Consistent with Provincial Curriculum	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Topics Relating to Needs	**Total 164**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Parents Need to Learn Cree	8	-	-	-	8	-	-
Need To Be Reassured:	*65*						
Questions re: Cree Immersion Program	24	-	7	-	9	-	8
Cree Immersion Possible Negative Effects	12	-	8	-	1	1	2
Teachers' Fluency	11	-	-	-	1	7	3
Community Awareness	18	-	9	-	-	1	8
Program Needs:	*91*						
Materials	29	2	-	2	-	-	25
N Dialect	11	1	3	-	2	-	5
Language Change (Long & Short Forms of Cree)	10	-	7	-	3	-	-
Administrative Support & Preparation Time	20	-	-	-	-	-	20
Consistency	3	-	2	-	-	-	1
Full time Resource Person	8	1	-	-	-	-	7
Flexibility to Make it Experiential & Fun	10	-	2	-	3	2	3
Topics Relating to Resources	**Total 116**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Elders	25	7	-	3	9	-	6
School	8	7	-	-	1	-	-
Teachers	8	-	1	-	7	-	-
Community Members	11	-	1	-	-	10	-
Community Institutions	26	2	3	1	6	13	1
Role Models/Conferences	4	-	-	-	4	-	-
Media	16	3	-	-	13	-	-
Expressed Interest in Self Involvement in Program	18	-	2	2	5	9	-

APPENDIX C: EXTENSIVENESS OF TOPIC DISCUSSION
(How Many People Talked about the Topic)

TOPICS	FOCUS GROUPS & # OF PARTICIPANTS IN DISCUSSION						
	Total 55	**A 13**	**BT 4**	**E 13**	**P 6**	**S 9**	**T 10**
Topics Relating to Vision	**351**						
Cree Language:	*82*						
Cree Language Attitude	7	2	1	-	1	3	-
Cree Language Condition	38	13	4	3	5	3	10
Cree Language Shift	19	3	2	5	5	1	3
Cree is Core Value of Cultural Competence	18	5	3	2	2	5	1
School Success:	*22*						
School Success - Attitudes	10	5	1	1	-	3	-
School Success - Behaviour	10	2	2	1	-	2	2
School Success - English	2	-	2	-	-	-	-
Colonization/Decolonization:	*59*						
Language Loss	14	4	2	3	4	-	1
Cultural Oppression	14	2	2	3	4	2	1
Racism	4	1	1	2	-	-	-
Language Recovery	5	1	-	1	3	-	-
Societal Change & Challenges	14	3	1	2	4		2
Different Definitions of Living Well	8	3	3	-	-	2	-
Cree Cultural Competence:	*118*						
Cree Identity	14	4	1	3	3	3	-
Understand Beliefs & Values	13	3	2	2	1	3	2
Affective Processes (Humour & Love)	23	4	3	2	6	3	3
Speak Cree Fluently	20	3	2	5	4	3	3
Behave In Culturally Appropriate Ways	26	5	2	3	4	6	6
Maintain relationships	22	6	1	5	1	5	4
Bicultural Competence:	*49*						
Know Both Cultures' Beliefs & Values	9	3	2	2	-	2	-
Positive Attitude To Both Cultural Groups	8	2	2	-	-	3	1
Bicultural Efficacy	8	2	1	1	2	2	-
Speak Cree & English Fluently	14	2	3	3	4	-	2
School Education	6	2	3	-	-	-	1
Curriculum (Math, Science, English)	4	-	1	-	-	3	-
Education:	*21*						
Experiential Learning	4	-	-	-	-	1	3
Parents Responsible to Teach Cree	8	1	3	3	-	-	1
Parents Teach Attitudes & Behaviour	9	1	1	5	-	-	2
Topics Relating to Expectations	**Total 149**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Cree Language Education:	*59*						
Language Change	5	3	-	-	2	-	-
Dialect	7	2	-	3	-	2	-
Language Learning	17	1	4	4	4	2	2
Optimum Age for Language Learning	8	-	-	2	5	1	-
Humour/Shyness as Inhibitors	16	4	-	1	4	3	3

Appendix C: Extensiveness of Topic Discussion (con't.)

Reversing Language Shift	6	-	-	1	4	1	-
Topics Relating to Expectations	**Total**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
School:	*12*						
School's Primary Role in Teaching Cree	5	3	-	2	-	-	-
School's Secondary Role in Teaching Cree	2	-	1	-	-	-	1
Teachers' Valued Role	3	1	1	-	-	1	-
Accountability to Community	2	-	1	-	-	-	1
Cree Immersion Program:	*78*						
Social Development	4	1	-	-	-	-	3
Functional Cree Fluency	21	2	4	-	5	5	5
English Fluency	2	-	1	-	-	-	1
Cree Literacy	12	-	1	1	4	2	4
English Literacy	7	1	2	-	1	-	3
Cree Cultural Competence	3	2	-	-	1	-	-
Bicultural Competence	2	1	-	-	1	-	-
Bilingual Instruction	17	-	4	-	5	8	-
Teach Cultural History & Traditions	4	-	-	-	1	3	-
Program Must Be Optional	5	2	2	-	1	-	-
Consistent with Provincial Curriculum	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Topics Relating to Needs	**Total 76**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Parents Need to Learn Cree	2	-	-	-	2	-	-
Need To Be Reassured:	*32*						
Questions re: Cree Immersion Program	12	-	3	-	3	-	6
Cree Immersion Possible Negative Effects	6	-	2	-	1	1	2
Teachers' Fluency	6	-	-	-	1	2	3
Community Awareness	8	-	2	-	-	1	5
Program Needs:	*42*						
Materials	7	1	-	1	-	-	5
N Dialect	8	1	2		2		3
Language Change (Long & Short Forms of Cree)	5	-	3	-	2	-	-
Administrative Support & Preparation Time	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
Consistency	2	-	1	-	-	-	1
Full time Resource Person	5	1	-	-	-	-	4
Flexibility to Make it Experiential & Fun	9	-	2	-	3	2	2
Topics Relating to Resources	**Total 70**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Elders	14	5	-	3	3	-	3
School	8	7	-	-	1	-	-
Teachers	7	-	1	-	3	-	3
Community Members	5	-	1	-	-	4	-
Community Institutions	14	2	1	1	4	5	1
Role Models/Conferences	3	-	-	-	3	-	-
Media	6	2	-	-	4	-	-
Expressed Interest in Self Involvement in Program	13	-	3	1	4	5	-

