Investigating the Restoration of the Mi'kmaq Language and Culture

on the First Nations Reserve of Miawpukek

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the restoration of the Mi'kmaq language and culture on the First Nations reserve of Miawpukek in the province of Newfoundland. A group of respondents between the ages of twenty-five and eighty from the Miawpukek reserve participated in the study, which was conducted by the researcher. The study consisted of fifty completed questionnaires and ten interviews designed to measure the value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture by members of Miawpukek. Data from these instruments were then gathered and analyzed.

Analysis of the data indicated that the people of Miawpukek place great value on restoring the Mi'kmaq language to their culture. It was unanimously agreed that a definite need exists to restore this vernacular to Miawpukek: however, there was mixed reaction about whether this can be done. Respondents commented on the lack of community involvement and the need for a certified, fluent Mi'kmaq language teacher as two of the major obstacles that still stand in the way. Further, they expressed a personal desire for the restoration of the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. Although the findings show a recognized need for Mi'kmaq language and cultural renewal, there does not appear to be anyone who meets the qualifications necessary and can commit the time and effort necessary to be successful in such a quest. The people of Miawpukek still have a long way to go before they will see the Mi'kmaq language and culture being a vibrant part of the community.

While the results of this study can not be generalized to the Aboriginal population at large, the conclusion can be drawn that although a definite desire exists to restore the

language and culture among the Miawpukek community, still much work needs to be done. The first step in this process would appear to be obtaining the services of a Mi'kmaq language teacher and building from there. This study confirmed the researcher's belief that all is not lost for Miawpukek; now, we need to start moving forward and building on what we have before what we have disappears.
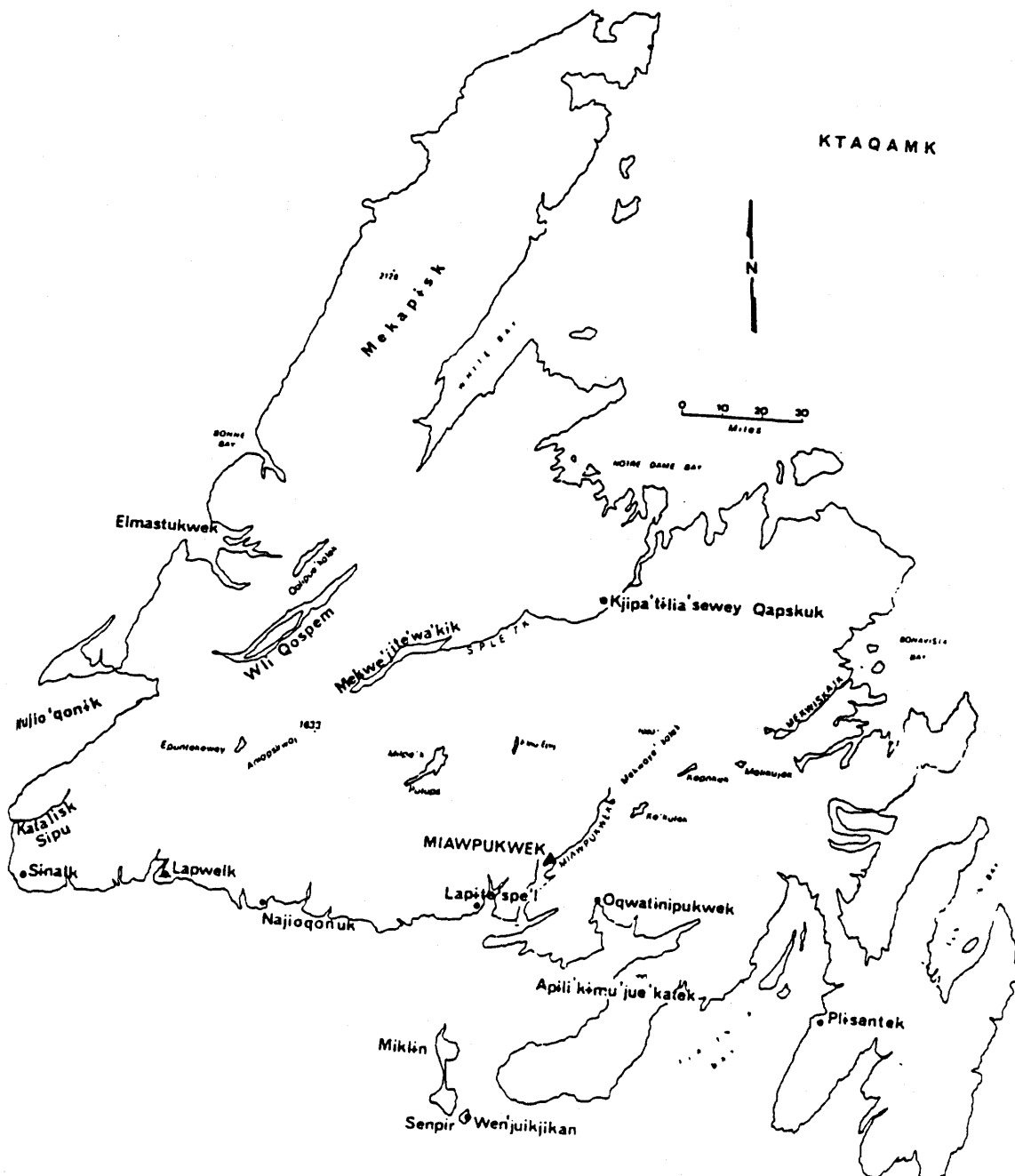
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Chapter One

Introduction to the Study

Introduction

As in many Aboriginal communities across Canada, the Mi'kmaq of the Miawpukek (Conne River) Reserve in Newfoundland have seen a steady decline in their own language over the past 70 years to the point where it is virtually extinct in that Province. The community has regressed from what was once a monolingual Mi'kmaq speaking community to a bilingual community and eventually to what is now an English speaking community. Given that culture has been identified as being tied to language (Assembly of First Nations, 1990), the consequence of losing their language to the people of Miawpukek Reserve appeared to have been extreme cultural loss and, concomitantly, significant loss to their Mi'kmaq identity. Fishman (1991) refers to this as the "domino principle." He explains

> It is necessary to add that most cultures reveal the 'domino principle'
>
> in operation and when any of their main props, such as language, are
>
> lost, most other props are seriously weakened and far more likely to
>
> be altered and lost as well (p.17).

