Many Voices; building on Aboriginal language preservation and revitalization.

Recommendations for British Columbia

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

British Columbia is home to over 32 Aboriginal languages and approximately 59 dialects, representing 60% of Canada's Aboriginal languages; all of them endangered. The use of these once vibrant languages, belonging to diverse communities, geographies and eco-systems has steadily declined in large part due to the processes of colonization, including the active repression of Aboriginal language and culture in the past, and the ongoing passive effects of assimilation. As the client for this project, the B.C Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (MARR) has a mandate to support Aboriginal language preservation and revitalization.

Provincial government support for the protection and revitalization of B.C's Aboriginal languages is already underway with programs and funding delivered through several provincial ministries and the First People's Cultural Council (FPCC), a provincial crown corporation tasked with supporting B.C First Nations language, arts and culture. While many government organizations contribute to supporting Aboriginal language vitality in B.C, MARR identified a need to consider ways this work could progress in a more coordinated way to continue building the momentum for language revitalization. The research questions for this project are:

- *By which means can Aboriginal languages be effectively preserved and revitalized?*
- *How can the government of British Columbia build upon existing efforts to preserve and revitalize Aboriginal languages in the Province?*

Background

The history of Aboriginal language loss in B.C is the history of colonization. The province-wide system of Indian Residential Schools actively suppressed Aboriginal languages in B.C as early as 1896. In 1920, the Indian Act was amended to require all school aged First Nations children to attend residential school, where they were forbidden from speaking their own language, and punished for doing so. The inter-generational effects of the residential school system continue to affect Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal British Columbians, as Aboriginal communities struggle to preserve and revitalize their languages and cultural practices.

According to FPCC, as of 2014, approximately 4% of B.C. First Nations, representing approximately 5,289 people, were fluent speakers of their language, the vast majority of these being elders. This represents a decrease of approximately 1% from 2010 (FPCC, 2010). Approximately 9.3% of the population are considered semi-speakers, an increase of 1% from 2010, as younger generations learn to speak their languages in schools and community settings. Despite this increase in semi-speakers, approximately 9% of the B.C First Nations were language learners in 2014, down from approximately 11% in 2010 (FPCC, 2010; 2014). Despite being home to 60% of Canada's Aboriginal languages, B.C has one of the lowest numbers of Aboriginal language speakers in Canada.

The Provincial mandate to support language revitalization is rooted in the New Relationship Agreement, signed in 2005 by the Government of British Columbia and the First Nations Leadership Council. One of the four goals in the agreement related to reconciliation recognizes language preservation and

revitalization as essential to the well-being of First Nations communities and aims to restore literacy and fluency while avoiding the extinction of any First Nations language.

Support for FPCC is one of the main ways that the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation contributes to language revitalization in B.C. In 2013/14, FPCC distributed approximately $1.5 million to communities in B.C for language revitalization activities through four main initiatives including Languages Nest programs that support pre-school immersion in language learning. The Language Revitalization Planning Program brings language groups together to develop language authorities and language programming and the Aboriginal Languages Initiative provides funding to language research, documentation, promotion and programming. FPCC also funds and delivers the Mentor-Apprentice Program; a three year model where mentor speakers are paired with individual language learners to learn a language one on one by doing every day activities together and participating in ongoing education on language learning and teaching.

The education system in B.C is also involved in Aboriginal language revitalization through the provision of Aboriginal language education in primary and secondary schools, targeted funding for Aboriginal students in the public school system, the education and certification of Aboriginal language teachers and post-secondary language revitalization programs.

Literature Review
The academic literature pertaining to indigenous language revitalization includes the history of language documentation and archiving in British Columbia beginning in the early 20th century through to the 1990's, first by early anthropologists, and later by communities who were struggling to record their dying languages, suppressed and endangered by colonization. The theoretical literature on language revitalization begins in this later period, with Fishman (1991) describing language revitalization as an important element of cultural regenesis in repressed cultures and as a key way that societies maintain cultural diversity. Fishman (1991) also introduced the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale, used to measure language loss over generations and the shifts in language as they decline or regain vitality. Important elements that Fishman uses to identify stages on the scale include the availability of language education, state support for a language and use of a language within and outside of a language community.

There are several educational models for language revitalization, proposing ways of teaching and learning indigenous languages with the goal of creating new speakers. Hinton (2003),Whaley and Grenoble (2006), and McIvor (2005) champion the language nest model, a language immersion model at use in B.C that introduces pre-school aged children to language learning. Whaley and Grenoble (2006) discuss community based models, including the master-apprentice model, as being more suited to adult learners. White (2006) argues that second language acquisition models are the least effective method of creating new speakers of indigenous languages through language learning because these models were created to teach people a foreign language that can be used and practiced elsewhere in the world where that language enjoys language dominance.

Methodology
The researcher used purposive sampling to identify 26 senior public servants, academics, and senior managers in community based organizations for interviews. Semi-structured, in-depth individual

interviews were conducted with 12 of these stakeholders. The qualitative design of this study allowed for the collection of a diversity of perspectives on what the government is doing, could be doing and should be doing, as well as different insights into what the barriers to language revitalization are across policy arenas including education, language recognition and funding.

Findings and Discussion

The interview findings are presented and discussed under six major themes;

1. Barriers to language revitalization;
2. Barriers to government support for language revitalization;
3. Barriers overcome;
4. Government support for language revitalization;
5. The importance of indigenous languages; and
6. Solutions.

Under barriers to language revitalization, several subthemes emerged including the complexity of language revitalization, learning and language education. Interview participants discussed the scope of work necessary to revitalize Aboriginal languages in B.C, and how structural barriers and a generation gap in language learners contributes to this complexity. In discussing learning Aboriginal languages, interview participants recognized the importance of language resources and the challenge of learning the languages that are indigenous to B.C. Under the sub-theme of language education, interview participants discussed the barriers to accessing Aboriginal language education, the structure of existing language education programs, challenges with curriculum development, teacher certification, and funding for language education.

Barriers to government support for language revitalization discussed in interviews included a perceived lack of awareness of language endangerment and a lack of leadership for language revitalization, although the majority of interview participants recognized the success of FPCC as one way government has worked to overcome barriers to language revitalization. Interview participants described FPCC as the number one thing government is doing well in terms of language vitality.

Every interview participant discussed the importance of indigenous language revitalization and the three main themes to emerge in this discussion were the reinforcing power language holds for Aboriginal culture and identity, the connection language facilitates to traditional lands and traditional knowledge and the power that language has to impact the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

The solutions proposed by interview participants to the barriers they recognized to language revitalization included continued support for language preservation and the need to raise awareness amongst non-Aboriginal British Columbians, especially public servants, of the value of Aboriginal languages, as well as their endangered status. Interview participants proposed recognizing B.C's Aboriginal languages with legal official language status, and argued for the need to continue focusing on immersion language learning models to create new speakers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the stakeholder interviews, and given the context of the literature review, three sets of recommendations have been provided; one set each for the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations, The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education. These would allow government to build upon existing efforts to preserve and revitalize Aboriginal languages in B.C. The recommendations are as follows:

Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

1. Increase financial support for First People's Cultural Council
2. Develop legislation to grant official language status to all Aboriginal languages indigenous to B.C.
3. Increase awareness and appreciation of B.C's Aboriginal peoples within the B.C Public Service.
4. Lead a renewed language roundtable.

Ministry of Education

1. Review the teacher certification policies and processes for Aboriginal language teachers.
2. Improve access to Aboriginal language education in the public schools system.

Ministry of Advanced Education

1. Recognize Aboriginal languages for university entrance.

Conclusion

The recommendations in this report provide actions the provincial government can take to raise the profile of endangered Aboriginal languages, improve access to language education, and improve the coordination of resources that communities and organizations access for language revitalization. The insightful solutions proposed by the stakeholders interviewed, alongside the research on language revitalization present an opportunity for the Ministry to take a leadership role within government to improve support for language revitalization.

1. Introduction

All over the world, including Canada, and British Columbia (B.C.), indigenous languages are quickly and steadily falling into extinction.   Over the last several hundred years, through the processes of colonization, language and cultural repression, and assimilation, most Aboriginal languages in Canada have fallen into disuse. The B.C. Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (MARR) has a mandate to support Aboriginal language preservation and revitalization and has identified a need for innovative policy options to move this work forward.

The client for this project is the Intergovernmental and Community Relations (ICR) Branch of the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (MARR). The ICR Branch develops, leads, and coordinates socio-economic strategies and initiatives across government to improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal people and communities (urban and on-reserve). The branch directs specific programs in the areas of Aboriginal economic development, language and culture, and youth leadership. While the ICR branch of MARR will be the primary client for this project, this project was initiated with the guidance of an inter-ministerial committee with representation from MARR, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Advanced Education, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry for Children and Family Development. Representatives from several of these Ministries were interviewed as part of this project, and the final product will be shared with them. Please see Appendix A for a list of individuals and branches represented on the committee.

Work to protect B.C.'s Aboriginal languages is well underway. Several Ministries fund and deliver language programs and services to preserve and revitalize B.C.'s Aboriginal languages. Provincially funded services for First Nations language preservation and revitalization in British Columbia are funded or provided through the Intergovernmental and Community Relations branch of the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Advanced Education, the Ministry for Children and Family Development, Universities and Colleges, health authorities, various non-profit organizations and individual First Nations communities.

The Intergovernmental and Community Relations branch of MARR provides much of its support for language preservation and revitalization programming and services through funding to the First Peoples Cultural Council (FPCC). FPCC is a crown corporation funded by government.

This project will examine how the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation in British Columbia can build on existing work to preserve and revitalize Aboriginal languages and provide recommendations for how to further support language vitality. The research questions for this project are:

- *By which means can Aboriginal languages be effectively preserved and revitalized?*
- *How can the government of British Columbia build upon existing efforts to preserve and revitalize Aboriginal languages in the Province?*

The project will focus on policy and legislative solutions to support Aboriginal language vitality and will draw on primary as well as secondary research to identify policy barriers and possible solutions.

The report is organized into seven Chapters; in addition to this Chapter, Chapter two provides background information for the paper, covering the historical and current context of Aboriginal language loss and

revitalization in B.C., the policy context for government involvement in language revitalization work in B.C., including the Provincial and Ministerial mandates for this work, as well as background information on the First People's Cultural Council. Chapter three reviews the relevant academic literature on the history and theory of language revitalization and covers theoretical, educational and legal-policy models. This Chapter also discusses academic research tying Aboriginal language revitalization to well-being. Chapter four describes the research methodology for the project. It describes the research design, how research participants were selected and recruited, and the individual interviews. Chapter five presents and discusses the findings from the interviews, organized into themes. Chapter six provides recommendations for action to the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education based on the interview findings and the literature review. Chapter seven concludes the report.