APPENDIX D: INTENSITY OF TOPIC DISCUSSION
(*Intensity Measured by Number of Overlap Responses, Wait Time Deviations and Changes in Speech Pattern)

TOPICS	FOCUS GROUPS' # OF INTENSITY MEASURES						
	Total 392	**A 68**	**BT 78**	**E 28**	**P 57**	**S 35**	**T 126**
Topics Relating to Vision	**173**						
Cree Language:	*33*						
Cree Language Attitude	3	-	-	-	-	1	2
Cree Language Condition	15	1	4	-	4	1	5
Cree Language Shift	4	-	-	1	2	1	-
Cree is Core Value of Cultural Competence	11	2	5	2	-	1	-
School Success:	*6*						
School Success - Attitudes	4	-	-	1	-	2	1
School Success - Behaviour	2	-	-	1	-	-	1
School Success - English	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Colonization/Decolonization:	*33*						
Language Loss	8	4	-	2	1	-	1
Cultural Oppression	7	-	-	1	5	1	-
Racism	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
Language Recovery	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
Societal Change & Challenges	8	7	-	-	1	-	-
Different Definitions of Living Well	7	-	4	-	-	3	-
Cree Cultural Competence:	*55*						
Cree Identity	7	3	-	2	1	1	-
Understand Beliefs & Values	6	5	1	-	-	-	-
Affective Processes (Humour & Love)	9	4	3	-	-	1	1
Speak Cree Fluently	5	1	-	4	-	-	-
Behave In Culturally Appropriate Ways	25	2	-	4	6	4	9
Maintain relationships	3	2	-	-	-	-	1
Bicultural Competence:	36						
Know Both Cultures' Beliefs & Values	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Positive Attitude To Both Cultural Groups	-	2	6	-	-	-	-
Bicultural Efficacy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Speak Cree & English Fluently	6	4	8	1	-	-	-
School Education	3	-	3	-	-	-	-
Curriculum (Math, Science, English)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education:	*10*						
Experiential Learning	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Parents Responsible to Teach Cree	6	4	2	-	-	-	-
Parents Teach Attitudes & Behaviour	3	-	2	-	-	-	1
Topics Relating to Expectations	**Total 113**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Cree Language Education:	*28*						
Language Change	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Dialect	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Language Learning	10	1	2	3	1	1	2
Optimum Age for Language Learning	2	-	-	-	1	1	-

Appendix D: Intensity of Topic Discussion (con't.)

Humour/Shyness as Inhibitors	14	3	-	-	6	2	3
Reversing Language Shift	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Topics Relating to Expectations	**Total**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
School	*18*						
School's Primary Role in Teaching Cree	3	2	-	1	-	-	-
School's Secondary Role in Teaching Cree	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Teachers' Valued Role	13	13	-	-	-	-	-
Accountability to Community	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Cree Immersion Program:	*67*						
Social Development	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Functional Cree Fluency	15	-	1	-	2	1	11
English Fluency	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Cree Literacy	20	-	2	3	6	1	8
English Literacy	9	-	2	-	-	-	7
Cree Cultural Competence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bicultural Competence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bilingual Instruction	12	-	8	-	2	2	-
Teach Cultural History & Traditions	6	-	-	-	2	4	-
Program Must Be Optional	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Consistent with Provincial Curriculum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Topics Relating to Needs	**Total 101**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Parents Need to Learn Cree	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Need To Be Reassured:	*39*						
Questions re: Cree Immersion Program	17	-	5	-	5	-	7
Cree Immersion Possible Negative Effects	6	-	2	-	2	2	-
Teachers' Fluency	6	-	-	-	-	1	5
Community Awareness	10	2	7	-	-	-	1
Program Needs:	*61*						
Materials	28	-	-	-	-	-	28
N Dialect	12	-	9	-	-	-	3
Language Change (Long & Short Forms of Cree)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Administrative Support & Preparation Time	18	-	-	-	-	-	18
Consistency	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Full time Resource Person	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Flexibility to Make it Experiential & Fun	2	-	-	-	1	-	1
Topics Relating to Resources	**Total 17**	**A**	**BT**	**E**	**P**	**S**	**T**
Elders	4	-	-	1	3	-	-
School	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teachers	7	-	-	-	4	-	3
Community Members	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Community Institutions	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Role Models/Conferences	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Media	2	1	-	-	1	-	-
Expressed Interest in Self Involvement in Program	2	-	-	-	-	2	-

APPENDIX E: MEASURES OF INTENSITY BY FOCUS GROUP

ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators' Overlap Responses

Topic	# of Overlap Responses by Administrators
Role of Teacher (Exemplary Teacher)	10
Whole Child, Whole School (Cree Cultural Competence, Bicultural Competence)	2
Joking Function	2

Administrators' Wait Time Deviation

Topic	Participant of Administrators	Indiv. Mean Avg. Wait Time (sec)	Wait Time (sec)
Condition of Language, Bilingual Competence, Societal Change & Challenge	A9	3	7
Cree Cultural Competence, Identity, Different Definitions of Living Well Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Respect)	A10	2	4
Language Loss, Societal Change & Challenge,	A9	3	1