Europeans had "their own culture, religion and standards of civilization by which they measured the Indian societies" (Paul, 1996, p. 85). As a result the people of Miawpukek experienced extreme levels of linguistic and cultural genocide. Here, the Mi'kmaq language became physically dislocated due to the influence of outside forces(i.e. church, school, and government). Mi'kmaq, which was once a thriving

language, was now no longer being used by the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek. European settlers had a flagrant disregard for Natives who already occupied these lands. As a result, Mi'kmaq was diminished by the dominant language and culture, English, resulting in Mi'kmaq language extinction. The English language gradually became the language of every day use in Miawpukek.

Among Aboriginal people, the displacement of one's native language with another language, which in most cases is English, is representative of the most profound language shift in North American history. The repercussions of such actions have had an immense influence on the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek. The widespread domination of English caused confusion and misery, as well as social and personal dysfunction among the Mi'kmaq people of Miawpukek. Cajete (1994) describes situations like the one among the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek, as "cultural schizophrenia." They were in constant conflict over whether or not they should remain loyal to their culture and traditions and subject themselves to a proclaimed disadvantaged lifestyle or adopt the Eurocentric lifestyle and improve their standing in life (Fishman, 1991; Paul, 1996). It became evident that if the Mi'kmaq wanted to survive in this new world, they would have to accept English as the dominant language and effectively abandon their mother tongue in the process. If they wanted to live in their own homeland, they would have to appear to have abandoned their ancestral language and use English for all functions and purposes. As a result, the English language became the dominant language of function, thus contributing to the linguistic and cultural demise of the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek. As noted earlier, no

person who has been born and raised in the community since early 1900 can speak Mi'kmaq.

Although most Aboriginal communities in Canada experienced varying degrees of linguistic imperialism, many others still maintain their language and certain aspects of their Native traditions (i.e. hunting and fishing, crafts, etc...). Despite such cognitive imperialistic actions (Battiste, 1986), and efforts to assimilate Aboriginals toward a Eurocentric world view, many Aboriginals, including the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek, were able to maintain some aspects of their Aboriginal identities. Hampton (1995) provides insight as to why some Native people continue to hold on to their identities.

> The coming of Western civilization (meaning Western Europe), with it Western forms of education, to this continent was the autumn of traditional Indian education. In the fall, the wild grass dies. The Europeans took our land, our lives, and our children like the winter snow takes the grass. The loss is painful but the seed lives in spite of the snow. In the fall of the year, the grass dies and drops its seeds to lie hidden under the snow. Perhaps the snow thinks the seed has vanished but it lives on hidden, or blowing in the wind, or clinging to the plant's leg of progress. How does the acorn unfold into an oak? Deep inside itself it knows - and we are not different. We know deep inside ourselves the pattern of life. The source of our tradition is present (pp. 31-32).

So, despite intensive efforts to assimilate them, Aboriginal people do not forget who they were or where they came from. All that was needed is for someone or something to reawaken this spirit of their Aboriginality.

This is exactly what happened in 1969. In that year the Federal Government put forward a White Paper proposing the transfer of the responsibility for services to Indian peoples to the province (Paul, 1996). First Nations people saw this as an infringement regarding treaty agreements and responsibilities which existed between Aboriginal people and the Federal Government. Paul (1996) writes:

> Reaction to this policy statement from the Indian people was swift and
>
> negative...the Indians saw the relationship as a special one based
>
> upon their original ownership of the land and the treaties which were
>
> negotiated nation to nation... The announcement of the White Paper
>
> provided the catalyst for the Indian leadership to redouble their efforts
>
> to build provincial and national organizations through which they could
>
> lobby for their own proposal (p. 97).

From this came the "Red Paper," a document developed by the Aboriginal people which sought to restore Aboriginal people as the directors and policy makers of their own education and government. The paper was accepted by the Canadian government as policy in 1972 and ushered in a new era for Indian control of Indian education. Progressively more Aboriginal communities began the struggle to restore and re-build their Aboriginal identities. Educational institutions were seen as the base from which such restoration was to proceed. As Dawson (1988) explains:

> Education can enhance the survival of First Nations' people if it contributes to identity development through learning our languages, our cultural traditions and our spiritual beliefs... A First Nations' person must first know himself, his clan, his nation and his responsibilities if he is to function as an Indian. An Indian identity provides a framework of values upon which one views life, the natural world and ones place in it (p.48).

As a result, band-controlled schools in Canada became a reality which has grown across Canada to 395 schools in 1993. From here many efforts continue to be made toward restoring language and culture to Aboriginal communities.

With the advent of band-controlled schools, Aboriginal people across Canada have experienced a renaissance of their cultural awareness and have begun to restore Aboriginal practices back into their communities. Included within these practices was the restoration and revitalization of language and culture. This process was very slow and cumbersome. It required an immense amount of time and effort amidst a spirit of cooperation among Aboriginal people, and the Federal Government with its agencies (i.e. churches, educational institutions, media, etc...). The power to change rested in the hands of the Aboriginal peoples themselves although power in the source of money would continue to handicap efforts. Furthermore, education was seen as a key aspect in the successful restoration of language and culture to Aboriginal communities primarily because education comprises such a major portion of peoples lives.

Since 1972, and the advent of band-controlled schools, many schools have been involved in introducing Aboriginal language programs to their school. Over the past twenty years more emphasis has been placed in Indian education. Language programs began their acceleration in 1982 with French Immersion being established in Quebec and experiencing great success (Lapkin, Swain & Argue, 1983). This success inspired other minority groups in Canada and around the world in developing or recovering lost or eroding languages.

Since then, several Aboriginal communities, and other groups, have developed programs geared toward linguistic and cultural renewal. They include such programs as French Immersion in Quebec and other Canadian provinces, Maori in New Zealand, Siksika Blackfoot of Alberta, Mohawk of Quebec, Swampy Cree of Manitoba, and Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland. All have experienced varying degrees of success, (Lowenberg, 1996; Hoover, 1992; Fleras, 1993; Ayoungman, 1991; Safty, 1991; and Battiste, 1983), and have developed numerous resources and materials to assist the process of language renewal. It is important to note, however, that most available resources in education seek to develop English as a second language, and even those language programs that develop Aboriginal languages do not necessarily meet the needs of every group (Lafond, 1988). Languages are so diverse and cultures so different that it is virtually impossible to generalize that all Aboriginal languages serve the same function. Where one lives, in isolation from a strong language base or in an area on thriving language use, will largely determine how that language is used. Cajete (1994) and Fishman (1991) warn of the repressing effects this can have on the vitality of a

language. Proper resources must be developed that address the needs of the particular group in question.