2. Background

Canada has been pursuing the assimilation of Aboriginal people into European language, religion and culture for over 150 years. In 1857, the Province of Canada passed *An Act to encourage the gradual Civilization of the Indian Tribes in this Province, and to amend the Laws respecting Indians*. This Act was the first officially assimilationist law in Canada. While the law stopped short of actually enfranchising First Nations individuals, it did remove the legal distinctions between Indians and Canadian citizens based, in part, on the adoption by First Nations men, of a language other than their own, specifically either of the official languages of their colonizers.

The Act made British subjects of any First Nations man, over the age of 21, who could read, write and speak reasonably well in either French or English, had a basic education (as considered legitimate by 19th century colonial law makers), was considered of good moral character and free from debt. While this Act appeared to provide an impetus for First Nations men to adopt non-Aboriginal languages by making them subjects of the Crown, it in fact failed to provide them with the right to vote, and stripped them of their legal rights as Indians, as negotiated in treaty. This first legal foray into assimilation was a pre-cursor to the official suppression of Aboriginal languages under the Indian Residential School system and later the Indian Act.

In 1920, the Indian Act was amended to require school aged Indian children to attend school, although there were Indian Residential Schools in operation in British Columbia as early as 1910, and policies to suppress Aboriginal languages were in place in Canadian Indian Residential Schools as early as 1896 (Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC], 2012, p. 17).

Over the long history of the Indian Residential School System, Aboriginal students were consistently punished for speaking their own language (TRC 2012 p. 24, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples [RCAP], 1996, Vol 1, Ch.10). Aboriginal language, culture, tradition and ceremony were forbidden in an attempt to civilize and Christianize Aboriginal students (TRC, 2012, p.10). The Indian Residential School system was explicit in its goal of assimilating students into colonial culture. The effect of these policies of language suppression in Indian Residential Schools has not been limited to the generations of students who attended these schools (the last of which in British Columbia closed in 1983), nor are the inter-generational effects of the residential school system limited to language loss. Instead, generations of Aboriginal families continue to suffer the effects of the cycles of abuse, neglect, self-loathing, fear, shame, social maladjustment, family breakdown, and identity loss that began in the Indian Residential School System (RCAP, 1996, Vol1, Ch.10).

The inter-generational effects of the residential school system are only one aspect of colonization that continues to affect Aboriginal individuals, families and communities in B.C. Forced relocation, the spread of diseases like small pox, and tuberculosis, the Indian Hospital system, and continuous and persistent economic marginalization have all contributed to the fact that today, Aboriginal British Columbians fare worse that non-Aboriginal British Columbians in almost every social or community determinant of health (B.C. Provincial Health Officer [PHO], 2007). Aboriginal people in B.C are under employed, have lower income, are less likely to graduate high school and more likely to be incarcerated, have higher rates of HIV and hepatitis C, and Diabetes than non-Aboriginal British Columbians (B.C. PHO, 2007).

2.1 Current State of Languages

The 2011 Census of Population reports over 60 Aboriginal languages grouped into 12 distinct language families in Canada. Despite the diversity of Aboriginal languages in Canada, there are relatively few speakers of these languages. In 2011, approximately 213,500 people reported an Aboriginal mother tongue and approximately 213,400 people reported speaking an Aboriginal language most often or regularly at home. In context of the greater Aboriginal population, the 2006 Canadian census was the first to record over one million Aboriginal people in Canada.

According to Statistics Canada, of the small percentage of the Aboriginal population who speak an Aboriginal language, most speak one of three major languages; Cree, Inuktitut and Ojibway account for most of the population who claim an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue (Aboriginal Languages in Canada, 2011). Neither Cree, nor Inuktitut, nor Ojibway are languages indigenous to British Columbia. Rather, Aboriginal languages in B.C. are many and dying. British Columbia is home to a majority of the Aboriginal languages in Canada but a minority of speakers of these languages. The Province is home to 32 Aboriginal languages and approximately 59 dialects, representing 60% of Canada's Aboriginal languages (FPCC, 2010). However, most of the languages indigenous to B.C. have very few speakers remaining, and the Province has one of the lowest numbers of Aboriginal language speakers in Canada. As of 2014, only approximately 4% of B.C. First Nations, representing approximately 5,289 people, were fluent speakers of their language, the vast majority of these being elders (FPCC, 2014). This represents a decrease of approximately 1% from 2010 (FPCC, 2010). Approximately 9.3% of the population are considered semi-speakers, an increase from the 8.2% of the population considered semi-speakers in 2010, as younger generations learn to speak their languages in schools and community settings. Despite this increase in semi-speakers, only approximately 9% of the B.C First Nations were language learners in 2014, down from approximately 11% in 2010 (FPCC, 2010; 2014).

Language preservation and revitalization is especially challenging for small communities of speakers. Most speakers in Canada who report an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue speak that language as their main language at home , but not all (Census of Canada, 2006). The likelihood that people speak their mother tongue at home is higher if they live in an area where there is a greater proportion of people who share their mother tongue. Community begets language preservation; people will speak a language only when they have others to converse with. British Columbia is home to over 30 Aboriginal mother tongues, but most are reported by less than 1000 people (FPCC, 2010). To further illustrate the size of language communities in British Columbia; in Canada, nine Aboriginal language families accounted for 6% of the population who report an Aboriginal mother tongue. Five of these language families are found primarily in British Columbia (Census of Canada, 2011).

2.2 Provincial Mandate - The New Relationship

In 2005, following the Supreme Court of Canada decisions clarifying Aboriginal rights and title in British Columbia and Canada in Delgamuukw v. British Columbia [1997] 3 S.C.R 771, and R. v. Sparrow (1990, Supreme Court of Canada), the Province of British Columbia entered in the New Relationship agreement with the B.C. First Nations Leadership Council. The New Relationship agreement is the Province of British Columbia's guiding program for reconciliation with First Nations. It envisions an end to what had long been a relationship based on distrust and confrontation to one based on respect and recognition, as well as accommodation of Aboriginal title and rights as they now stand in the law. The New Relationship

agreement seeks the reconciliation of Aboriginal and Crown titles and jurisdictions, but it does so through relationship building, rather than through the courts.

The New Relationship agreement lists four goals related to reconciliation. These goals aim to strengthen First Nations communities by closing the gaps in the social determinants of health between First Nations and other British Columbians, to achieve self-determination for B.C. First Nations, and to ensure lands and resources are managed in collaboration and partnership with First Nations. Goal four explicitly recognizes language preservation and revitalization as essential to the health of First Nations communities and culture, and aims to restore both literacy and fluency in First Nations languages and to avoid the extinction of any First Nations language. This goal, focused specifically on language alone acknowledges that language vitality is a bellwether for the vitality of First Nations more broadly.

2.3 First People's Cultural Council

The First People's Heritage Language and Culture Act (1990) establishes the FPCC as a crown corporation and an agent of the government. The Act also establishes the First People's Advisory Committee and the Board of Directors to support and guide the work of FPCC. The First Peoples' Council's mandate in reference to language is three fold. First, it has a mandate to preserve, restore and revitalize First Nations languages, second to increase awareness and acceptance of First Nations culture, including language, amongst all British Columbians, and third to advise government on the preservation and fostering of First Nations languages. The FPCC`s mandate to preserve, restore and revitalize First Nations languages includes working in partnership with First Nations communities to archive and revitalize their languages to restore literacy and fluency in First Nations languages and to provide funding B.C. First Nations for language programs.

Over several years, MARR and the FPCC developed a set of amendments to The First People's Heritage Language and Culture Act. These amendments modernize and create a more representative governance structure for FPCC, and better reflect the mandate of the FPCC. The amendments were brought into force on April 1, 2011. The FPCC Advisory Committee can now include representatives for each of the 34 First Nations languages groups in British Columbia.

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation funding contributes to The First People's Cultural Council's core operations and specific programs, including: First Nations Language and Culture Immersion Camps; Master-Apprentice Language Programs; Pre-school Language Nests; Language Authorities; and the BC Language Initiative. In 2010, FPCC published a Report on the Status of First Nations Languages, the first comprehensive measure of the condition of First Nations languages in British Columbia. In 2014, FPCC published an updated report. FPCC has also developed innovative language technology including indigenous language applications for mobile technologies and applications for teaching and archiving purposes.

The First People's Cultural Council's 2013/14-2015/16 Service Plan identifies several key strategic challenges to language preservation and revitalization in B.C. While these challenges are identified as specific to the organization, they are also applicable to the broader policy environment. Preserving and revitalizing Aboriginal languages in B.C. is complicated by not only the number and diversity of languages that exist in the Province, but also by the rate at which many languages are falling into disuse . While the window of opportunity to address this language crisis is short, resources are limited and the

current response lacks co-ordination. Furthermore, many Aboriginal communities are facing other socio-economic challenges that hinder their access to technology and their capacity to invest time and money into language preservation and revitalization (FPCC, 2014).

On November 30th, 2011, the FPCC and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) organized a stakeholder meeting to discuss the state of Aboriginal language revitalization in B.C. From this meeting, the Indigenous Language Partner's Group was formed (a list of group member organizations is found in Appendix B). This group, made up of several provincial government ministries who fund and deliver language services and programs, universities and colleges, FNESC, FPCC, as well as several federal government departments, sought to develop a more coordinated and strategic approach to language preservation and revitalization work in B.C. The group was born out of a perceived need to combine efforts in a policy area where few resources are available.

From the November 30th, 2011 meeting, a basic inventory of language vitality work underway in B.C. was created, however over the course of the next year, the progress of the Indigenous Language Partners Group stalled. A second meeting was scheduled for March 2013, but was cancelled due to lack of participation. In preparation for this meeting a Terms of Reference was drafted for the group as well as a Memorandum of Understanding that the group would sign to commit to working collaboratively on indigenous language vitality in the province.

2.4 British Columbia – Current Policy and Programs

First People's Cultural Council receives funding for language revitalization from the Province of B.C. through the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and from the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage. FPCC has funded a Master-Apprentice model language revitalization program in B.C. called the Mentor-Apprentice Program since 2008. The program is a three year model where Mentor speakers are paired with individual language learners with the goal of 300 hours of language learning every year for a total of 900 hours. Twelve mentor-apprentice pairs began the program in 2008 and ten new pairs began the program in 2010 (FPCC, 2013) The First People's Heritage Language and Culture Program, administered by FPCC, also distributes funding for language revitalization in the following language revitalization programs:

- Language Nests; a program to support pre-school immersion language learning
- Language Revitalization Planning; a program to bring language groups together to develop language authorities to support language programming; and
- The Aboriginal Languages Initiative; a federal program that provides funding to initiatives that include research, documentation, language promotion and programming.