Administrators' Change of Speech Pattern

Topic	Participant of Administrators Focus Group	Change in Speech Pattern
Language Loss, Societal Changes, Media	A9	Rarely Speaks
Cree identity, Belief & Values, Affective Processes of Culture, Maintain Relationships, Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways	A2	Rarely Speaks
Cree identity, School's Primary Role in Teaching Cree, Community Based Initiative	A2	Rarely Speaks
Language Change, Humour as Inhibitor, Language Recovery	A13	Rarely Speaks
Cree Cultural Competence (Cree Identity Maintain relationships, Speak Cree Fluently)	A13	Rarely Speaks
Societal Change, Behave in Culturally appropriate Ways, Humour as Inhibitor,	A13	Rarely Speaks
Societal Change	A13	Rarely Speaks
Cree is Core Value of Cultural Competence	A8, A10	Spontaneous Topic
Speak Cree & English Fluently	A9, A10, A13	Spontaneous Topic
Societal Change	A9, A12, A8	Spontaneous Topic
Understand Cree Belief & Values	A9, A12, A10(2x)	Spontaneous Topic
Affective Process (Humour), Humour as	A12, A13, A3	Spontaneous Topic

Inhibitor		
Language Loss	A3, A13, A12	Spontaneous Topic
Language Recovery	A13	Spontaneous Topic
Language Learning	A13	Spontaneous Topic
Role of Teacher	A12, A10, A9	Spontaneous Topic
Community Awareness	A3, A10	Spontaneous Topic
Program is Optional (Community Based Initiative)	A10, A1, A13, A12	Spontaneous Topic
Maintain Relationships, Speak Cree Fluently	A13, A12	Spontaneous Topic
Dialect in Language Learning	A10	Spontaneous Topic
Different Definitions of Living Well	A10	Spontaneous Topic
Media	A9	Spontaneous Topic

BOARD TRUSTEES

Board Trustees' Overlap Responses

Topic	# of Overlap Responses by Board Trustees
Adults Teaching Bicultural Competence to Youth (Junior Achievement Program)	9
Cree Immersion Program - Dialect concerns	9
Joking Function	8
Community Support Must be Maintained	7
Cree Immersion Program - Must be Bilingual	6
Cree Immersion Program - Questions & Clarification	5
Value of Cree Language	5
Collaborative Talk, Verification of Details	5
Language Condition in Cumberland House	4
Community Sustainability - Educated community members to return to Cumberland House	4
Different definitions of "Living Well" in Cumberland House	3
Parents' Responsibility to teach Cree at Home	3
Cree Knowledge in Language -Needed for Affective Processes of Culture (Humour)	3
Value of Post Secondary Education & Training	2
Parents' Responsibility to Teach Work Habits & Attitudes	2
Language, Geography & Poverty Barriers to University	2
Language Learning - Adolescents Learn Cree in Informal Situations	2
Cree Immersion Program May Hinder Child's School Success	2
Cree Immersion Program - Cree & English Literacy	2
Cree Immersion Program - No Math or Science	2
Cree Hampers Individual on the Job	1

Board Trustees' Wait Time Deviation

Topic	Participant of Board Trustees	Indiv. Mean Avg. Wait Time (sec)	Wait Time (sec)
Post-secondary education, English	BT1	1.5	6
Beliefs & Values, Different Definitions of Living Well	BT2	3.5	8
Parents Responsible to Teach Cree	BT2	3.5	6
Reserved support of Cree Immersion Program	BT4	2	6

Board Trustees' Change of Speech Pattern

Topic	Participant of Board Trustees' Focus Group	Change in Speech Pattern
Questions the Value of Cree, bilingual competence	BT3	Spontaneous Topic
Parents Responsible to Teach Cree	BT3	Rarely Speaks
Cree Immersion Program Must Be Optional	BT2	Rarely Speaks
Different Definitions of Living Well	BT2	Spontaneous Topic

ELDERS

Elders' Overlap Responses

Topic	# of Overlap Responses by Elders
Joking Function	5
Support of Cree Immersion	4
Cree Literacy	3
Behave in Culturally Responsible Way (Respect)	3
Cree Language - an Asset in Job Market	2
Cree Language - Nurtures Identity	1
Loss of Language & Shame - A Consequence of Assimilation Policy of Schools	1

Elders' Wait Time Deviation

Topic	Participant of Elders' Focus Group	Indiv. Mean Avg. Wait Time (sec)	Wait Time (sec)
Cree is Core Value of Cultural Competence, Bilingual Ability	E6	8	12
Cultural Oppression, Linguistic Oppression of Cree	E11	4.5	2
Cree is Core Value of Cultural Competence	E12	4.5	9

Elders' Change of Speech Pattern

Topic	Participant of Elders' Focus Group	Change in Speech Pattern
Support of Cree Immersion Program, Role of School to Teach Cree to Children	E4	Rarely Speaks
Speak Cree Fluently, Parents Responsible to Teach Cree and English to Children, (Cultural Competence)Speak Cree Fluently,	E6	Rarely Speaks
Resource - Elders, Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways, Racism, Language Learning	E8	Rarely Speaks
Language Shift, Language Learning, School Success (Attitude & Behaviour), Cree Identity, Parents Responsible to Teach Children Cree,	E9	Rarely Speaks

PARENTS

Parents' Overlap Responses

Topic	# of Overlap Responses by Parents
Cree Literacy	6
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways	6
Humour as Inhibitor	4
Language Condition	3
Resource - Elders	3
Bilingual Instruction	2
Functional Cree Fluency	2
Resource - Teachers	1
Cultural Oppression	1
Cree Identity	1
Flexibility to Make Learning Cree Experiential & Fun	1
Questions Re: Cree Immersion Program	1
Resource - Media	1

Parents' Wait Time Deviation

Topic	Participant of Parents' Focus Group	Indiv. Mean Avg. Wait Time (sec)	Wait Time (sec)
Introduction	P3	1	5
Introduction	P4	1.5	5
Language Condition	P4	1.5	19
Introduction	P6	1.5	16