It wasn't until 1973 that the Federation of Newfoundland Indians was established and began fighting to achieve Federal status for the Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland. The Miawpukek Reserve was not recognized as a Federal Reserve until 1987. Since then, efforts have been made to restore culture and language to the community. The Miawpukek Reserve finds itself fighting battles today that other groups fought from 10 to 20 years ago (i.e. land claims, hunting and fishing rights, etc). As a result, Miawpukek finds itself behind in their community development in comparison to other Aboriginal communities. Because the struggle to reclaim our Aboriginal rights has been slow, the language situation has progressively eroded making the need for relevant language curriculum materials great. While other Mi'kmaq communities have developed such materials, they are not reflective of what is needed in Miawpukek.

Language restoration is a major undertaking and cannot be achieved without investigating the causes of language loss, attitudes toward language, as well as functions and uses of language in Miawpukek. More specifically, this research will look at situations in which language is used orally, its written use, and reading use. The research will identify the requirements necessary for second language development in Miawpukek. This is of particular importance for the successful restoration of language and culture to the Miawpukek Reserve. Therefore, it is important to assess what resources are available to combat the problems before proceeding to develop further resources in hopes of reversing the language shift

that has occurred in Miawpukek. As Cajete(1994) states, "A new educational consciousness, an 'ecology of Indigenous education,' must be forged that allows Indian people to explore and express their collective heritage in education and to make the contribution to global education that stems from such deep ecological orientations" (p. 218). Without such an understanding, existing programs will only hold out the illusion of language maintenance(Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1995).

Statement of the Problem

This thesis was designed to identify the language needs of the Mi'kmaq in Miawpukek in an effort to effect programmatic considerations to increase communicative competence in the Mi'kmaq language, leading toward recommendations to the Miawpukek First Nation for an approach to language renewal.

The proposed research is not entirely unprecedented. Language studies have been completed among other Aboriginal peoples in North America including the Mohawks of Kanhawake, Quebec (Hoover, 1992; Lowenberg, 1996); the Siksika of Alberta (Ayoungman, 1991); the Swampy Cree of Norway House, Manitoba (Lowenberg, 1996); and the Mi'kmaq of Eskasoni, Nova Scotia (Battiste, 1983; Lowenberg, 1996), all of whom are native to Canada. In addition, similar studies have been completed among several other non-Aboriginal groups in Canada and around the world, such as the French in Quebec (Safty, 1991); and the Maori of New Zealand (Fleras, 1989; Fleras, 1993). However, no such studies have been

undertaken to examine the situation that exists for the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek, even though several studies have been conducted among the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (Barman, He'bert, & McCaskill, 1886). The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the latter studies (Lowenberg, 1996; Hoover, 1992; Fleras, 1993; Ayoungman, 1991; Safty, 1991; and Battiste, 1983), are perceived to be inapplicable to the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek because of the Mi'kmaq of Newfoundlands geographical and cultural isolation which has created an English speaking environment unique to Newfoundland. As noted earlier, this research was designed specifically to identify the language needs of the Mi'kmaq in Miawpukek in an effort to effect programmatic considerations which will increase the communicative competence in the Mi'kmaq language.

Objectives:

This research study has five objectives:

(1) to describe Mi'kmaq language situation in Miawpukek, including the factors that have contributed to Mi'kmaq language loss;

(2) to assess the current language use and function in which Mi'kmaq knowledge still prevails;

(3) to assess the community attitudes toward Mi'kmaq language and culture restoration;

(4) to examine literature of current Aboriginal language teaching methodologies used for language restoration and renewal;

(5) to discuss the merits of second language teaching methodologies and offer recommendations for improving the status of the Mi'kmaq language in the community of Miawpukek.

Setting of the Study

The Mi'kmaq of the Miawpukek Reserve are situated near the south coast of Newfoundland. This reserve is located 560 km from the capital city, St. John's, 180 km from the nearest service centre, Grand Falls, and 145 km south of the Trans Canada highway. The Reserve is connected by an 18 km dirt road that joins Route 360, which connects to the Trans Canada.

The Miawpukek Reserve is populated by 698 members situated within a 14 km squared reserve boundary. Of the 698 members, approximately 50% are under the age of 21. This demographic statistic indicates that there is a substantial population base of young learners already available, who can have a substantial impact on the success of language renewal efforts.

The Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek were originally migrant Mi'kmaq from Nova Scotia who eventually settled here as their own distinct group, but still belonging to a much larger group of Algonkian tribes. Despite more than a century of colonial contact, the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek remain a distinct cultural and political unit within the Province of Newfoundland. Although they were once monolingual speakers of the Mi'kmaq language, today very few people, if any, are able to speak more than a few words of their ancestral language or have sufficient knowledge of it to ensure

it's survival in Newfoundland. English has become the "lingua franca" of the Miawpukek reserve.

The granting of reserve status in the late 1980's brought with it a renewed sense of pride in being Mi'kmaq. The locally controlled band school instituted a Mi'kmaq language program for students in kindergarten to grade six, as well, it instituted special days for the school where students showcased cultural projects and knowledge of their Mi'kmaq heritage, some students built birch bark canoes, and others demonstrated their new language knowledge. The community also reintroduced Mi'kmaq traditions long disallowed in the community by the Roman Catholic Church, such as Mi'kmaq songs and prayers. A resurgence of cultural identity created a new awakening of other forms of cultural expression, including desire to speak their Aboriginal language. As a result, the desire to speak Mi'kmaq required new structures to nourish this growth. The local school initiated language programming, hired language instructors and began curriculum development.

My connection to Miawpukek stems from the fact that I am a native of the Miawpukek reserve, a registered Band member of the Miawpukek Mi'kmaq Mawi'omi(Council of Conne River Mi'kmaq), who grew up on the reserve and spent most of my adult life there. My family is large and extends throughout other Mi'kmaq reserves. My parents live in Miawpukek, as do most of my relatives; however, a sister and many cousins live throughout other Mi'kmaq communities in the Atlantic provinces. Upon completing my studies I plan to return to Miawpukek and resume my position at St. Anne's All Grade School as a Mi'kmaq language teacher.