In 2013/14, the FPCC distributed approximately $1.5 million dollars to communities in B.C. for language revitalization efforts. This represents a decrease of approximately $275,000 from the 2011/2012 fiscal year, following a 26% decrease in annual funding to the organization from the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation for the 2012/2013 fiscal year.

British Columbia's education system is also involved in language revitalization through language education in schools, colleges and universities. The Ministries of Education and Advanced Education are responsible for policies that govern language instruction and curriculum in the Provincial system. In 2006, British Columbia signed a suite of agreements on First Nations education jurisdiction with the

Government of Canada and the First Nations Education Steering Committee, an independent society in B.C. with representation from over 100 First Nations communities that advocates on behalf of B.C. First Nations on issues of education. In 2006, the federal government passed enabling legislation based on these agreements, and in 2007, B.C. passed the B.C. First Nations Education Act recognizing and enabling these agreements. Considerable change to First Nations education on-reserve has taken place based on these agreements and legislative changes, including Reciprocal Tuition Agreements with the Province of B.C., and the creation of new Provincial school curriculum for courses on B.C.'s First Peoples in the secondary schools system.

Most school age Aboriginal language learners in B.C. enrolled in the public school system are learning an Aboriginal language through a second language acquisition model. Official policy of the B.C. Ministry of Education is that every student in grades 5 to 8 must be enrolled in a second language. If schools wish to teach an Aboriginal language as a second language course to satisfy this requirement they must use the B.C. Ministry of Education Integrated Resource Package to develop a second language curriculum via the prescribed template to satisfy provincial approval.

2.5 Legal Policy Models – Recognition and Official Status Acts

Legislation is the means by which governments create a legal framework to guide the implementation of policy. While Canada recognizes only English and French in law, a few Canadian provinces and territories, including British Columbia, have passed laws concerning First Nations and Aboriginal language revitalization. In 2010, the Government of Manitoba passed the Aboriginal Languages Recognition Act (hereafter referred to as the Act), which formally recognizes the use of the Cree, Dakota, Dene, Inuktitut, Michif, Ojibway and Oji-Cree languages as the Aboriginal languages spoken and used in that Province. While the Act falls short of proclaiming these languages official languages, it recognizes their value and specifies their importance to the survival of the identity and culture of Aboriginal people. The Act also recognizes that language revitalization contributes to cultural continuity, increased self-esteem and community wellbeing and acknowledges the role of government in Aboriginal language preservation. (Chapter A1.5, para. 7).

Despite the proclamation of the Act in 2010, the Province of Manitoba has taken no further action based on the Act (personal correspondence, January 2013). No policy has been developed to guide action based on the declarations in the Act and the government of Manitoba has not committed any additional funding to language revitalization based on the passage of this legislation. As no implementation or enforcement followed from the passage of the Act, no evaluation of its impacts has been undertaken.

Alternatively, in the United States, the impacts and the evolution of the Native American Languages Act, passed in 1990, is well documented and shows this Act, while initially passed without any attached funding for language revitalization, became an important basis for further legislative action on language revitalization, including the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act, passed in 2006, which sets up a funding structure for language revitalization activities in the U.S. (Warhol, 2010).

Measureable impact is difficult to attribute to The Native American Languages Act, it has been controversial and may well have been considered a failure at some points over the last twenty years. Warhol (2010) identifies that NALA has been criticized for lacking an enforcement policy (p. 289), and limited associated appropriations to language revitalization programs and activities (p. 291). However,

over time, the power of NALA has proven to lie largely in its ability to lend credibility, and legitimacy to the language revitalization movement, keeping the issue of language of revitalization alive on the government policy agenda, influencing policy making at the state level, and setting the stage for further legislative action (Warhol, 2010). Warhol's (2010) findings around the supportive power NALA lend credence to Delaine's (2010, p. 71) assertion that interventions like the granting of official language status to Aboriginal languages can lend a prestige to languages that can increase their presence in institutions of influence like governments and academic institutions, and facilitate their insertion on the policy agenda.

3.0 Literature Review

This review of literature pertaining to indigenous language revitalization examines both academic and government sources, and is divided into six sections The review begins with a brief history of linguistic work on Aboriginal languages leading up to the beginning of the modern indigenous language revitalization movement, through to the present. This section provides basic context for how Aboriginal languages in B.C. and Canada came to be endangered and how the movement towards language preservation and revitalization has emerged. Next, contemporary theory around indigenous language revitalization is discussed. This section considers arguments for why language is important and in turn why language revitalization is important. In the following section, a theoretical model for language revitalization is discussed, followed by educational and policy models. The final section discusses the relationship between language revitalization and well-being.

3.1 History

Research and linguistic work around First Nations languages began with and then returned to documentation, first when these languages were thriving, and later as their jeopardy became apparent. In the early 20th century First Nations languages were documented and analysed by anthropologists (White, 2006). This work, both ethnographic and linguistic, included developing grammars and translated dictionaries for B.C First Nations languages, including the Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian and Kwakiutl languages (Boas, 1911). The impetus for these early efforts was one of scientific discovery; early anthropologists sought to learn about the origins of First Nations peoples by studying their languages (Hinton, 2010). By analysing and categorizing First Nations languages into language families, early anthropologists and linguists also sought to understand the diversity and dispersal of First Nations languages and people (White, 2006).

By the 1990's, less than one hundred years after Boas' research, linguists in Canada and America were again documenting indigenous languages into grammars and dictionaries, but this time with the intention of preserving languages under threat of disappearance. The 1970's and 80's were a period of language maintenance; the number of speakers of First Nations languages in North America was declining but the danger of extinction was not yet fully understood (Hinton, 2003). Leading up to this period, a confluence of factors, including the systematic repression and criminalization of First Nations languages and cultural activities, population decline, and the assimilation of First Nations people into colonial society through education and trade, had reduced the number of speakers of First Nations language to dangerously low levels. The modern language revitalization movement then only really began to gain momentum in the 1990's, when the crisis of First Nations language loss brought linguists back to language documentation, as a means of preservation, rather than discovery (White, 2006). Documentation itself can be controversial. Hinton notes that communities who are at risk of losing their language can often be critical of linguists interested primarily in language preservation out of scientific interest, yet resources like grammars and dictionaries can be useful to community language revitalization efforts (Hinton, 2003, p.46).

3.2 Theory

The academic literature on language vitality is rooted in the philosophical framework in support of cultural diversity and the argument that culture is essential to human peace and prosperity and that the expression of cultural identity is human right. This framework, as articulated by United Nations

Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2003, in a universal declaration on cultural diversity to which Canada is a signatory, finds that language is a fundamental and necessary component of culture, which shapes how people understand the world and provides a means of expression and creativity. It is this understanding, that language is the vehicle through which culture is expressed, that forms the basis for the argument in favour of language preservation and revitalization.

Fishman (1991) expresses this same sentiment in his work on reversing language loss, which marks a move from language maintenance to language revitalization, both in the academy and in the community. He argues in favour of language revitalization as a means to protect cultural diversity, the cultural continuity of ethno-cultural minorities, as well as different and valuable ways of seeing and knowing the world (Fishman, 1991, p. 20). Fishman further argues that each language has a unique way of articulating the worldview of the culture to which it is linked (1991, p. 20). He uses the familiar example of the indigenous peoples of Alaska having several words to describe different types of snow to show that languages are also most lexically appropriate for their associated cultures. This is not to say that culture or language is static, in fact both are constantly changing, rather, that a language develops as an intrinsic and self-affirming component of culture, one that Fishman argues also acts as a symbol for its associated culture, a powerful identity marker that defines how members of that culture think, speak, and act in the world (1991, p. 20). Fishman coined the term "language loyalty" to describe the willingness of individuals and communities to maintain their heritage language even when this language no longer serves any practice (Fishman, 1966).

In 1991, Fishman described the decline of languages as language shift and proposes that communities pursue the reversal of language shift as a means of cultural preservation, reconstruction and self-regulation (p.17). For Fishman, language revitalization, or reversing language shift, is one of the ways that ethno-cultural minority communities assert or reassert themselves and attempt to increase their social, political and economic power (1991). Fishman also identifies successful language revitalization as dependant on this broader process, arguing that the most successful language revitalization projects to date, including French in Quebec and Catalan in Spain have been only one part of a much larger project of cultural regenesis (2001, p. 18).

Tsunoda (2005) summarizes the arguments made in the academic literature in favour of language revitalization. Tsunoda explains that language revitalization acts as a form of cultural revitalization and cultural re-legitimization for many ethno-cultural minorities whose languages and cultures were historically repressed (2005, p. 272). This cultural legitimization happens not only within the language community, but externally as well, improving indigenous and non-indigenous relations (Tsunoda, 2005). Tsunoda finds the potential of language revitalization to be found in the sense of pride and identity it provides that can empower communities who are often economically, culturally and socially marginalized (2005).

3.3 Theoretical Models
Most models of language revitalization are models for language learning. The Master-Apprentice Model and the Language Nest Immersion Model are discussed below. The only theoretical model of language loss and stages of revitalization found in the relevant academic literature is put forth by Fishman (1991) who developed a scale of language loss, based on which associated actions are suggested in order to reverse language loss and begin to reconstruct or revitalize a language, dependent on the degree of

destruction.   The Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) measures language loss over generations and the concentration of remaining or existing speakers.

The GIDS scale moves through eight stages. At the highest stage of language loss, the disruption in the transfer of the language from one generation to the next is most acute. Most remaining language speakers are older people who are isolated from the younger generations of the community who may no longer live in concentration. At stage seven, most of the remaining speakers are still socially integrated and live amongst a population of active speakers, but they are beyond child bearing age. At stage six, there are multi-generational speakers who live in a community and there is some institutional reinforcement of the language (for example, children may be able to learn their language at school). At Stage five, the language is taught at home, at school and in the community, but there is little support or reinforcement for the language outside the language community. For example, a Cree speaking community in Saskatchewan may continue to teach their children Cree at home, younger generations may be learning Cree at school and older generations may have the opportunity to learn Cree in the community, but outside of the community, community members do not have the opportunity to speak Cree in the workplace or access services such as health care in Cree. At Stage four, students can attend school in their language in lower education to such a degree that meets compulsory education laws either in private or alternative schools, or alternatively in the public education system. At stage three, language speakers can use their language in the work sphere, and possibly interact with people in their language, even though the language in question is not the first language of the other speakers. At stage two, the language is present in some mass media and lower levels of government, for example, front line service provision, and there may be mass media radio or television content available in the language. At stage one, the language may be used in higher education, in mass media and in workplaces, but without the political independence of the non-dominant language community from the dominant language community (Fishman, 1991).