Parents' Change of Speech Pattern

Topic	Participant of Parents' Focus Group	Change in Speech Pattern
Possible Negative Effects	P4(2x)	Spontaneous Topic
Language Loss	P3,	Spontaneous Topic
Teach Cultural Traditions & History	P4, P3	
Cultural Oppression	P4, P3, P2, P1	Spontaneous Topic
Questions Re: Cree Immersion Program	P3, P4(3x)	Spontaneous Topic
Language shift	P1, P2	Spontaneous Topic
Language Learning, Optimum Age,	P4	Spontaneous Topic
Societal Change	P1	Spontaneous Topic
Resource - Teachers	P3(3x)	Spontaneous Topic
Humour as Inhibitor	P3, P6	Spontaneous Topic
Parents Need to Learn Cree	P4	Spontaneous Topic

STUDENTS

Students' Overlap Responses

Topic	# of Overlap Responses by Students
Joking Function	6
Cree Immersion Program - Include Cree Cultural Studies, History, Traditions, & Dancing	3
Cree Immersion Program - Health should be taught in Cree AND English	2
Two Definitions of Living Well (interpreted as devaluing Cree Culture)	2
Language Learning - Teach Cree in Early Childhood	1

Students' Wait Time Deviation

Topic	Participant of Student Focus Group	Indiv. Mean Avg. Wait Time (sec)	Wait Time (sec)
Identity	S1	3	15
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Cree Cultural Values Transmitted by Adult)	S1	3	16
Condition of Language, Language Shift, (Elders Assume Youth to be Non-Cree Speakers)	S1	3	18
Resources, Community Member (Pastor as Cree Speaker)	S1	3	7
School Success - Attitude (Self Motivated)	S2	2	5
Cree Immersion -Self Involvement as Learner	S3	4	1
Cree Language Attitude (Benefits)	S3	4	7
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Cree Cultural Values Transmitted by Adult)	S5	2	7
School Success - Attitude (Self Motivated)	S5	2	5
Cree Language -Literacy (Advanced Study)	S5	2	8

Need- Teacher Training - (Reassure re: fluency)	S5	2	5
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Cree Cultural Values Transmitted by Adult)	S6	3	6
Curriculum-Cree Cultural Studies	S6	3	6
Language Learning - Humour as Inhibitor	S6	3	12
Cree Language - Core Cultural Value	S6	3	13
Cree Language - Contains Information for Affective Processes of Culture	S6	3	14
Possible Negative Effect (Immersion Students may devalue mainstream education)	S7	7	12
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Cree Cultural Values Transmitted by Adult)	S9	4	8
Community Resources - Cultural Week	S9	4	10

Students' Change of Speech Patterns

Topic	Participant of Students' Focus Group	Change in Speech Pattern
Functional Cree Fluency (Core Cree does not Teach Fluency)	S3	Rarely Speaks
Humour/Shyness as Inhibitor	S3	Rarely Speaks
Self Involvement as Student in Cree Immersion	S3, S4	Rarely Speaks
Possible Negative Effects	S7	Rarely Speaks
Different Definitions of Living Well, Cultural Oppression	S5	Spontaneous Topic

TEACHERS

Teachers' Overlap Responses

Topic	# of Overlap Responses by Teachers
Needs - Materials	22
Needs - Administrative Support	6
Language Learning- (Functional Usage Learned Experientially)	5
Expectation - Literacy	3
Expectation - Social Development	2
Needs - N Dialect Resources	2
Needs - Preparation Time	2
Cree Language -Humour	2
Language Condition	2
Joking Function	2
Needs - Flexibility to Teach Experientially	1

Teachers' Wait Time Deviation

Topic	Participant of Teachers' Focus Group	Indiv. Mean Avg. Wait Time (sec)	Wait Time (sec)
Condition of the Cree Language	T1	4	1
Language Loss	T1	4	16
Language Learning	T1	4	16
Experiential Learning	T1	4	1
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Discipline)	T1	4	1
Functional Cree Fluency (Role of Elders & Grandparents in Education)	T1	4	1
Functional Cree Fluency in Context	T1	4	1
Questions about Cree Immersion Program	T1	4	1
Need Administrative Support (Program Model)	T1	4	1
Need Administrative Support (Training)	T1	4	1
Cree Literacy	T1	4	1
Need Materials	T1	4	1
Need Administrative Support	T1	4	1
Need Preparation Time	T1	4	1
Condition of the Cree Language	T2	3.5	1
Humour as Inhibitor	T2	3.5	6
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Children Learn by Example & Storytelling)	T2	3.5	7
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Cree Child Rearing, Discipline, Work Ethic)	T2	3.5	12
Child's Behaviour & Attitude as Sign of Success	T2	3.5	7
Functional Cree Fluency (Classroom Teaching Restrictive)	T2	3.5	1
Functional Cree Fluency (Teaching in Context Superior)	T2	3.5	8
Need Resource Person in Classroom	T2	3.5	1
Need Administrative Support (Training, Reassurance)	T2	3.5	1
Social Development in Kindergarten	T2	3.5	1
Need Administrative Support	T2	3.5	1
Cree Literacy	T2	3.5	1
English Literacy	T2	3.5	1
Questions about Cree Immersion Program	T2	3.5	1
Need Administrative Support	T2	3.5	1
Need Materials	T2	3.5	1
Need Preparation time	T2	3.5	1
Functional Cree Fluency (Teaching in Context is Superior)	T4	3	6
Functional Cree Fluency (Teaching in Context is Superior)	T4	3	8
Topic	Participant	Indiv. Mean	Wait

	of Teachers' Focus Group	Avg. Wait Time (sec)	Time (sec)
Resource - (Teachers are from the Community)		3	7
Maintain Relationships with People	T5	3	15
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Hunting, Fishing, Trapping)	T5	3	6
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Discipline)	T5	3	6
School's Secondary Role in Teaching Cree	T5	3	21
Need Administrative Support (Reassurance About Immersion)	T5	3	11
Resource -Teachers Strive for Excellence	T5	3	8
Condition of Cree Language	T8	4	8
Language Learning	T8	4	8
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Hunting, Fishing, Trapping)	T8	4	16
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Children Learn Through Observation)	T8	4	10
Cree Core Value of Cultural Competence, (Especially Humour), Affective Processes of Culture	T8	4	8
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways	T8	4	1
Behave in Culturally Appropriate Ways (Children Learn Through Play, Imitating Parents, Sharing Responsibility)	T8	4	7
Dialect Need Materials in N dialect	T8	4	1
Teachers Need Prep. Time for Materials	T8	4	1
Resource -Teachers are Community Members	T8	4	8