Many people of the Miawpukek Reserve have observed my progress through school and university and are aware of my dedication toward restoring the Mi'kmaq language to our community. I have worked as a Mi'kmaq language teacher at St. Anne's school for two years, as well as one year with community members, and I am acquainted with almost all of the members of Miawpukek. From these connections I hope to be able to establish some degree of an understanding of the status of the Mi'kmaq language, as well as attitudes toward Mi'kmaq language renewal. I will make my proposal clear to them and hope to receive support in finding the appropriate information to complete my research.

I have many close friends in the community who share my interests and will help guide my research. I also have friends and colleagues on the mainland, particularly in Nova Scotia, who speak and write fluent Mi'kmaq, and who are able to assist me in developing curriculum materials for the future once this research is completed. Their knowledge of the Mi'kmaq language will be a great asset for the future development of Miawpukek as a Mi'kmaq speaking community.

Significance of the Study

The relationship between language and culture provides the basis from which many Aboriginal communities originate and continue to function. Within the milieu of education, research has the potential to develop procedures and methods that Aboriginal communities can use to document their own developments. The information may be used as resource material for schools that are currently unable to restore language and culture to their communities in hopes of establishing

communicative competence in their respective languages. Furthermore, the information can be drawn upon as a source of strength when developing restorative approaches regarding language restoration.

One additional point of significance for this study is its application to the development of appropriate curriculum by administrators and their committees. It may be used as a foundation for developing curriculum changes that reflect Aboriginal identities and content, and provide teachers and administrators with a stronger knowledge base from which they can generate curriculum changes.

Furthermore, the study may provide non-Mi'kmaq teachers with a significant background knowledge and guide, thereby enabling them to understand Mi'kmaq heritage, and make it possible for them to accommodate their teaching methods to reflect practices relevant to Mi'kmaq communities.

Also, this study may provide Aboriginal bands with information to aid decisions made about the education of their children in future years. It may provide the basis from which further research into the area of language and culture restoration can occur.

Finally, it is hoped that this study will provide the community of Miawpukek with a better understanding and appreciation of the need for language and cultural renewal. This research can be drawn on as a source of strength for the community of Miawpukek to establish the necessary agencies to begin the process of linguistic and cultural restoration. It is hoped that this research will provide the foundation from which future generations can build programs and develop materials to help insure the survival of the Mi'kmaq language and culture on the Miawpukek Reserve.

Assumptions

An assumption is defined as a proposition which is taken or posed in order to draw inferences from it. The following constitute the major assumptions that have been made by this researcher:

(1) The Mi'kmaq people of Miawpukek who have suffered from linguistic and cultural domination see the value in restoring traditional Mi'kmaq linguistic and cultural practices to this community.

(2) Current Mi'kmaq language education practices, although valuable and necessary, are insufficient toward restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to the community of Miawpukek.

(3) Currently, Aboriginal and other heritage language programs have been developed to restore language and culture to different communities, and these programs can be useful models for language restoration efforts in the Mi'kmaq language on the Miawpukek Reserve.

(4) The participants in this study were valid and reliable representatives of linguistic and cultural needs of the community of Miawpukek and will thereby reflect the needs of that community.

(5) Formal education is a key element in successfully restoring language and culture to Aboriginal communities. Because education constitutes such a large portion of peoples lives, successful restoration requires substantial contributions from the field of education. Without proper educational support and contributions, restoration attempts will evolve at a lethargic rate and result in changes that are merely symbolic and meaningless.

Limitations

Limitations indicate areas of the study that were restricted by occurrences or events that were unpredictable. This study was limited by several factors:

(1) There was a lack of available resources on Aboriginal language recovery necessary for successfully implementing restorative processes. Because this area of study is so underdeveloped, available resources are very scarce, and even those that are available(i.e. Mohawk programs, Blackfoot programs, etc..) are not applicable to the community of Miawpukek because of differing circumstances surrounding each group.

(2) The study was limited by time constraints. Because the study is not a longitudinal one, it only examines perceptions of the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek and therefore generalizations can not be drawn toward other Aboriginal groups.

(3) Finally, this research was limited by researcher bias. Because the researcher is a Mi'kmaq language teacher, he was biassed toward restoring the Mi'kmaq language which appears throughout the research.

Delimitations

Delimitations mark the parameters, or boundaries, within which the research will operate in conducting the study. This research had several delimitations:

(1) This research was delimited to band members of the Miawpukek Reserve. The researcher chose 50 band members to complete a questionnaire.

(2) Participants were delimited to parent, ages 25 and up, who have children attending school or had children who attended the school in the past ten years on the Miawpukek Reserve.

(3) Participants chosen to participate in the extended interviews were delimited to two parents of children in the school, two Aboriginal teachers, two Band Council members, two Elders, the Director of Education and the Band Chief.

(4) Finally, this research was delimited to Aboriginal members of the community of Miawpukek. Participants were chosen based on their accessibility, minimizing any generalizing of the research.

Definition of Terms

(1) Aboriginal refers to those people who are self-declared as being descendent from the original inhabitants of the region now designated as Canada, regardless of legal status conferred by federal government of Canada.

(2) Additive bilingualism is when linguistic preferences enrich people's language experience and is associated with accomplishments and positive feelings (Cummins, 1993).

(3) Band-controlled schools are schools that are owned and operated by Indian Band governments or councils on reserves throughout Canada (Holota, 1995).

(4) Community is defined by the orientation of Aboriginal peoples who perceive community as an intimate relationship of living things, both inanimate and animate.

(5) Communicative competence requires the development of the knowledge of the code of the language (linguistic competence), the ability to put language together to form unified texts (discourse competence), the ability to use language appropriately (sociolinguistic competence), and the ability to use verbal and non-verbal strategies to compensate for communication problems (strategic competence) (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1989).

(6) Colonization refers to the process whereby a group of colonists, from another country, dominate and transform a community through acts of violence, racism and other colonizing forces, into a model of the colony from where they have originated (Memmi, 1967).