Hinton (2003) uses Hawaii as an example of an indigenous language community that has successfully climbed the GIDS scale, from endangerment to Stage 4, where Hawaiian is now taught in both private and public schools from preschool through high school (p. 51). Similar to Aboriginal languages in British Columbia, the Hawaiian language was repressed by a colonizing power and disallowed in the education system. According to Hinton, by 1990, the Hawaiian language was severely endangered and a concentrated effort to train teachers at a post-secondary level facilitated the creation of pre-school language nests, a model borrowed from Maori language revitalization in New Zealand (2003, p. 51). A sufficient number of families with young Hawaiian speakers created a demand for further Hawaiian language education in schools and Hawaiian students can now learn their language through high school. While the Hawaiian language became endangered under similar circumstances to British Columbia's Aboriginal languages, it enjoys several advantages that made language revitalization more manageable; Hawaiian is the only indigenous language of the community, Hawaiian had a strong literary tradition, and the Hawaiian language was not repressed as forcefully by the state as Aboriginal languages in British Columbia were (Hinton, 2003).

Despite the GIDS scale being the only established scale for language loss at use in the language revitalization movement, Hinton questions the GIDS scale for application to small indigenous languages as languages with very few speakers or even possible speakers are unlikely to ever reach even Stage 3 (2003, p. 51). In B.C. where there are dozens of small languages used by small communities, it would likely be fruitless to use the GIDS scale to measure the success of language revitalization for languages

that are unlikely to ever move more than one or two stages (Hinton, 2003, p. 53). Furthermore, Hinton points out that the GIDS scale is focused on literacy, whereas many languages indigenous to North America do not have a literary tradition and in fact have an oral tradition of knowledge transmission that is not reflected in the GIDS scale (Hinton, 2003, p. 52).

Both official and unofficial supports for language revitalization are key to the success of any revitalization effort, as the support from the state and the community play different but important roles (Fishman, 1990, Hinton, 2001). Delaine (2010) argues in favour of granting official language status to indigenous languages in Manitoba as a way to increase the prestige of indigenous languages and increase their use in institutions of influence like governments and schools (p. 77). He argues that official support for language revitalization will result in informal support in the community (Delaine, 2010, p.77). Fishman's GIDS model supports this perspective, as languages in the lowest stages of language disruption enjoy state support and the provision of public services in the language in question, and indigenous and non-indigenous speakers of the language work and interact in the language in the broader community.

3.4 Educational Models

There are several educational models for language revitalization, proposing ways of teaching and learning indigenous languages with the goal of creating new speakers. The most effective model is the immersion model, but other models, including the indigenous language as second language or foreign language model, community models, and the master-apprentice model have also proved to be effective and may be more suited to adult learners (Grenoble and Whaley, 2006).

Immersion models can include programs of partial or full immersion language learning, including language nest programs. Language nest programs originated in New Zealand in the 1970's in the Maori language revitalization movement and have since been applied in other jurisdictions, including with success in Hawaii (Hinton, 2003), and more recently in British Columbia (McIvor, 2005). Language nest programs bring fluent speakers; often elders, into preschools to work with very young children, teaching them to speak and play in their indigenous language. Whaley and Grenoble attribute the success of language nest programs in part to the fact that they create demand for indigenous language education at higher levels as children age and move past the language nest stage (2006, p. 55). In both New Zealand and Hawaii, the language nest model has been the basis on which progressive systems of indigenous language education have been built in the school system, creating generations of language learners (Whaley and Grenoble, 2006, Hinton, 2003). In 2005, McIvor studied two British Columbia communities with language nest programs and found that in both communities the programs acted as catalysts for other language revitalization initiatives in the community including language programs at higher levels in the education system, as well as community based programs for parents and other adults (p. 85).

While all language revitalization programs are essentially second language programs, the second language acquisition model is based primarily on research on immigrants learning the dominant language of a new community, or the learning of foreign languages for use in a place or culture where that language is dominant. White (2006, p. 94) argues that second language acquisition models are less effective than other models for indigenous language revitalization because the motivations, needs and goals of indigenous language learners are quite different from someone learning a second foreign language that enjoys language dominance somewhere in the world. Rather than learning a new language with the goals of acculturation into a foreign culture, learners of endangered indigenous languages are instead attempting

to learn a minority language, with strong ties to personal, familial and community identity, with the goals of reclaiming and saving a language and associated culture that might otherwise be lost (White, 2006). Second language acquisition models are based on the goal of acculturation, however non-dominant languages may not have a culture to acculturate to, making language learning in this way difficult to apply.

Community based models, as described by Whaley and Grenoble (2006), provide an alternative to the second language acquisition model in that they focus on domains of language use, rather than language instruction, teaching the language in application. Community based models use activities to teach language informally through participation. These programs often incorporate other aspects of culture and include programs like cultural immersion camps where participants learn language through traditional communal activities like hunting, food preparation, song, and dance.

The Master-Apprentice model, also a community based model, was developed in California in 1992 in response to conditions of indigenous language endangerment that closely mirror those in British Columbia (Whaley and Grenoble, 2006). Similar to B.C, California is home to several indigenous languages, most with very few speakers (most of whom are elderly), and very little language vitality. The model pairs remaining speakers who are fluent with individual language learners and relies on the commitment of both the master speaker and the student to the language transmission endeavour. The language learner participates in everyday activities with the master speaker, learning the language orally and through nonverbal communication, trying to use only the indigenous language in their time together. This model tries to replicate the immersion setting that one would experience at home, with the student learning the language naturally in the same ways the master speaker first learned.

3.5 Language and Well-being

Research conducted in B.C works from the premise that culture is intrinsic to individual identity, attempting to establish a link between Aboriginal language vitality and community and individual well-being, specifically suicide rates. Chandler and Lalonde (2003; 2008) describe the concept of cultural continuity as the passing of culture from one generation to the next. They argue that interruptions in cultural continuity, like the processes of colonization or the suppression of language in residential schools, have deleterious effects (1998, p. 7). Without culture, including language, they argue that an individual's sense of identity is threatened and the social cohesion of their community is undermined (1998, p.7). In their initial five year study Chandler and Lalonde (1996) found that First Nations communities that positively identified with their measures of cultural continuity had consistently lower suicide rates than those who did not (p.18). However, McIvor, Napolean and Dickie (2009), point out that, aside from language, Chandler and Lalonde's initial measures of cultural continuity may be more accurately described as measures of self-determination as they include self-government, engagement in land claims, existence of education services, tribal-controlled police fire services and existence of cultural facilities (p. 12). Hallett, Chandler and Lalonde (2007) added an indigenous language knowledge factor to the original analysis and found it to be a strong independent correlate to suicide rates (p. 396). McIvor (2009), finds that while the research by Hallett, Chandler and Lalonde is a solitary example of the connection between language vitality and the general vitality of Aboriginal communities, the evidence they present is strong (pg. 12).

Besides acting as protective factor against suicide, Loppie-Reading and Wien (2009), identify cultural continuity as an intermediate level social determinant of health for Aboriginal peoples in Canada (p.18). Proximal determinants of health, like health behaviours and food security, are those that have a direct impact on physical health and for which inequity between groups is easy to measure. Intermediate determinants like cultural continuity are those factors which can be thought of as the origins of health inequities (Loppie-Reading and Wien, 2009, pg. 15). Other intermediate determinants include health and education systems and community infrastructure. Distal determinants of heath are identified as the social, political and economic context in which Aboriginal peoples live which have a negative impact on all other determinants of health and include colonialism, racism and social exclusion. Considered within this structure of health determinants, improving the vitality of traditional languages can have a positive impact on both proximal and distal determinants of health. Language vitality can positively affect proximal determinants like health behaviours, for example, by acting as a vehicle for knowledge of traditional diets and food preparation. Improving language vitality can also affect distal determinants of health by reducing social isolation and improving social cohesion which can improve a community's capacity for self-determination.

Language vitality and language revitalization is a prominent issue in the academic literature on reconciliation, especially in Canada, where the system of residential schools in place across the country for decades is considered responsible for a great deal of language loss amongst Aboriginal peoples (TRC 2012, RCAP, 2006, White, 2006). Kirmayer, Simpson and Cargo (2003) suggest that language revitalization, along with the recovery of tradition more generally, can be understood as acts of healing for many contemporary Aboriginal communities seeking to reassert cultural traditions that may have been forcefully repressed through colonization or lost through assimilation (p. S16).

3.6 Summary

British Columbia represents a unique context for the consideration of Aboriginal language revitalization. Because there are so many small and diverse Aboriginal language communities in the Province, it can be difficult to draw comparisons or extrapolate from the language revitalization experiences of other language communities where a common language is indigenous to a larger population. The greatest examples of successful revitalization of indigenous languages lost under comparable circumstances of colonization; Maori in New Zealand and Hawaiian in Hawaii, still have the benefit of having but one language to revitalize, one language for which to gain acknowledgement from the wider community. While many indigenous languages are in danger in other places in the world, the small size of language communities in B.C increases the vulnerability of these languages to extinction. In the 2013 census of New Zealand, one in five Maori spoke their language. While the number and proportion of Maori who could speak their language declined between 2013 and the previous census, this 21% of the Maori population who speak Maori represents over 125,000 people (Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

This is not to say that the literature on language revitalization, based on the experiences of communities in other places in the world, does not illuminate the project of language revitalization in B.C, rather, it is simply to note that British Columbia is unique. Both the theory and practice of language revitalization established in the literature can be used to understand language revitalization in B.C. The theory of language revitalization provided by Fishman provides a model for measuring the vitality of languages, and educational models for language vitality established in New Zealand and Hawaii provide the tools to

nurse that vitality. Neither side of the literature is rooted in the study of North American indigenous languages or language communities, but both are applicable in meaningful ways.

For Fishman, the health of a language is found not only in the number of speakers but in the accessibility and prevalence of the language in the home community, as well as in the wider community. Community based language learning models are already in place in British Columbia, and the provincial government supports some of these models, such as the Master-Apprentice program though the First People's Cultural Council. The literature on language revitalization, from both the theoretical perspective and the practice based perspectives of Hinton and Whaley and Grenoble acknowledges the need for both unofficial and official support for language revitalization efforts.

4.0 Methodology

The research design of this project is qualitative and the primary data collection method used was a series of semi-structured in-depth individual interviews conducted with a diverse set of stakeholders in indigenous language revitalization in B.C including public servants, academics, and senior managers in community based organizations. Qualitative methods are appropriate for this project because the information the researcher desired to collect was not information that could be counted or tested using quantitative methods, rather the researcher sought to collect impressions, ideas, descriptions and observations from the research participants. The researcher interviewed individuals with an experienced and detailed understanding of how language revitalization is both thriving and faltering in British Columbia, and what role the government of B.C plays. The objective of the interviews was to identify perceived barriers to language revitalization in B.C, perceived barriers to government support for language revitalization, to glean ideas for solutions to barriers, and to identify areas in which the government is currently contributing positively to language revitalization.