Teachers' Change of Speech Patterns

Topic	Participant of Teachers' Focus Group	Change in Speech Pattern
Teachers' Cree Fluency (Need Reassurance)	T10	Rarely Speaks
School Success - Behaviour (Discipline)	T10	Rarely Speaks
English & Cree Literacy	T8, T1, T5	Spontaneous Topic
Teachers' Fluency	T1, T2, T5	Spontaneous Topic
Community Awareness (Parents' Support)	T5	Spontaneous Topic
Language Condition, Language Attitude	T2, T5	Spontaneous Topic
Materials,	T8, T5, T4, T2	Spontaneous Topic
Parents Teach Attitude & Behaviour	T8	Spontaneous Topic
Questions re: Cree Immersion Program	T5, T2, T1	Spontaneous Topic
Administrative Support	T5	Spontaneous Topic
Teachers' Fluency	T10	Rarely Speaks

APPENDIX F: Participants' Responses Central Tendency and Variability

Total Participants	Score of Responses	Mean Avg. # of Responses	Standard Deviation	Median	Mode	Range
55	1 053	19.14	25.77	4.5	1	120

APPENDIX G: Participants' Responses Central Tendency & Variability by Focus Group

Focus Group	Score of Responses	Number of Participants	Mean Avg. Score of Responses/ Participant	Median Avg.	Range
Administrators	66	13	5.1	3	13
Board Trustees	167	4	41.8	38.5	52
Elders	33	13	2.5	2.5	3
Parents	313	6	52.2	47	101
Students	250	9	27.8	11	120
Teachers	224	10	24.9	9.5	68

APPENDIX H: Definition of terms used in Appendices F & G.

Score of Responses - the number of times participants made a verbal expression of thought.

The Mean Average is the exact centre of normal distribution of the scores of responses. It is an arithmetic average, a measure of position and central tendency.

The formula $M = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}$ calculates the mean average.

The Median Average is the central number dividing 50% of participants who responded more times than the median average score of responses and 50% of participants who responded fewer times than the median average. The median average overcomes the exaggeration when the distribution is negatively or positively skewed.

The Mode is the most frequent score of responses by participants.

The Range is an indication of the variability. It is calculated by subtracting the lowest score of responses from the highest score. A large number indicates great variance in the number of responses among participants in that group.

The Standard Deviation combined with the mean indicates the central tendency and variability. The normal curve of scores from lowest to highest is divided into standard deviation units (equal distances along the baseline of the curve and each portion under the curve contains a fixed percentage of cases). The standard deviation, an average of the amount that the scores differ from the mean, describes the spread of scores in the group. Thus 34% of cases fall between the mean and 1SD, 14% of cases fall between 1SD and 2SD, and 2% of cases fall between 2SD and 3SD. The same percentages apply to intervals below the mean. (Lyman, 1998). The standard deviation is calculated using the following formula $SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2}{N} - M^2}$

SD	Standard Deviation
‰	the sum of
X	a score of participant responses
N	the number of participants
M	Mean
$\sqrt{\ }$	square root of

The Standard Deviation of 25.8 reflects a great deviation in the distribution in the score of responses by the individual participants. The median average of 4.5 overcomes this exaggeration by indicating that 50% of the participants responded more than 4.5 times and 50% responded fewer that 4.5 times. The SD is a numerical representation of the different discourse styles within and across the focus groups.

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSE TO INTERIM REPORT

In December 1998, the researcher sent an interim report of the research findings to the NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee and the administrators at Charlebois School. The following summary is a response to that interim report. The response team was four people representing the teachers', elders', and administrators' focus groups. The report is presented verbatim.

Response to "An Interim Report for the Research Study titled 'The context for an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program: The insiders' view of success in school and community'"

In response to the Interim Report, four representatives from the focus groups reviewed the document. The six areas identified as Introduction, vision, Expectations, Needs, Resources and conclusion were discussed. As a result of the group review and discussion, we made comments, deletions or adaptations in areas that we felt need to. Our aim was to respond to the Interim report in attempt to reflect community views as accurately as possible. The response team was comprised of ***, ***, *** and ***.

A. Vision

In summary, this category describes the Cumberland House community members' vision of education. Vision is particularly important with the Cree Immersion educational project because the project will need to fit with the philosophy of education held by community members in order to maintain community support. This educational initiative is not authoritatively designed by outsiders but holds promise of stake holder design to be delivered as an educational option. The three questions which were asked in this category were:

1. What does a person need to know to live well in this part of the world?

The response team felt that the views given were reflective of the community. We need to live in harmony with nature, with one another and with our Creator to fulfill the emotional needs in our lives. We also need to meet our physical needs of food, shelter and income to have support systems in place to meet the physical needs.

We feel that the word "conflict " should be replaced with another word so that the idea of " the value of preserving Cree culture and maintaining the distinct nature of Cumberland House and the value of education as preparation for the outside society" is not in such sharp contrast. Rather, that both cultures can be maintained using a balanced approach. Yes, culture is important and yes, education is important. A Board Trustee emphasized the importance of school preparing "youth for post-secondary equation [sic] and professional training" and we would like to add "trades training" to that statement.

2. How do children learn these things you have talked about?

The answers are reflective of the community as expressed by the six focus groups; at home, by observing and listening and copying, and at school.