(7) Colonized consciousness is the process whereby Aboriginal peoples and other minority groups, as a result of assimilation through colonization and linguistic imperialism, espouse virtues and attitudes associated with the dominating or colonizing society (Memmi, 1967).

(8) Cultural schizophrenia refers to minority groups being constantly faced with adapting to two very different worlds of being, thus causing untold confusion and misery, as well as social and personal dysfunction among people of the minority group (Cajete, 1994).

(9) Diffusion is the process whereby an idea or its material effect came into a community, having originated in some other community, in some other part of the landscape (Blaut, 1993).

(10) Indigenous refers to people from all the different Aboriginal groups around the world, regardless of race or ethnicity.

(11) Instrumental motivation is motivation to learn a language based on the desire to be like a valued member of the community who speaks the second language. This is obtained out of interest and promotes receptive rather than defensive learning (Krashen, 1981).

(12) Integrative motivation is the motivation to learn a language based on the desire to achieve proficiency in the language for utilitarian, or practical reasons, to achieve certain ends. This type of motivation may cease as soon as enough language is acquired to serve what is needed (Krashen, 1981).

(13) Language renewal is an organized adult effort to assure that at least some members of a group whose traditional language has a steadily declining number of speakers will continue to use the language and promote its learning by others in the group. Those others are always the very young, for it is with these members of the group that the future rests (Brandt & Ayoungman, 1989).

(14) Linguistic imperialism is the phenomenon in which the minds and lives of the speakers of a language are dominated by another language to the point where they believe that they can and should use only the foreign language for transactions dealing with more advanced aspects of life such as education, philosophy, literature, governments, and the administration of justice, etc...(Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1995).

(15) Miawpukek (Meowboogik) is the common name used to refer to the community otherwise known as Conne River and the community referred to in the 1991 Canadian census as Samia'jij Miawpukek.

(16) Mi'kmaq (Me'gma) is the current name used to refer to the Algonkian tribe traditionally called the Micmac. Although one may still find the name Micmac used in historical literature, Mi'kmaq is the correct modern spelling for the name of this tribe.

(17) Subtractive bilingualism is when bilingualism is associated with feelings of inferiority and punishment (Cummins, 1993).

Summary

Although Aboriginal and other minority groups have, and may still be suffering from linguistic and cultural domination, all is not hopeless. Language studies have been completed among other Aboriginal peoples in North America including the Mohawks of Kanhawake, Quebec (Hoover, 1992; Lowenberg, 1996); the Siksika of Alberta (Ayoungman, 1991); the Swampy Cree of Norway House, Manitoba (Lowenberg, 1996); and the Mi'kmaq of Eskasoni, Nova Scotia (Battiste, 1983; Lowenberg, 1996), all of whom are native to Canada. In addition, similar studies have been completed among several other non-Aboriginal groups in Canada and around the world, such as the French in Quebec (Safty, 1991); and the Maori of New Zealand (Fleras, 1993; Morris, McCleod, & Danesi, 1993). All of these describe successful efforts made by each group toward revitalizing or maintaining

their own Aboriginal language which in itself provides a basis for the Mi'kmaq language in Miawpukek to have hope of one day being spoken again, fluently. Each provides an example of the program that has been used to help maintain and restore language to their respective community. However, none of these is directly applicable to the situation found in the community of Miawpukek. Because this community was so late entering into the struggle for linguistic and cultural renewal, the people now find themselves fighting battles that have long been fought in other parts of the world. It is the intent of this researcher to examine language usage in Miawpukek and approaches to language renewal used elsewhere in hopes of establishing a program to develop communicative competence within the community. It is the intent of this researcher to provide the foundation from which such a transition may take place. However, it is recognized by the researcher that it is the responsibility of the community to initiate the necessary steps to reverse the language shift that has occurred. It is ultimately the people who must want the change. Research and education can only provide them with a means by which some of the goals may be acquired.

Organization of Thesis

Chapter 1 has provided a background to the study including the setting in which the study will take place. The purpose and the objectives of the study were outlined; the significance of the research, together with the delimitations, limitations, assumptions and definition of major terms, was presented. Chapter 2 contains a literature review of relevant and related writings with regard to the effects of

colonization and the history of language loss in Miawpukek, as well as examining programs dedicated to language renewal and revitalization and the successes that they experienced with particular emphasis on how these programs may benefit restoration efforts in Miawpukek. In Chapter 3, the research design and methodologies are described in terms of site selection, data collection and data analysis. Chapter 4 presents information (framed by the objectives) obtained from the interviews and surveys examining the language needs of the community of Miawpukek. The Chapter concludes with a synthesis of the themes relating to the peoples perceptions of what is needed for successful Mi'kmaq language restoration in Miawpukek. In Chapter 5, the study and its major findings are summarized, following which significant implications are drawn and recommendations for language renewal efforts are made.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

For over one hundred years, deliberate policies fostered by the government, educational agencies, and sometimes religious and missionary groups, have attempted to cause language change and language death for Native American languages...For many communities, an attempt to save the language must be made now or it will forever be too late (Brandt and Ayoungman, 1989, p.43).

While this statement referred to conditions in the United States of America, the same could be made in reference to the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. Such language death and the need to restore the language holds true for the community of Miawpukek. Currently, this community is engaged in a struggle to restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture to the levels proportionate to that of their ancestors when Mi'kmaq was the language of every day use. Although much has been done, there is still a long way to go. However, before any Aboriginal group, including the people of Miawpukek, can develop any such restorative processes, it must first come to an understanding about why linguistic and cultural practices experienced such a rapid decline over the past century so that it may better appreciate the need for revitalization of the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek.

History of Colonization

First Contact

Colonization has characterized the relationship of European contact with Aboriginals in North America. European contact can be traced back hundreds of years prior to the arrival of John Cabot, but it was his arrival in 1497 that brought with it the greatest influx of Europeans to Newfoundland. Like all Aboriginal people, the Mi'kmaq, who live in Mi'kma'ki or what is now called the Atlantic Provinces, were reportedly a friendly people and welcomed the Europeans with open arms (Jackson, 1993). They shared their knowledge and material possessions, as well as their land, with these newcomers. They were unaware of the concept of private property, believing that everything should be shared among all members of the community. Everything appeared to be fine at first but, as the years went by, circumstances began to change. What was once a cooperative relationship, now became one of European dominance and misconception. As Barman, He'bert, and McCaskill (1986) wrote:

> Cultural interaction had been characterized by co-operation and conflict, but more importantly, by misconception and contradictions. For the most part, the aboriginal population accepted the new arrivals at face value, while Europeans assumed the superiority of their culture over that of the aboriginal peoples. Out of the misconception grew the European conviction that in order for Indians to survive, they would have to be assimilated into the European social order(p.2).