4.1 Instrument

The semi-structured in-depth individual interviews are based on an interview guide of previously determined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging in conversation between the research and the interviewee (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). The semi-structured individual in-depth interviews allow the research participant sufficient time and space to provide detailed responses to the researchers' questions, as well as flexibility in the interview format so that the researcher can ask new questions if they arise from the dialogue between researcher and participant, or if new questions arise from data collection over the course of the research process (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 316)

This interview format was chosen because the topic is politically and personally sensitive for some people and the individual interview gives the research participant the opportunity to speak openly with the researcher, with the opportunity to strike any responses from the official record of collection. The semi-structured interview format was chosen because it allows respondents to express themselves using their own words and conduct the interview on their own terms, while still producing comparable data, given the use of a pre-determined interview guide (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). (Appendix C provides the Interview Guide).

4.2 Sample

The researcher used purposive sampling to identify 26 senior public servants, academics, and senior managers in community based organizations for interviews. Purposive sampling is used to target data collection from individuals who are particularly knowledgeable about a topic, can provide a representative perspective, and are willing to participate, while snowball sampling provides access to inter-connected individuals who may be harder to reach (Grinnell Jr. & Unrau, 2010, p. 237). Speaking with academics, as well as leaders from government and community based organizations is expected to provide a diversity of perspectives on what the government is doing, could be doing and should be doing, as well as different insights into what the barriers to language revitalization exist across policy arenas including education, language recognition and funding.

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4.3 Recruitment

An introductory email and request for participation was sent by the researcher to eighteen of the twenty six potential research participants, introducing the researcher and the project, and asking them to participate. The email included a summary of the project, a short biography of the researcher, a short description of the client and their interest in the project and an informed consent form. The project client sent an email to the other eight potential research participants in her professional network with the same introductory information, encouraging them to contact the researcher to participate. The researcher sent follow up emails to the original 26 invitees, and followed up by telephone with five of the invitees. Of those invited, twelve people agreed to participate: four representatives from post-secondary institutions, three representatives from the First People's Cultural Council, and five representatives of BC government ministries, including two representatives of the Ministry for Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, one representative from the Ministry of Education, and one representative from the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

4.4 Interviews

Nine of the interviews were conducted in person, and the remaining three interviews were conducted by phone, two because the interviewees were located in different cities from the researcher and one for the convenience of the interviewee. Prior to beginning the interviews, the respondents read and signed the informed consent form and the researcher confirmed the voluntary and confidential nature of the research. The researcher asked the interview questions and follow-up questions as needed throughout the interview. Each interview was recorded with the consent of the research participant and notes were also taken by hand during the interviews. Interviews ranged from 35 minutes to 75 minutes, with the average length of the interviews being approximately 60 minutes.

4.5 Analysis

The results of the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. The interview data was reviewed by the researcher who identified common themes across the interviews and then created an index of themes to apply to all interview responses. The themes were not determined in advance of the analysis; rather they arose through the analysis process. The major themes are summarized in the discussion section.

4.6 Limitations

As with any research design that relies on a small sample size of research participants who are not selected randomly, the findings of this research could not be considered generalizable to other jurisdictions. This limitation is considered acceptable as the objective of the research is to gather information and make recommendations for British Columbia alone and not to produce generalizable findings. Furthermore, the policy context for language revitalization in British Columbia is unique as B.C is home to more Aboriginal language families than any other province, a fact which would not be overcome by a different research design.

Selection bias is also a possible limitation of research designs that employ a small sample size and purposive sampling. However, the research participants in this study were chosen based on a necessary

familiarity and experience with the subject matter. The researcher relied on her professional network and the professional network of the client to identify appropriate potential research participants.

5.0 Findings and Discussion

This Chapter reports on the ideas and perspectives shared by interview participants during the interviews and discusses the interview findings in relation to the literature as appropriate. The Chapter is organized into six sections based on the structure of the interview questions, as well as the themes that emerged from the interviews. The interview findings are divided into the following sections and include discussion of the findings where there is a connection to the literature and/or relative reports.

Each of these main sections are titled as follows:
5.1 Barriers to language revitalization
5.2 Barriers to government support for language revitalization
5.3 Barriers overcome
5.4 Government support for language revitalization
5.5 The importance of indigenous language revitalization
5.6 Solutions

5.1 Barriers to Language Revitalization
5.1.1 A Complex Problem
The following three subsections discuss barriers identified during interviews that contribute to the complexity of language endangerment and revitalization. Five interview participants saw the scope of the task of language revitalization as a barrier in itself. The structural barriers created by colonization, continuing colonial policy, the Indian Residential School system, and the resultant generation gaps in language knowledge are identified. The discussion section draws on the FPCC Report on the Status of BC First Nations Languages (2010) to affirm the existence of the generation gap described by interview participants and references the discussion of structural barriers by both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

Scope of Work
Five interview participants identified the breadth, depth and scope of work needed to revitalize endangered languages as a barrier to revitalization. These participants said that there is a poor understanding of the work that needs to be done to save a language both in the community and in government, and that this work tends to be underestimated, which can lead to frustration and discouragement when significant funding and years of effort yield few, if any, new speakers. Three participants identified the diversity of Aboriginal languages in B.C as part of this issue, and three other participants identified limited opportunities to attain fluency as another. One interview participant identified these two issues as being connected, as the number of different Aboriginal languages in B.C means that many language communities are very small, and have lost most of their fluent speakers, making immersion education very difficult to provide on any level. Two interview participants identified the geography of British Columbia as a contributing factor to the scope of language revitalization efforts in B.C, citing the remote location, and small size of many rural First Nations as a barrier to language education, accessing funding, and networking with other communities engaged in revitalization efforts.

Structural barriers

Eight interview participants identified the history of colonization in British Columbia, and specifically the Indian Residential School system as creating barriers to language revitalization. Interview participants discussed the language policies of residential schools that forbid students from speaking their language and punished them for doing so. Two interview participants discussed the need to overcome shame on an individual and community level in order to successfully revitalize languages, explaining that because students were taught that their languages were evil or sinful, some residential school survivors continue to feel shame connected to speaking their language, while others may feel ashamed for failing to retain their language knowledge or failing to transmit their language to their children. One interview participant discussed the shame felt by some families who had lost their language, while other families in their language community had managed to retain it.

Generation gap

Six participants identified a generation gap in language knowledge in the community as a specific barrier to language revitalization. This disruption in language transmission within families and communities is attributed primarily to the Indian Residential School system. These participants discussed the shame and fear inculcated in residential school survivors around use of their languages which often led survivors to stop speaking their language permanently. Many survivors did not teach their language to their children. The decision of some speakers to not teach their language to their children was also attributed to a desire to see their children succeed in an English speaking society. The six participants further discussed this generation gap in language transmission as a barrier to language revitalization because it affects language learning for school aged children who may have access to language learning in the school or community. Interview participants explained that parents of many school aged children do not speak their indigenous language; rather most speakers of their language are of their grandparent's generation. This can mean school aged language learners have little assistance in their learning at home, or very little opportunity to use and practice their language in the home.

Discussion

The generation gap in language knowledge identified by interview participants is consistent with the Report on Status of B.C First Nations Languages 2014 (FPCC, 2015), which reports that approximately 59% of fluent speakers in B.C are over the age of 64, with another approximately 34% between the ages of 45 and 65. Only 5% of fluent speakers are between the ages of 25 and 44 and 1% are 24 and under. Nearly all language learners are in the age 0 to 24 category; approximately 78%, while 10% are in the 25 to 44 age category, which is where most parents of school aged children learning language fall. Despite making up a very small percentage of language learners, those people in the age 25 to 44 category do account for approximately 23% of semi-speakers, however this leaves 63% of the people in this category who are neither fluent, semi-speakers, nor learners, meaning most children learning their language will receive little assistance from their parents.

Both 2010 and 2014 Reports on the Status of B.C First Nations Languages describe the experiences of students in the Indian Residential School system and the history of colonization as responsible for structural barriers to language revitalization. The goal of obliterating Aboriginal languages in the Indian Residential School system is acknowledged by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996, Vol. 1, part 2, Ch.10), as well as the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada (2012, p. 1; 2), which recommends in

their 2012 Interim report, long term funding for linguistic and cultural revival commensurate with the resources previously spent in an effort to destroy this knowledge (2012, p.7).

5.1.2 Learning

The availability and accessibility of learning resources and the difficulty of learning indigenous languages were both identified as barriers to language revitalization by interview participants. The discussion section links these barriers to the literature, which affirms the importance of learning resources.

Learning Resources

Four interview participants identified barriers to language revitalization created by a lack of language learning resources available to learners of Aboriginal languages. One interview participant discussed the challenges of using Aboriginal language learning resources developed using a second language acquisition model. The interview participant explained that most people learning a second language are not learning the language indigenous to their community; rather they are learning a language that belongs to a community other than their own. Second language acquisition models rely on the existence of a home community from which language resources can be developed and immersion experiences can be accessed. Indigenous communities who wish to revitalize their endangered language most often do not have this luxury; rather they must first create language learning resources before they can begin to teach the language. Sometimes, this means starting from scratch and developing a dictionary, or even a written alphabet.

Learning Aboriginal languages

Three interview participants identified the personal capacity and willingness of individuals to learn an Aboriginal language as a barrier to language revitalization, as well as the capacity of the community to support language revitalization in the long term. These interview participants, some of whom were or are language learners themselves acknowledged that learning a new language takes a lot of time, effort and commitment and that this can be difficult to maintain for language learners. Two of these same interview participants, as well as one other, also identified the difficulty inherent in learning the languages indigenous to B.C, especially as an adult. Many languages indigenous to B.C are very complex and require the creation of sounds that can be difficult for an adult to learn. One interview participant discussed the differences between Latin based languages which are noun based, versus many language indigenous to B.C that are verb based, as well as the fact that many languages indigenous to B.C are poly synthetic, meaning words may have several roots. These differences can make learning and teaching Aboriginal languages challenging.

One interview participant also felt that not all Aboriginal communities are ready to support the school districts in their region to teach the traditional language or languages of that region, explaining that B.C includes many diverse indigenous communities in different states of healing from the individual, family and community traumas of the residential school system. Two interview participants felt that not every community is ready for language revitalization.