3. What does Cree enable you to do? Does Cree help you do some things that English can't?

It has been expressed that spoken Cree connotates [sic] respect for others and that as the language erodes so then does the element of respect. Respect for others has long been considered essential in this part of the world and lends to living well. Language erosion is seen as connected to cultural erosion and in this case, respect for others is considered as significant. There is clear indication that culture and language are connected and those who are losing or have lost the Cree language have weak conception of culture.

B. Expectations

This section described the community members' expectations of the Cree immersion program in meeting their vision of education. It also describes their expectations of student learning in the Cree immersion program.

We felt the stand taken by the Local Board of Trustees on Cree immersion was not proactive. Although they expressed valid concerns, we felt that they were not fully representative of the community. In contrast to the views expressed by the student group, "the board trustees were less supportive of the role of the school in teaching Cree...although they stated that the planners should be aware that they support the Cree immersion program as long as it is teaching both Cree and English and the objective is that the children will have ability in both languages that help them to live well in in [sic] this society." Further, "the trustees fear that a child's learning through Cree immersion will limit his or her cognitive development, and so they have the expectation that English must be used in the deliver[sic] of the program." We feel that the Elders who expressed that the "teachers should teach kindergarten in strictly Cree" is much more suitable to an immersion program. Along educational thought, we realize that learning an Aboriginal language will mean giving up the learning of concepts through English but that acquisition of the Cree language outweighs it. Over a period of time, those concepts are gradually gained and therefore, the Cree language should not be seen as robbing our children of cognitive skills. Our ultimate aim is to enable children to be bilingual, in Cree and English. We do not believe in a "just let Cree die" attitude simply because it may have limited economic advantages. Rather we see it as a way to enhance the lives of people who want to live well and who could benefit from economic opportunities having pursued bilingualism/biculturalism. With respect to delivery of a Cree immersion program, it is almost beyond imagination to expect the English language to be used as the language of instruction in an immersion program. It is expected that English and Cree will be the languages of instruction as percentages of time are to be allocated. In the Kindergarten program, the Cree language will be used almost totally and English instruction will increase for percentages of time as the grades progress. It should be noted that the Standard Roman Orthography will be followed as opposed to syllabics.

C. Needs

This section describes what people need to either support the program or deliver it.

It is well noted that some parents need to learn the language too and it is possible to offer evening classes through our Community School programming.

The students imagined that teachers may have trouble with fluency and suggested that a solution was to take a course. We would like to think that they are speaking of teachers who are non-Cree speakers. Teacher who have thus far volunteered to be part of the Cree Immersion planning are comprised of fluent speakers who would have not problems with delivery of Cree immersion in fluent Cree.

The need for a Teacher Assistant/Material Developer is a resounding statement.

D. Resources

There is no comment in this section except that NBC is MBC, as an acronym for Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation.

E. Conclusion

The conclusion well summarizes what the people of Cumberland House think of Cree Immersion...that we simply want our children to be biculturally competent and bilingually fluent. The interim report states that "From all six groups, there was agreement that the goal of Cree immersion program is to make children bilingual Cree and English speakers, readers and writers. All groups agree that cultural awareness that leads to positive self-identity is an important part of the program."

As a concluding response to the interim report we wish to state that,

Unless our generation of fluent Cree speaking fully certified teachers bring this immersion program to reality, the hope of ever creating such an opportunity for our children may never again arise. We are the last keepers of the language and know full well the barriers that exist in implementing an immersion program. What most needs to be understood is that once our generation is not available to deliver a Cree Immersion program, the language will die and that there is no other country and no other people from where or whom our children can seek Cree language instruction."

Appendix J: Research Proposal Approval and Renewal by the University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Human Experimentation.

UNIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON ETHICS IN HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION

(Behavioral Sciences)

NAME: M. Battiste (G.A. MacKay)
Department of Educational Foundations

E.C. #: 98-55

A. Ward
Department of Curriculum Studies

DATE: May 1, 1998

The University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Human Experimentation (Behavioral Sciences) has reviewed your study, "The Context for an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program: An Emic View of Success in School and Community" (98-55).

1. Your study has been APPROVED.

2. Any significant changes to your protocol should be reported to the Chair for Committee consideration in advance of its implementation.

3. The term of this approval is for 3 years.

Cheryl Lindsay for
DAVID HAY
David Hay, Chair
University Advisory Committee
on Ethics in Human Experimentation
Behavioral Sciences

Please direct all correspondence to:

Bonnie Korthuis, Secretary
UACEHE, Behavioral Science
Office of Research Services
University of Saskatchewan
Room 210 Kirk Hall, 117 Science Place
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5C8

FILE

UNIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ETHICS IN HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION

(Behavioral Sciences)

NAME: M. Battiste (G.A. MacKay)
Department of Educational Foundations

E.C. #: 98-55

A. Ward
Department of Curriculum Studies

DATE: May 1, 1998

The University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Human Experimentation (Behavioral Sciences) has reviewed your study, "The Context of an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program: An Emic View of Success in School and Community" (98-55).

1. The Committee requests clarification on the following issue and/or that the consent form be modified to account for the following:

   - A Confidentiality Form should be prepared for Committee approval. The form would then be signed by the participants in the Focus Groups as well as by the Assistant Moderator(s). [The purpose of the form would be to have the participants/assistant moderators asknowledge their responsiblity to protect the integrity of what others in the session have said].
   - Revise the information provided, and the consent form(s) to indicate the data including tapes, will be stored in either A. Ward's or M. Battiste's office for a period of five years as required by the University of Saskatchewan guidelines.
   - A Student Assent Form should be developed for Committee approval. [The Parent/Guardian can provide consent for the student to participate in the study, but the child should be asked to provide written assent, as well].

2. Please respond (only one copy required) to the above questions and comments. Please direct the response c/o David Hay, Chair, UACEHE, Behavioral Sciences as listed below.

3. Any significant changes to your protocol should be reported to the Chair for Committee consideration in advance of its implementation.