The concept of assimilation marked the beginning of the colonization process that would continue until the present century.

Upon Aboriginal contact with Europeans, two differing world views collided. Europeans saw the land as a means of obtaining wealth conducive to consumption, whereas Aboriginals lived in harmony with their environment (Duran & Duran, 1995). For example, the respect that Aboriginals had for Mother Earth was seen as irrelevant to Europeans who slowly began to assert their dominance over the Aboriginal people's lands. Soon the Aboriginal population was viewed as being "either a threat or a nuisance which persisted in claiming the best lands without utilizing them efficiently from a European perspective"(Barman et al., 1986, p.4).These philosophical differences over land use constituted what became known as the "Indian problem."

As the "Indian problem' became more prevalent, it became increasingly difficult for both parties to co-exist within the same environment. The European community recognized that action had to be taken to separate these differing world views before conflict erupted. Initially, they felt this could be accomplished through the implementation of a Eurocentric world view. The European failure to assimilate Aboriginal communities to accept their world view led to the next phase of the colonization process, the establishment of the reserve system.

Reservation Period

With increasing numbers of Europeans arriving in North America, more land was needed to accommodate the influx of settlers. However, Aboriginals occupied

most of the land and, therefore, represented a problem which led Europeans to develop myths of the 'empty land' and 'ignorant savage'(York, 1989). European settlers wanted Aboriginal lands because of their material wealth and abundant resources; however, Aboriginals had to be removed from these lands before Europeans could settle. To solve this dilemma from their perspective, the Canadian government began relocating the Aboriginal people to lands known as reserves which were patterned after American Reservations. The establishment of reserves was fraught with dissatisfaction among the Aboriginal people. They began to realize that reserves were not allocated to comply with their needs, but rather with those needs of the incoming European settlers. York(1989) states, "The reserves were created to remove Indians from the path of white settlement and to assimilate them by transforming them into farmers...In the end, most of the reserves were too small and infertile to permit any significant amount of farming" (pp. 57-58). Despite opposition, Aboriginals were relocated to reserves where "land was rocky and rugged, not particularly good even for grazing, much less farmland...." (Shipek, 1987, p.35).

Efforts such as these had devastating effects on the culture of the Aboriginal people. Culture was rooted in the tradition of Aboriginals when they lived off the land. These new reserves and reservations were unfamiliar to the Aboriginals and provided limited means of sustenance necessary for their survival. However, both the American and Canadian governments claimed that such action was necessary to "change the Indian from migrant or semi-migrant savage into settled, civilized Christians,..." (Surtees, 1971, p.36). The harmony that had once existed between

Aboriginals and their land was disrupted by European style settlement and relocation of the Aboriginal people. European subjugation of Aboriginal peoples, further contributed to the eventual cultural and linguistic demise of all people of Aboriginal ancestry.

Residential School Period

Although the relocation of Aboriginal peoples to reserves considerably affected their culture and language, many people believe the greatest impact was felt by the use of residential schools. These institutions would have effects that would reverberate throughout Aboriginal communities for many years. John A. McDonald introduced the Indian Act in 1876 and reasoned that

> Indian children should be taken away from their parents so as to eliminate their barbarian influence and expose the children to the benefits of civilization. The teacher has been sent out as an educational missionary to introduce culture change in Indian societies(Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1984, p.6).

The Indian Act of 1876 was responsible for the removal of Indian children from their families and communities and forced them to be placed in centralized Residential Schools to receive their education.

One of the biggest changes experienced by these children was that concerning religion. Because residential schools were operated by priests, nuns and missionaries of the Christian Church, children were forced to adhere to the religious beliefs of the particular institution to which they were assigned. Being taken

from their families, communities and friends was also a considerable change. Thus began the process of forced assimilation. As Memmi(1967) wrote: "Conversion of the colonized to the colonizers religion would have been a step toward assimilation"(p.73). The use of Aboriginal prayer and other Aboriginal ceremonies were abolished and children were forced to learn the prayers of the missionaries and priests.

The next act of assimilation witnessed the total abolition of the use of Aboriginal languages among the children attending these schools. This had a detrimental effect on the maintenance of the Aboriginal languages in future generations. Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson(1995) wrote of such occurrences. "Not being able to use a language in all contexts, especially school, leads to a diminishing competence, and this may lead to language death over several generations"(p.362). Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson(1995) describe this as linguistic imperialism, or

> ... the phenomenon in which the minds and lives of the speakers of
>
> the language are dominated by another language to the point where
>
> they believe that they can and should use only the foreign language
>
> when it comes to transactions dealing with more advanced aspects of
>
> life such as education, philosophy, literature, governments, the
>
> administration of justice, etc... Linguistic imperialism has a subtle way
>
> of warping the minds, attitudes and aspirations of even the most noble
>
> in society and preventing him from appreciating and realizing the full
>
> potentialities of the indigenous languages(pp. 339-340).

They go on to further state, "A threat to an ethnic group's language is thus a threat to the cultural and linguistic survival of the group"(p.7).

Despite the detrimental impact of such policy, the restrictions on language were closely monitored and, if students were caught breaking the rules or using their mother tongue, they were punished. The main goal of this policy was economic dominance through the creation of a monolingual society. Phillipson(1993) writes:

Monolingualism was supported in the Periphery, by the physical and psychological sanctions. Those caught using their mother tongue risked corporal punishment or were identified as having done something shameful, whether in Wales(Jones 1973), or Kenya(see Ngugi 1985: 114), or France and its colonies(Calvet 1974)(p.187).

Punishment for speaking anything but the official language was common across Canada. It was also very evident in the community of Miawpukek. Schools were administered by Church leaders and insisted upon the exclusive use of English. Father St. Croix, the parish priest in Miawpukek in the early 1900's, strictly forbade the speaking of Mi'kmaq in all social settings and those caught using the language were punished or publicly humiliated. Mi'kmaq language could only be used within one's own home.(Further discussion on this topic will be carried out in the next section). Chavez(1995) also wrote of similar experiences in the United States. He wrote "... the children were forbidden to use their native languages under pain or physical punishment. They were taught to speak, read, and write English as well as to dress and act like the white children"(p.145). This is the means by which the

Mi'kmaq lost the use of their language. In effect, what was occurring was linguistic and cultural genocide.