Discussion

The community capacity and community resources, both financial and human, available to support long term language revitalization programs figure strongly into the success of community language

revitalization efforts (Grenoble and Whaley, 2006, p.41). Fluent speakers are the most valuable resource to language revitalization efforts, but external resources like linguists, teachers, teacher trainers and language planners are also important (ibid, .41). In a community with limited capacity to undertake language revitalization, rich language documentation can preserve a record of the language that can be used for maintenance, and revitalization at a later date (Florey, 2009, p. 121). The importance of language documentation, especially in communities who lack capacity or resources was also recognized by interview participants who discussed the importance of ongoing support for FPCC's documentation and archiving work, especially First Voices, their public database that makes language resources available to anyone.

5.1.3 Language Education

Interview participants identified various barriers to language revitalization within the education system. Access to language education, the structure of language education, curriculum development for language education and teacher certification for language teachers were all identified as barriers. The discussion section considers the success of immersion language students despite concerns that immersion learning will hinder students, and considers how barriers of access and bias affect the movement of languages across Fishman's GIDS scale.

Access and Structure

Broad access to Aboriginal language education in the public school system was identified as a barrier by three interview participants. These participants acknowledged that the availability of Aboriginal language education varies from school to school and between districts in the public school system in B.C. The availability of teachers, the support of the community, awareness of language endangerment, the relationship between the school and the Aboriginal community, and the number of language communities within a school or district catchment area were all identified as factors that affect the availability and/ or strength of Aboriginal language education programs in the public school system.

The structure and environment of Aboriginal language learning in the public school system was identified by three interview participants as creating barriers to language revitalization. Second language education is only required in the public school system in the primary grades between grades five and eight. One interview participant identified this as a barrier, arguing that language education is more effective when it begins at an earlier age and when it is provided in an immersion format. Another interview participant commented that more emphasis is placed on raising awareness of Aboriginal language and culture than on language learning in the public school system curriculum.

Two interview participants felt that bias against Aboriginal languages may inhibit the creation of immersion language programs in public schools. Participants felt that parents may prefer their children learn one of Canada's official languages, either English or French, as these are the languages that Canadians most often have the opportunity to work in later in life. One participant acknowledged that parents sometimes have a similar fear around French immersion, worrying that students learning all subjects in French will not develop adequate English language skills. A further barrier to community demand for Aboriginal language immersion programs identified by one interview participant was the language requirements for entry to post-secondary institutions in B.C. Not all universities accept Aboriginal languages as a second language as required for entrance to some programs. These entrance

requirements are often set at the faculty level in each university and vary between faculties and universities.

Discussion

Concerns around the academic achievement of immersion language learners has been addressed by considerable research that shows that students in immersion language education programs who are proficient in English do as well or better than non-immersion students in reading and math, despite differences in socio-economic status, ethnicity, cognitive and linguistic ability (Fortune, 2012, p.42). However, without the ability to use Aboriginal language education to access post-secondary education, or employment, Aboriginal languages are at risk of being caught in a paradox that keeps them locked into a lower level of Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption scale of language loss. Without opportunities to work in indigenous languages, there may be insufficient demand for immersion language education, and without opportunities for language education or recognition of language education in post-secondary institutions, there may be insufficient demand for opportunities to work in the language. Fishman (1991, p.87) identifies language learning in lower levels of education as a precursor to opportunities to use the language in question in work situations; however interview participants felt that indigenous languages in B.C require support across settings and age groups; that language learning will need to be made available to both youth and adults for Aboriginal languages to regain strength.

Curriculum Development

The process of curriculum development for Aboriginal language education in the public system was identified by two interview participants as a barrier to language revitalization. If a community would like to have an Aboriginal language taught in a public school, they can work with the Ministry of Education and the school to develop a language curriculum that meets Ministry of Education requirements. Two interview participants acknowledged that this process can have many positive effects for the community; it can raise awareness of a language and its possible endangerment, and it can help a community articulate the importance of their language and plan for further revitalization activities outside of the school. However, both interview participants commented that the amount of work, organizing, and capacity curriculum development requires is very high, especially for communities without many fluent speakers, or whose only speakers are elderly and have no training in teaching. Both interview participants acknowledged that it can be very difficult to take the knowledge of elders and turn it into a language curriculum for school children, especially is there is no teacher available who speaks the language. One interview participant commented that curriculum development can be especially challenging if the community members working on the development are acting in a volunteer capacity only.

Teacher Certification

Three interview participants spoke at length about perceived problems with the certification of Aboriginal language teachers in British Columbia. Individuals who are proficient in an Aboriginal language in B.C can apply to the Teachers' Certification Branch of the B.C Ministry of Education to become certified as a First Nations Language Teacher in the B.C public school system. Language teachers certified in this manner are only able to teach language classes, and are therefore rarely employed full time as language teachers according to these interview participants.

The same three interview participants also discussed problems with the Developmental Standard Term Certificate (DSTC) program for Aboriginal language teachers who would like to work towards earning their Bachelor of Education degree. Interview participants described the creation of this program as an attempt to address the problem encountered by having language teachers who are only able to teach language classes and could rarely be employed full time by school districts. Interview participants discussed the difficulties associated with having to complete some of the Bachelor of Education requirements through the DSTC program at the University or College the student originally enrolled with. Many First Nations are located in rural and remote locations, and this limitation of the DSTC program can be challenging for students who lack the financial resources to attend courses outside of their community, who are responsible for young families, or who move away from the area of the province where the post-secondary institution where they originally enrolled is located.

Discussion

The author was unable to find any research that showed that indigenous language teachers are more or less effective if they have a Bachelor of Education degree or an Early Childhood Education Diploma. In the interviews conducted for this research, the issue was positioned largely as a political one. Two interview participants argued that the highly endangered status of many Aboriginal languages justifies making exceptions to the regulation of teachers in the name of language survival. Another interview participant, however, worried that unless all teachers are subject to the same standards and regulations, the public education system could be accused of short changing Aboriginal students by allowing teachers without formalized training to instruct a marginalized minority of students who already have poorer educational outcomes as a group.

5.1.4 Funding

Issues related to funding for language revitalization were discussed as barriers by four interview participants. They identified the fiscal calendar of government, especially as it relates to the disbursement of government funding as a barrier for some communities engaged in long term language revitalization projects. Funding that is only guaranteed on a year to year basis, or funding that is announced at the end of a fiscal year with a short application time were seen to be counter-productive for communities trying to build stable, long term language education programs.

A general lack of funding for language revitalization programs and activities, from both government and non-governmental sources, as well as underfunding (providing some funding, but an inadequate amount to fully support programs or for language revitalization organizations to properly fulfill their mandate) was discussed by three interview participants. They felt that a lack of funding, or underfunding, was seen to create instability in programming and competition for funding that could lead to negative and avoidable impacts, for example; a community may hesitate to share language learning resources if the possession of these resources would provide them with necessary leverage to secure future funding in an environment of competition.

The misuse of targeted funding for Aboriginal students was identified as a barrier to language revitalization within the public education system by three interview participants. The Ministry of Education currently provides each school district with targeted funding based on their Aboriginal enrollment (First Nation, Metis, Inuit students who self- identify) for language and culture learning.

Interview participants reflected that in their experience, this funding was often used to support Aboriginal children with special needs, and was not consistently applied to Aboriginal language and culture education.

Discussion

According to their 2013/14 Annual Report, the FPCC has no long-term contracts and no guaranteed funding as all funding it receives is proposal based (p.29). Funding for new pilot language immersion programs that began in 2007 has not increased, and FPCC has experienced some reduction in funding from the Provincial government due to low returns on investment in the First Citizens Fund. In 2012/13, FPCC experienced funding reductions from MARR and the New Relationship Trust to a combined total of $650,000, an amount that represents 26% of the total annual funding received from the government of B.C, and 17% of the organizations total budget (FPCC Service Plan 2013/14-2015/16, p. 13).

5.2 Barriers to government support for language revitalization

Three interview participants identified the four year electoral cycle of government as a barrier to language revitalization efforts that are dependent on long term government funding. Interview participants said that while First People's Cultural Council provides consistency to the language revitalization movement in B.C. over time, there is still a perception that FPCC is not immune to funding cuts and the shifting priorities of government over the course of an election cycle.

Four interview participants identified what they perceive as a lack of leadership and motivation for language revitalization in government as a barrier to language revitalization. One interview participant felt that the political will to fund, support, and promote language revitalization is currently lacking. Two interview participants said they do not feel that language revitalization is a current priority for government. One interview participant identified a perception in the community that the environment of treaty negotiation paralyzes government from taking action on language with some First Nations because they do not want to risk setting a precedent.

Two interview participants identified a lack of awareness of language endangerment in government outside of the MARR and the Aboriginal education branch of the Ministry of Education. Two interview participants identified what they perceive as an attitude of ambivalence in government towards the loss of Aboriginal languages. They feel that government does not value diversity and that the large number and small size of Aboriginal language communities in B.C leads government to undervalue language revitalization and that government does not see the intense resource investment required to revitalize languages of very small communities as offering a sufficient return on investment. This sentiment was echoed by a third interview participant who felt that the ambivalence towards the endangerment of Aboriginal languages was present not only in government, but also in wider society. This interview participant attributed ambivalence towards endangered languages to an unwillingness in the dominant culture to value alternative perspectives, including the possibility of a pluralistic society that values the health of many languages, rather than just the two official languages of Canada.

Three interview participants identified a lack of coordination across government ministries as a barrier to revitalization efforts. These interview participants felt that while several ministries fund language revitalization in different ways, there is little done to ensure administrative efficiency in terms of streamlining funding or funding application processes. One interview participant felt that having more

than one source of government funding was positive, but overall interview participants who discussed government funding felt that language revitalization was often pitted against other issues or priorities like health or economic development and that a lack of coordination between funding agencies prevented a holistic approach to funding for language and cultural revitalization.

Discussion

Fishman (1991) uses the GIDS scale to identify intergenerational language loss and alternately revitalization. As languages fall into disuse and become endangered they move up the scale from level one to level eight, and as revitalization efforts affect positive outcomes, languages can move back down the scale towards vitality. Fishman considers the provision of government services in a given language to be a sign of strong language vitality and uses it to describe stage two of the GIDS scale. Support for the language in the public sphere appears as early as stage six, where there is some institutional reinforcement for the language and by stage four language education is often accessible in publicly funded schools. As discussed in the literature review, official support for language revitalization is key to the success of any revitalization effort, and support from the state plays an important role (Fishman, 1990, Hinton, 2001). Interview participants identified a lack of awareness of Aboriginal languages and a lack of, understanding of, or concern for language revitalization within government.

5.3 Barriers overcome

Interview participants were asked to identify any barriers to language revitalization that they think have been overcome in B.C. Rather than identifying specific ways in which barriers have been overcome, most interview participants discussed what successes they recognize as having been realized in B.C in terms of language revitalization.