Daryl Lindsay
for DAVID HAY

DAVID HAY, Chair
University Advisory Committee
on Ethics in Human Experimentation
(UACEHE) Behavioral Sciences

Please direct all correspondence to:

Bonnie Korthuis, Secretary
Behavioral Sciences Committee
Office of Research Services
Room 207, Kirk Hall, 117 Science Place
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5C8

FILE

Research Services

Valerie Thompson, Chair
University Advisory Committee on Ethics in
Behavioural Science Research
c/o Rm 207 Kirk Hall, 117 Science Place
SASKATOON, SK S7N 0W8
Phone: 966-4053 Fax: 966-8597

MEMORANDUM

To: M. Battiste (G. MacKay) **BSC#:** 1998-55
Department of Educational Foundations

From: Valerie Thompson, Chair
University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Behavioural Science Research

Date: January 10, 2001

Re: BSC #98-55 - The Context of an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program: An Emic View of Success in School and Community

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In response to your email inquiry dated December 14, 2000 relating to continued ethics approval for the study entitled, "The Context of an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program: An Emic View of Success in School and Community", I would just like to clarify, contrary to your message, that the original ethics approval for this study was granted on May 1, 1998 for a three year period. The approval will therefore expire on May 1, 2001.

In general, if the data collection phase of a study is complete, and all contact with study participates has ceased, continued ethics approval is not required. Since Ms. MacKay is requesting a leave for the remainder of this academic year, the ethics approval for this study will be extended for one year from the original approval date.

1. Your study has APPROVED for an additional year.
2. Any significant changes to your proposed study should be reported to the Chair for Committee consideration in advance of its implementation.
3. The term of this approval expires on May 1, 2002.

Sincerely,

Valerie Thompson, Chair
University Advisory Committee on
Ethics in Behavioural Science Research

VT/bjk

APPENDIX K: THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES' ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH

The guidelines for RCAP sponsored research have been observed to ensure that appropriate respect is given to the Aboriginal culture, language, knowledge and values, and Aboriginal community standards of legitimating knowledge (Canada, 1997) b Those guidelines particularly relevant to this study are quoted and followed by a description of the measures to be taken to ensure the guideline is followed.

1. **Aboriginal peoples have distinctive perspectives and understandings, deriving from their cultures and histories and embodied in aboriginal languages. Research that has Aboriginal experience as its subject matter must reflect these perspectives and understandings** (Canada, 1997) b.
Seeking the insiders' understanding as a research goal determined from the outset that the researcher's orientation to the study, the choice of theories, the methods of data collection, the object of investigation, and the process of analysis and reporting will serve the ends of reporting.

2. **In the past, research concerning aboriginal peoples has usually been initiated outside the aboriginal community and carried out by non-aboriginal personnel. aboriginal people have had almost no opportunity to correct misinformation or to challenge ethnocentric and racist interpretations** (Canada, 1997) b.
The Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Committee initiated the research and with their purpose clear, negotiated a focus to the research with Dr. Battiste, Dr. Ward, and the researcher. The Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Committee provided on-going guidance regarding cross-cultural differences. Although all but one member on the research team is Aboriginal, there is a wide diversity in individuals' ethnicity and cultural background. The student researcher provided written transcriptions of the focus groups discussions and asked the participants to read these and make corrections, deletions, additions or clarification where they deemed it necessary. These changes were made before the data was analyzed.

3. **In research portraying community life, the multiplicity of viewpoints present within aboriginal communities should be represented fairly, including viewpoints specific to age and gender groups** (Canada, 1997) b.
This guideline was followed by the planned composition of the six focus groups designed specifically to garner a multiplicity of viewpoints present in the community.

4. **Researchers have an obligation to understand and observe the protocol concerning communications within any aboriginal community** (Canada, 1997) b.
The committee members of the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee and Vice Principal of Charlebois School guided the researcher about observing appropriate protocol in conducting this research in the community of Cumberland House.

ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE

With regard to guidelines concerning Aboriginal knowledge the following questions are relevant to the study and are therefore answered herein:

Q: **Are there perspectives on the subject of inquiry that are distinctively Aboriginal**?

A: Yes. The purpose of the study is to identify the community members' perceptions and needs. The community members are Aboriginal and the forum of the focus group discussion facilitated the expression of shared meaning and different interpretations.

Q: **What Aboriginal sources are appropriate to shed light on those perspectives?**
A: The community members themselves who voluntarily participated are the sources of information.

Q: **Is proficiency in an Aboriginal language required to explore these perspectives and sources?**
A: A member of the ALIPPC who is bilingual functioned as moderator of the elders' group. She translated to Cree the questions on the question route, made the introduction to the focus group, introduced the topic and invited the elders to people to conduct the discussion in Cree if they chose. Another member of the ALIPPC translated to English and transcribed the elders' focus group discussion.

Q: **Does Aboriginal knowledge challenge in any way assumptions brought to the subject from previous research?**
A: Berry (1984) and Murdoch (1988) provide some information about Cree cognition. However this information for the Cumberland House context has not previously been recorded in the literature. The results of the interviews present the community members' views of success in community and school.

Q: **How will aboriginal knowledge or perspectives portrayed in research products be validated?**
A: By virtue of a focus group discussion participants were able to respond immediately to the information they shared. This research method provided an in situ means of validation. Upon receipt of the transcription of their focus group discussion, individuals had the opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the written words. Also an interim report of the findings was made available to ALIPPC members and some Cumberland House community members through Charlebois School's Vice-principal.

RCAP GUIDELINES FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH
1. **In studies located principally in aboriginal communities, researchers shall establish collaborative procedures to enable community representatives to participate in the planning, execution and evaluation of research results** (Canada, 1997) b.
These procedures have been established with the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee. The participation of community members in member checks and in a review of the draft of the final report will met this guideline.

2. **In community-based studies, researchers shall ensure that a representative cross-section of community experiences and perceptions is included** (Canada, 1997) b.
This has been done in the composition of the focus groups.