Effects of Colonization

The colonization era was a confusing time for Aboriginal people. They were caught between two worlds, struggling to maintain their identity, while at the same time questioning whether or not maintaining their identity was at all necessary. As Cajete (1994) explains, Aboriginal people were experiencing "cultural schizophrenia," or "being constantly faced with adapting themselves to two very different worlds caused untold confusion and misery, as well as a social and personal dysfunction among Indian people"(p.144). This represented a major dilemma for many Aboriginal people. Fishman(1991) speaks of this dilemma in his book, <u>Reversing Language Shift.</u> He writes

> Xmen* are seemingly faced by a cruel dilemma: either to remain loyal
>
> to their traditions and to remain socially disadvantaged(consigning
>
> their own children to such disadvantages as well), on the one hand;
>
> or, on the other hand, to abandon their distinctive practices and
>
> traditions, at least in large part, and thereby, to improve their own and
>
> their children's lots in life via cultural suicide(p.60).

Increased confusion pervaded Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal peoples were split between their traditions and the life opportunities promised to them by the colonizers. They were being led to believe that survival depended on the acquisition of the English language. Memmi(1967) illustrates this point when he writes: "If he

wants to obtain a job, make a place for himself, exist in the community and the world, he must first bow to the language of his master"(p.107). As a result, more and more Aboriginal peoples began adopting European traditions and abandoning their own traditional ways, leading to the erosion if not demise of their language and culture.

Unfortunately, these Aboriginals soon became conscious of the harsh reality of this new world. They became marginalised victims of oppression which Young(1990) characterizes as "A whole category of people is expelled from useful participation in social life and thus potentially subject to severe material deprivation and even extermination"(p.53). Aboriginal peoples found that they were not being accepted in the colonizer's society because of their native ancestry and were being ridiculed by their own people because of their association with the colonizers. In effect, these Aboriginals had become ostracized from both worlds.

History of Mi'kmaq Language Loss in Miawpukek

Miawpukek's experiences very much mirrored what went on throughout the rest of North America, but at a much later date. Up until 1908, the Mi'kmaq language flourished throughout Miawpukek. The Mi'kmaq were proud of their language and spoke it whenever and where ever they met. It was the language of every day use. However, the year 1908 marked the beginning of the demise of the Mi'kmaq language. At this time, the first school was built in Miawpukek by the Roman Catholic parish of Harbour Breton, and students were instructed in only the

English language (Jackson, 1993). Prior to this children were educated to live off the land by their parents but no formal school structure existed.

Because of Chief Membertou's agreement with the church upon the initial baptism of the Mi'kmaq people, they had strong religious beliefs, and thus reluctantly accepted this institution and its practices. Although the first teacher spoke Mi'kmaq, it was not long before a succession of non-native teachers were appointed (Jackson, 1993), resulting in the decline of the Mi'kmaq language in Miawpukek.

Although the Mi'kmaq language was eroding among the younger generation, it was still able to be maintained in some functions within the community. Chief Noel Jeddore and others members of the community, mainly elders, were able to provide leadership on matters of faith, ritual and tradition in Mi'kmaq (Jackson, 1993). This would all soon change when a new parish priest, Father St. Croix, was assigned to the parish in 1916. Though initially the Mi'kmaq welcomed St. Croix, as Jackson (1993) writes: "The goodwill St. Croix initially cultivated with Micmac [sic] ended in the face of his insensitivity"(p. 162). St. Croix protested against many of the ancient rituals and customs of the Mi'kmaq, especially the singing of hymns and praying in the Mi'kmaq language because he felt they were mocking God and the church with their Mi'kmaq songs. Being responsible for school administration, St. Croix told the teachers to use only English. Jackson (1993) goes on to further explain how St. Croix was offended by the community's social life, ordering young couples who were not married but dating, to marry or terminate their relationship. Anyone who went

against these beliefs were sternly lectured, banned from the church or threatened with damnation.

Many Mi'kmaq people, especially the older generation, held great pride in their faith in the Catholic Church and their community and felt that Mi'kmaq catholic rituals were being neglected by St. Croix. As a result, the chief, Noel Jeddore, and other members of the community assumed responsibility toward maintaining their traditional faith and the rituals that attended to it. Jackson (1993) reports how St. Croix was threatened by this because he knew the immense power that the Chief held in the community. To further escalate tension, there was a rumour that the church was going to be rebuilt in Miawpukek. "This made St. Croix very angry and he threatened to tear down any church built in Miawpukek. He wanted St. Alban's to be the church centre" (Jackson, 1993, p. 164). Chief Jeddore called a meeting to present his case to his Mi'kmaq community stating that, if the Mi'kmaq people abandoned their church, faith, and language, then they had murder in their hearts. St. Croix mistook this as a threat on his life and in 1924 he abolished the office of Chief; consequently, Chief Noel Jeddore left the community in disgrace (Jackson, 1993). This broke the faith of the people in themselves: "St. Croix left an indelible mark on the community, a sense of inferiority. At his hand the Micmac [sic] were estranged from their culture" (Jackson, 1993, p. 164). Mi'kmaq language and culture had no place in the community any more and slowly was replaced by English. Such colonial actions prompted the Mi'kmaq, like other Aboriginal groups, to begin efforts to re-establish their identity as Native people. It is important to note, however, that such efforts did not occur until much later in the century.

Renewal Efforts

Such colonial efforts soon precipitated developments that prompted the Aboriginal people toward re-establishing their Aboriginal identity. As Young(1990) stated, "The American Indian Movement and other radical organizations of American Indians rejected perhaps even more vehemently than Blacks the goal of assimilation which has dominated white-Indian relations for most of the twentieth century"(p. 160). In Canada the process of attaining Indian self-government began with the advent of the famous "White paper" which was released by the Federal government in 1969. It called for the abolition of the Department of Indian Affairs and the transfer of their fiduciary responsibilities to treaties and Indians to the provinces (Green, 1990). The people responded to this and the National Indian Brotherhood took up a challenge to this document with their own "Red paper calling for Indian control of Indian education. This inspired the Aboriginal peoples of Canada to assert their right to self-government and control over education with a new commitment to recovering their language, traditional rituals and cultures.