FPCC was identified by five interview participants as responsible for overcoming barriers to language revitalization in B.C. The creation of FPCC was cited by five interview participants as an example of how the barrier of inadequate funding has been partially, but successfully overcome. All of the interview participants said that FPCC would benefit from more funding, however they see the organization as one that has been successful at using the funding they do receive, and using their success as leverage to secure funding from sources outside the provincial government. Three interview participants recognized FPCC's Report on the Status of B.C First Nations Languages, 2010 as instrumental in helping them to secure additional funding from the government of Canada, as the report identified for the first time, that B.C is home to the majority of First Nations languages in Canada.

Three interview participants said that they also saw FPCC as a strong leader in language revitalization in B.C because they have embraced the use of technology through the development of language applications and online training, allowing them to leverage funders they might not otherwise have had access to. Two interview participants acknowledged that FPCC is successful at sharing resources to increase access to resources, leveraging their language archiving work to create the First Voices public database that can also act as a language teaching tool. FPCC was also recognized by two interview participants for addressing barriers to language revitalization by undertaking considerable community consultation in 2006 and 2007 which led them to shift their goals away from awareness raising and towards the creation of fluent speakers through immersion programs for children and adults.

The undergraduate and graduate level programs in indigenous language revitalization at the University of Victoria were identified by three interview participants as a major success in overcoming barriers to language revitalization B.C. These programs are educating indigenous students to become fluent speakers of their languages and certified teachers.

Two interview participants identified government of B.C support for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and government of B.C efforts towards residential school reconciliation as overcoming barriers to language revitalization. Reconciliation efforts were seen by these interview participants as building awareness of First Nations history and the status of First Nations languages amongst non-indigenous British Columbians. These interview participants also felt that reconciliation efforts contributed to improved relations between the government of B.C and First Nations governments and communities.

5.4 Government support for language revitalization

Interview participants were asked three questions in relation to government support for Aboriginal language revitalization in B.C. First, interview participants were asked to identify what they thought government is doing well in terms of supporting Aboriginal language revitalization. They were also asked to identify any efforts that has been tried, but failed, and finally, they were asked what government could do differently.

What is government doing well?

Nine interview participants identified support for First Peoples' Cultural Council as the number one thing government is doing well to support Aboriginal language revitalization in B.C. Interview participants referred to the success of the Mentor-Apprentice Program, FPCC support for language nests and other immersion language education programs, and First Voices when explaining their support for First People's. Two interview participants acknowledged that FPCC has leveraged its funding from MARR to secure funding from other sources. FPCC's status as a crown corporation was discussed by two interview participants who felt this status helped FPCC to establish the reputation and stability needed to attract funding from the federal government and other sources outside the provincial government.

Other efforts of government mentioned by interview participants included partnerships between MARR and the Urban Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Partners Table, the building and maintaining of relationship and goodwill with Aboriginal communities and organizations by MARR, and targeted funding for Aboriginal students delivered by the Ministry of Education.

Efforts tried and failed

Interview participants were asked to identify anything in their experience working in and around language revitalization in B.C that had been tried and failed. Only one real theme emerged from the interview data; four interview participants identified the DSTC program as having negative unintended consequences, and often failing to create new speakers.

What could government do differently?

When asked what government could do differently to support language revitalization, four interview participants agreed that government could improve how it works together across ministries. These four interview participants discussed the idea of a language roundtable and discussed better coordination

between early childhood development funding, language education in primary schools, and directed funding for Aboriginal students. Two interview participants suggested the Ministry of Education provide funding to schools and school districts earmarked for language education only so it does not get spent on other needs, and argued that more transparency was needed from schools on how funding for Aboriginal students is used.

Three interview participants specified that government should support language revitalization efforts in both the community and the education system, and that both children and adults need access to immersion language education opportunities if endangered languages are to be saved. Two interview participants suggested the Ministry of Education recognize other forms of language learning (in the community or at home) for credit so that students can use their learning of their language to meet the language requirements for graduation.

Five interview participants identified increased support for FPCC as something government could do differently, and two interview participants responded that they see the role of government in language revitalization as that of funder. These interview participants were clear that they think language revitalization policy, programs and the coordination of both should be community driven and community led and that government's role is to provide financial resources.

5.5 The importance of language revitalization

When asked to describe why Aboriginal language vitality and revitalization is important, interview participants identified three main themes; identity and culture, connection to land and traditional knowledge, and health and wellbeing.

Identity and culture

Eleven interview participants stated that language revitalization works to rebuild and strengthen the identities not just of Aboriginal individuals and communities, but that it can have a positive impact on non-Aboriginal communities and community members as well. Interview participants talked about the shared history of colonization and the Indian Residential School system and how involving the non-Aboriginal community in language and cultural revitalization can be a powerful form of healing and reconciliation for both communities. Including, or even just having the support of the wider community for cultural revitalization can raise awareness of Aboriginal language endangerment and build respect for Aboriginal culture.

Connection to land and traditional knowledge

Six interview participants identified connection to land as a primary reason why they felt language revitalization is important. Participants described Aboriginal languages as representing an irretrievable connection to hundreds of years of ecological knowledge and practice, and emphasized that not all knowledge is accessible through English.

Health and Well-being

The third theme to emerge from this question was the idea that language vitality is connected to both physical health and emotional well-being. Five interview participants discussed this idea, and while three of them cited the research of Chandler and Lalonde, they all talked about taking a holistic perspective of

health that includes physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects. For these interview participants, language vitality and the vitality of traditional culture in Aboriginal communities positively affects all aspects of health and well-being as individual, familial and community identity is reinforced and traditional ways of taking care on oneself, are valued and framed within language learning and cultural practice.

Other

Other reasons for the importance of language vitality and revitalization cited by interview participants included the opportunities for inter-generational learning afforded by language revitalization programs and activities; and the increased understanding of Aboriginal culture in the non-Aboriginal community facilitated by language education in public schools. One interview participant also noted that having Aboriginal language education in public schools can help to make schools a safer place for Aboriginal families who may not feel comfortable in school settings due to family experiences with the Indian Residential school system. This was seen to benefit all students when all families are included and participate in the school community. Two interview participants recognized language revitalization as community building, bringing people together for a common purpose.

Discussion

The connections that interview participants made between language and identify are consistent with the findings of Chandler and Lalonde (2003) who argue that language gives one a sense of self as continuous throughout time, with connections to the past and the history of one's community as well as connection to the future, where future generations will understand themselves and their surroundings through the worldview established in language. Interview participants underscored the important connection between language and cultural identity, stating that cultural knowledge is held in unique ways in language.
The dominant philosophical framework within which arguments in favour of language vitality are made views cultural and linguistic diversity as inherently positive, closely linked to personal and community identify, important to broader peace and prosperity, and a basic personal right that government has a responsibility to help protect. On a national level, this view is illustrated by the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996, Vol.1, p.6), which argues that the stability of Canada requires that the majority French and English cultures of Canada respect and protect the minority cultures and languages of the original peoples of this land, as the cultural identities of these groups are intrinsic to the personal identities of their individual members, and that this right to a personal cultural identity is a human right that should be respected by all people and protected by the state.

On an international level, between 2001 and 2005 the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established a Universal Declaration and two international conventions aimed at promoting and protecting cultural and linguistic diversity to facilitate intercultural understanding and tolerance. Canada is a signatory to both the declaration and both conventions and played a key role in the development of the 2005 International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (Council of Europe, 2011).

5.6 Solutions

After identifying barriers to language revitalization and government support for language revitalization, as well as some of the ways government is successfully or unsuccessfully supporting language

revitalization, interview participants were asked to identify possible solutions to barriers to language revitalization. Interview participants were not asked to suggest specific solutions to specific barriers, rather solutions were identified as applicable to the broad barriers to language revitalization. The following themes emerged from the interviews.

Language Preservation

Three interview participants identified language preservation, including the recording and archiving of languages as part of the solution to overcoming some barriers to language revitalization as access to language resources is essential to learning and teaching language. In their interviews, these participants explained that they view language preservation as an essential component of language revitalization and an activity that safeguards the opportunity for language revitalization for later generations if communities are not yet in a position to undertake language education.

Raising Awareness

Three interview participants discussed the need to raise awareness of First Nations history, culture, and language in government, the education system and the community. Raising awareness of Aboriginal peoples and issues in the non-Aboriginal community was seen by these interview participants as a solution to the barriers to language revitalization created by ignorance of the issue of language endangerment and ambivalence towards the issue by people who don't know the history of Aboriginal language repression in Canada.

One interview participant suggested that non-Aboriginal people, and specifically non-Aboriginal public servants, representatives of government and educators would benefit from opportunities to learn about B.C First Nations, as well as opportunities to interact with Aboriginal peoples in positive ways. Another interview participant identified a need to raise awareness of the need for Aboriginal content, curriculum and pedagogy within the Ministry of Education and also at the school district and school level. Yet another interview participant argued that all students and teachers need to be aware of and recognize the history of Aboriginal communities in B.C, not just Aboriginal students and teachers.

Two interview participants suggested that the Ministry of Education has a role to play in teacher training, and the ongoing professional development of teachers to raise awareness of Aboriginal history, culture and language. One of these interview participants also said the Ministry of Education has a role to play in improving the comfort level of teachers who are aware that our current education is euro-centric, but don't know enough themselves about the history of colonization, or local Aboriginal culture and history to recognize it and teach it in class.

Recognition/Official Status of Languages in Legislation

Five interview participants identified official recognition of Aboriginal languages in legislation as one solution to some of the barriers to language revitalization. These interview participants suggested new legislation that either recognizes indigenous languages in B.C as important, valued and subject to past repression, or that conveys official language status on all indigenous languages of B.C with associated rights, such as access to education in those languages or the ability to access government services in any indigenous language. Two interview participants thought that official recognition of languages would be largely toothless, or have little impact without a commitment from government of associated funding, but others felt that official recognition of Aboriginal languages would provide leverage for funding for

language preservation and revitalization from all levels of government and non-governmental sources. Four interview participants also felt that official recognition would raise awareness of the endangerment of Aboriginal languages and would likewise raise the profile of Aboriginal languages in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, which could have positive impacts on the relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities and could positively influence community demand for Aboriginal language education in schools.

Four interview participants discussed the idea of a renewed language roundtable that could bring together government ministries and agencies, partners from other levels of government, FPCC, and other Aboriginal community organizations to guide and coordinate government policy that affects language revitalization efforts and government support for language revitalization. Interview participants felt that a language roundtable would provide the community with a forum for articulating a broad vision for indigenous language revitalization in B.C.