3. **Review of research results shall be solicited both in the aboriginal community and in the scholarly community prior to publication** (Canada, 1997) b.
This measure was taken.

ACCESS TO RESEARCH RESULTS
Results of community research were distributed through an interim report. A copy of the thesis report will be sent to Charlebois School library.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT
In assessing community benefit, regard shall be given to the widest possible range of community interests, whether the groups in question be aboriginal or non-aboriginal, and also to the impact of research at the local, regional or national level (Canada, 1997) b.
Community members is defined by those stake holders who have an interest in the Cree immersion program, and includes the people resident in Cumberland House, but also the members of the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program Committee. Benefit could extend to other communities, as this pilot study may provide a model and basis for comparison.

Whenever possible research should support the transfer of skills to individuals and increase the capacity of the community to manage its own research (Canada, 1997) b.
This may have been achieved to a degree through the experience ALIPPC and community members gained through the organizing and assistant moderating of the focus groups. Community members involved in the discussion groups articulated their commitment and support of the Cree immersion program.

Canada. (1997) b . Research reports: ethical guidelines. In For seven generations: An information legacy of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. [CD ROM] Ottawa, ON: Libraxus Inc. ISBN 0-9698178-1-9.

Appendix L: Information Letter and Consent Form

Information Letter for Adult Participants

Gail MacKay
#707 107 Cumberland Ave. S.
Saskatoon, SK S7N 2R6

May 04, 1998

Hello!

My name is Gail MacKay. I am a student in the Master's program at the University of Saskatchewan. I have to do a research study to finish my degree in Indian and Northern Education. I am working on a research study with the Northern Lights School Division (NLSD) on the Aboriginal Language Immersion Pilot Program. The research study is set up to follow the advice of a community member who said, "in order to recognize the needs of the community first of all I think it's important to listen to what they want". You are invited to come to a group interview to talk about the Cree immersion program.

I plan to have six mini-group interviews with the people in Cumberland House to find out three things: 1) What do people think about the importance and place of the Cree language immersion program in school, 2) What do they need to be a part of the program, and 3) What or who is in the community that will help make the program work? Each mini-group will have 6-10 people. There will be one group of high school students (age 14-16 years), one group of parents of kindergarten- age children, one group of Cree-speaking teachers, one groups of Charlebois school administrators and NLSD Aboriginal Language Immersion Committee members, one group of elders, and one group of board trustees.

During the mini-group interviews you will be with other people. You will be able to hear what they say and you are free to participate in any part of the discussion when you feel comfortable. Each mini-group interview will last between 1 1/2 to 2 hours. I would like to tape record the mini-group interviews, then write what people said, and then study what people said about the topics they think are important. These will be coded so people's names will not be written on the paper. I will send to each person a written copy of what was said in the mini-group. You will be able to make corrections if there are mistakes.

The tape recording, the notes, and the written record of the mini-group interviews will be stored in a locked cabinet in my home during the writing of the thesis. Following the completion of the study, the data including the tapes will be stored in Dr. A Ward's office for a five-year period, after which time they will be destroyed. People can use a name other than their own if they want to be anonymous in the report. Anybody can leave the mini-group interview or withdraw from the study at any time. After participating in the mini-group interview you will receive twenty dollars, which is provided by the NLSD research funds.

Please fill out the attached form. Keep one copy for yourself and return one to Lily Carriere at Charlebois School.

I hope to schedule the mini-group interviews during the first week of May 1998. I will be contacting you to tell you of the exact time and location. Please note that on the day of the mini-interview, only the first ten people to arrive will participate in the mini-group interview.

Yours truly,

Gail MacKay

Guidelines for Participant Consent

Department of Educational Foundations
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W0

"The context for and Aboriginal Language Immersion Program:
An emic view of success in school and community"

Please read the following guidelines which are designed to safeguard the interests of everyone taking part in the study:

1. You will be participating in a focused mini-group interview in which there will be a maximum of 10 participants.

2. Each focused mini-group interview will be tape-recorded. Participants who are uncomfortable with the recording of session may choose not to participate in the study.

3. After the focus group session, you may be contacted and asked to provide additional clarification with regard to themes or questions the researcher may have when she is copying the talk from the tape.

4. You will be able to check the written record of your talk to make any corrections, cut out or add information to make your meaning clear.

5. The tape recordings and the written records, made during the study will be stored in a locked cabinet in Gail MacKay's home during the writing of the thesis. Following the completion of the thesis, the data including the tapes will be stored for five years in Dr. A. Ward's office and then destroyed in the year 2003.

6. People's names, location, dates, or any information that identifies individuals will not be used in the thesis or any report to the NLSD or any articles, or presentations based on this study. However, you may choose to have your name included but you must sign a release form after you have read the written record of your talk and interview notes.

7. Participation in the study is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. If this happens your contribution to the taped focus group will not be used.

8. Any questions which you have about the study can be directed to either:

Gail MacKay
Graduate Student
Educational Foundations
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan
(306) 966-7603

Dr. Angela Ward
Associate Professor
Curriculum Studies
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan
(306) 966-7585

Dr. Marie Battiste
Associate Professor
Educational Foundations
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan
(306) 966-7576

Adult Participant Consent Form

Adult Participant Consent Form
(Participant's copy)

I, _____ have read and
(please print your name)
understood the Guidelines for Participant Consent. With these conditions, I hereby agree to participate in Gail MacKay's study, **"The context for an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program: An emic view of success in school and community".**

Date: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Adult Participant Consent Form
(Researcher's copy)

I, _____ have read and
(please print your name)
understood the Guidelines for Participant Consent. With these conditions, I hereby agree to participate in Gail MacKay's study, **"The context for an Aboriginal Language Immersion Program: An emic view of success in school and community".**

Date: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Home mailing address: _____

Phone number: _____

Summer mailing address (if different than home address):
_____

Summer phone number (if different than home phone number):
_____

Researcher's signature: _____