The same four interview participants also suggested a renewed language roundtable would provide government with the opportunity to support community dialogue around language vitality and provide a forum to consider the different barriers to language revitalization as a community. One interview participant suggested a language forum would help ensure that government support, especially financial support, for language revitalization is community directed, and would also give government representatives an opportunity to be honest with partners about government capacity for support. While the previous incarnation of the language roundtable did include government representatives, one interview participant felt that the focus was on information sharing between education partners and that a focus on coordinating government support for language revitalization would be especially useful.

Immersion

Five interview participants identified increased support and greater emphasis on language immersion as a solution to many of the barriers to language revitalization as it is considered the best way to create new speakers. Interview participants suggested prioritizing funding to language nests; language immersion education and childcare for pre-kindergarten aged students, as well as immersion education for school aged children and bringing various funding partners together to create long term stable immersion programs. Two interview participants suggested that one way to support immersion language education would be for the teachers' regulation branch to make exceptions for language nests and immersion language education.

Two interview participants advocated for a shift from language awareness in the public school system to language immersion and argued that language education needs to be mandatory before the fifth grade if public education is going to have a real impact on language revitalization. These two interview participants suggested that every school district could work towards providing immersion language education in the language indigenous to the land on which they are located, and that government could immediately begin directing funding to school districts that have expressed a desire to develop immersion programs. One interview participant also referred to the success of the FPCC Mentor-Apprentice program and suggested this program could be expanded.

Discussion

The solutions identified by interview participants that relate to the expansion of immersion language education, support for community based learning models, and the official recognition of indigenous languages by the state are also found in the research around language revitalization as described in the literature review. Hinton (2003), McIvor (2005) and Whaley and Grenoble (2006) use the examples of language nest programs to show the power of immersion language education to revitalize indigenous languages. Whaley and Grenoble (2006) describe community based models like FPCC's Mentor-Apprentice model as appropriate alternatives to full immersion that suit adult learners by focusing on domains of language, teaching students language through doing, rather than through formalized language instruction. Delaine (2010) advocates for official language status for Aboriginal languages to increase awareness and government support for language revitalization, and both Fishman (1990), and Hinton (2001) argues that official and unofficial supports for language revitalization are key to the success of any revitalization effort.

6.0 Recommendations

The research questions this project sought to answer were:

- By which means can Aboriginal languages be effectively preserved and revitalized?
- How can the government of British Columbia build upon existing efforts to preserve and revitalize Aboriginal languages in the Province?

Three sets of recommendations have been provided; one set each for the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations, The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education. These would allow government to build upon existing efforts to preserve and revitalize Aboriginal languages in B.C. The recommendations consider the findings from the stakeholder interviews within the context of the relevant literature.

6.1 Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
6.1.1 Increase financial support for First People's Cultural Council
- Increase funding to FPCC, on an ongoing annual basis, by approximately $1.2 million to address funding shortfalls in each FPCC language project to bridge the generation gap in language learners, create new speakers, and increase language documentation and archiving.
- According to the FPCC annual report for 2013/14, the 2013/14 the funding shortfall in the BC Language Initiative was $477, 481. FPCC received requests for $665,082, from 43 applicants to the BC Language Initiative, but only awarded $187,601 to 13 successful applicants using $37,602 in funding received from MARR and $150,000 in funding from the New Relationship Trust (NRT)
- In 2013/14, the funding shortfall in the Aboriginal Languages Initiative was $287,179. Through Canadian Heritage, the Government of Canada provided $720,960 in funding towards funding requests totalling $1,008,139.
- The funding shortfall to the Mentor-Apprentice program in 2013/14 was $363,905. FPCC funded 17 successful applicants using $126,400 in funding from MARR and $100,000 from the NRT.
- The funding shortfall in the Language Revitalization Planning Program was $187,000 in 2013/14. FPCC received $100,000 in funding from MARR and $70,000 in funding from the NRT.

6.1.2 Develop legislation to grant official language status to all Aboriginal languages indigenous to B.C.
- In consultation with stakeholders, draft new legislation for introduction in the Spring 2016 legislative session, making all of the Aboriginal languages of B.C official languages of the Province.

6.1.3 Increase awareness and appreciation of B.C's Aboriginal peoples within the B.C Public Service.
- Work with the B.C Public Service Agency to undertake a government-wide initiative to raise awareness amongst public servants of the traditional lands on which they work and how to acknowledge these lands publicly with respect.

- o Work with the BC Public Service Online Aboriginal Relations Resource Center to launch a one year government-wide online communications campaign in 2016 to teach public servants about traditional territories and how to acknowledge them.
    - o Seek approval from Cabinet to provide direction to the Deputy Ministers to sponsor a Ministry-wide campaign in every Ministry encouraging employees to include knowledge and regular acknowledgement of the traditional territory on which they work as a work goal in their MyPerformance annual performance review for the 2016/17 MyPerformance cycle.

- Provide the Provincial Health Services Authority with $12 million over 10 years to deliver the Online Indigenous Cultural Competency Training to all B.C public servants.
    - o According to the B.C Public Service Agency's Corporate Human Resources Plan for 2013/14 (pg.3), the B.C Public Service currently employs 25, 265 employees.
    - o The Ministry of Health already pays for all Ministry of Health and Health Authority staff to participate in the ICC training, leaving approximately 24,075 employees.
    - o The PHSA can deliver the facilitated online ICC training for $500/person.
    - o Funding of $1.2 million per year for ten years will enable the PHSA to train approximately 2400 employees per year for 10 years.

6.1.4 Lead a renewed language roundtable.

- Bring stakeholders together in Victoria on a bi-annual basis to share information and resources, work to reduce duplication, and increase administrative efficiency.
    - o A renewed, provincial level Aboriginal language roundtable focused on directing and coordinating government funding for Aboriginal language revitalization should include, but not be limited to:
        - o Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
        - o First People's Cultural Council
        - o Ministry of Children and Family Development
        - o Ministry of Health
        - o Provincial Health Services Authority
        - o Ministry of Education
        - o Ministry of Advanced Education
        - o First Nations Education Steering Committee

6.2 Ministry of Education

6.2.1 Review the teacher certification policies and processes for Aboriginal language teachers.

- In collaboration with stakeholders, including FNESC and FPCC, review the teacher certification requirements for language nest teachers with the goal of developing a policy model that would permit and fund language keepers like Elders who are not educated or certified as teachers and do not have early childhood development training to teach Aboriginal languages in language nest settings by 2016.

- Immediately change the Developmental Standard Term Certificate program for Aboriginal language teachers who wish to become certified as teachers so that they can finish the program through any participating University in British Columbia.
  - Currently, students enroll in a DSTC the program through the post-secondary institution that has partnered with their First Nations Language Authority, and must finish the program through this institution. Allowing students to transfer to another institution to complete their coursework will allow more students to finish the program and become certified as teachers.

6.2.2 Improve access to Aboriginal language education in the public schools system:
- Increase transparency for targeted Aboriginal student funding by requiring every school that receives targeted funding for Aboriginal students to provide an accounting of how that money is spent and why, and to make this information available to the public on an annual basis beginning in the 2016/17 fiscal year.
- In collaboration with teachers, school boards and Aboriginal communities, develop policies for recognizing language learning that happens outside of school to encourage students to pursue language learning in the community and at home for implementation in 2016/17.
- Include the history of Aboriginal language repression in B.C, and the importance of language and Aboriginal language revitalization in the annual Aboriginal education professional development day for B.C teachers announced by the Minister of Education on June 19th, 2015.

6.3 Ministry of Advanced Education
6.3.1 Recognize Aboriginal languages for university entrance
- Work with BC's post-secondary institutions to develop a common policy framework for the recognition of Aboriginal languages for entrance requirements across institutions and throughout the Province for implementation in 2016.

7.0 Conclusion

British Columbia is home to dozens of diverse Aboriginal languages, which make up an important part of the province's shared history. Government support can make an impact on language revitalization efforts, which are, in large part necessary as a result of colonial policies of cultural repression and forced assimilation. With support for language revitalization as part of its mandate, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation has an opportunity to take a leadership role within government to improve support for language vitality efforts.

The academic research on language revitalization finds that immersion models for language learning are most effective, and have the most impact when introduced to children at a young age, but also that community based models can help to create new adult speakers and work to bridge the generational gap in language knowledge. These models are already in use in B.C, where the next phase of this work will include overcoming some of the barriers that hold back the progress of language revitalization.

The recommendations in this report provide actions the provincial government can take to raise the profile of endangered Aboriginal languages, improve access to language education, and improve the coordination of resources that communities and organizations access for language revitalization. The solutions proposed arose from the existing research on what is known to work in language revitalization, coupled with the experience, insight and expertise of a diverse set of stakeholders who are themselves dedicated to seeing this work move forward.

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Appendices

Appendix A- Members of Project Advisory Committee

Trish Rosborough, Director, Aboriginal Education, Ministry of Education

Ann Hill, Curriculum Coordinator, Aboriginal Education, Ministry of Education

Susan Kelly, Director, Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training, Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology

Dena Carroll, Director, Aboriginal Policy, Ministry of Children and Family Development

Jan Gottfred, Director, Social & Cultural Policy, Intergovernmental and Community Relations Branch, Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

Deborah Hull, Executive Director, Human Capital and Sector Labour Relations, Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology

Tara Nault, Director, Health Actions, Aboriginal Healthy Living Branch, Ministry of Health

Appendix B - Organizations represented at Indigenous Language Partners Group meeting, December 2012

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

First Nations Education Steering Committee

First Peoples' Cultural Council

First Nations Schools Association

Health Canada

Heritage Canada

Indigenous and Adult Higher Learning Association

Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

Ministry of Advanced Education

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Children and Family Services

Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

Simon Fraser University

University of British Columbia

University of Northern British Columbia

University of Victoria

Appendix C – Interview Guide

- How does your work involve or support First Nations language vitality? (using vitality as a term encompassing both preservation and revitalization - I can be more specific in my interviews).

- Can you any identify policy, legislative or structural barriers to First Nations language vitality in B.C (or your jurisdiction if outside of B.C)?

- Can you identify any possible to solutions to these barriers?

- Can you describe any situations in your work or the work of your organization where barriers to support for First Nations language vitality were successfully removed or lessened?

    - What contributed to this success?
    - What can be learned from this experience and applied to similar or different situations?
    - Anything tried and failed?

- Can you identify any policy, legislative of structural barrier to Provincial support for First Nations language vitality in B.C (or your jurisdiction if outside of B.C)?

- Can you identify any possible solutions?

- What might government do differently to support First Nations language vitality?

- Can you identify policy or legislative changes that could facilitate or make easier Provincial support of First Nations Language revitalization in B.C?

- Can you identify anything government is doing that is contributing to the success of First Nations language preservation or revitalization? What is government doing well?

- How does, or how would First Nations language vitality benefit the clients you or your organization serve?

- How does, or how would support for First Nations language vitality contribute to the goals of your organization?