Miawpukek Experience

As noted earlier, Miawpukek did not become an official reserve until 1987, although they did obtain control over their community school in 1986-87. From 1969, when Newfoundland was organized into larger school districts, the local school, St. Anne's, was operated by the Roman Catholic Gander School Board. However, in the summer of 1986, the Miawpukek Band Government reached an

agreement with the Provincial Government that gave them control over education on the Miawpukek reserve. The school has acted as the foundation from which language renewal and revival has generated since that time.

Currently, the school has developed a language program for students in kindergarten through grade six. Students participate in Mi'kmaq as a second language class for three half hour periods a week. These classes focus on Mi'kmaq vocabulary development and some basic conversation for grades four to six. This alone, however, has proven insufficient for developing Mi'kmaq competency. As Brandt & Ayoungman (1989) report, "In normal first language acquisition children hear language for a period of up to 18 months an average of 5 hours per day before they produce very much. This alone is approximately 3700 hours before much production"(p.54). If St. Anne's School has any hope of helping students acquire the Mi'kmaq language, a half hour three times a week can hardly provide significant language immersion to achieve fluency status.

The delay in Mi'kmaq language revitalization is compounded by the fact that the residents of the community do not speak the language and therefore have very little to offer as support for language renewal. Currently, no program exists to introduce the Mi'kmaq language to the community. As a result, students have no reinforcement of the language outside of the school environment. Due to lack of materials and qualified teaching staff in the Mi'kmaq language, it is very difficult to have a successful language program. The restoration of the Mi'kmaq language must become a total community effort. According to Brandt & Ayoungman (1989), language renewal is

an organized adult effort to ensure that at least some members of a
group whose traditional language has a steadily declining number of
speakers will continue to use the language and promote its being
learned by others in the group. Those others are almost always the
very young, for it is with these members of the group that the future
rests (p.43).

Restoration requires a total effort by all. In other words, language and cultural
restoration will not occur unless both the school and community work together
(Brandt & Ayoungman, 1989; Chastain, 1980; Fishman, 1990; Genesee, 1984).
What goes on in the school will not amount to anything substantial unless it is
supplemented in the world outside the classroom. It is vitally important that learners
be constantly surrounded by language so that it becomes comprehensible, useful
and functional (Krashen, 1981). Krashen and others have frequently reiterated that
students need opportunities to hear the language so that they may better come to
understand the language. The Mi'kmaq language must be seen as having a function
within the community if it is to become successful. This type of environment will also
enable the learners to monitor their own language acquisition and comprehend how
the language works. Krashen (1981) explains what is meant by functional language:

This consists of class time involving communicative activity with the
teacher speaking only in the target language and students responding
in the target language, or their first language. Student errors are
ignored unless there is some communication failure (p.106).

The primary purpose of this procedure is to help students understand the language fully by providing natural and meaningful contexts for language usage.

All of this is further compounded by the fact that there appears to be little desire by some members of the community to renew the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek. Previous efforts, by Mi'kmaq language teachers, to introduce the Mi'kmaq language to the community has had very little effect on language use. As Brandt & Ayoungman (1989) explain:

> Many people have been socialized by negative experiences in their past schooling, by deliberate policies which have or had as their aim the eradication of native languages and cultures; or simply may feel that the time has passed for the language and that the language of the future is English (p.46).

Therefore, a desire for the language must be established to help individuals understand the value of the Mi'kmaq language. As Krashen (1981) suggests, we must develop within individuals an 'integrative motivation' where individuals "desire to be like a valued member of the community that speaks the language." (p.23). Success depends largely on whether or not the acquisition of the language is perceived as desirable. The experience in Miawpukek has not been documented and this thesis can provide a useful starting point for building a renewed base of language instruction.

Programs of Study

Mohawk immersion

Several groups have had success with second language development over the past decades. One Aboriginal program of note is the Mohawk Immersion Program employed by the Mohawks of Kanhawake, Quebec, which began in 1979 (Hoover, 1992). It was at this time that the Kenien'Kehaka Raotitiohkwa Cultural Centre established a pilot project to use only Mohawk in nursery schools. This program was modelled after the French Immersion program and, therefore, would only use Mohawk as the language of instruction in these schools. All interactions between the teacher and students were carried out in Mohawk. This program proved to be very successful because language was viewed as being an important part of their cultural identity. Hoover(1992) reports,

It has proved so successful that today more than half of the community's students study entirely in Mohawk from nursery to grade 3, then 60% in Mohawk and 40% in English from grades 4 to 6. The others attend the English-language elementary school in the community, where they receive an half -hour a day instruction in Mohawk(p. 271).

Consequently, the Mohawk language, which had been declining over the last 100 years, was able to be re-established in Kanhawake. As Hoover(1992) states, "The community has a strong sense of importance of the language to their cultural identity, and supports a range of schemes to further promote the learning and use of the Mohawk language"(p.281). Community support for the Mohawk language grew even stronger than it had been before.

Mi'kmaq Language Program

Still another program of note is the Mi'kmaq Language Program employed in Eskasoni Elementary and Junior High School at Eskasoni, Nova Scotia. Here the emphasis is centred around reading and writing the Mi'kmaq language as opposed to acquiring the language, which is the aim of the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek. The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia have experienced great success with their language program and have developed extensive curriculum resources and materials to support their educational objectives. While this is a great achievement for them, their approach does little to address the needs of the people of Miawpukek. Unlike Eskasoni, where the program is geared toward people who already speak the language and, therefore, more concerned with language maintenance, Miawpukek requires a program for language renewal and revitalization. What Eskasoni has done will only be of benefit to Miawpukek once the Mi'kmaq language has been re-established in the community.

Maori Program

Programs such as those among Maori, in New Zealand, are valuable to Aboriginal experiences. The Maori are widely recognized and admired for their success in promoting Aboriginal language and culture. Much like Canada's First Nations people, the Maori have outsider status within New Zealand and in the early 1970's saw a decline in Maori language usage to the extent where it was being threatened with extinction as the younger generation were not using it. Unlike the

Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek though, the Maori still had elders who were able to speak the language.

The decline of the Maori language became an important concern for the Aboriginal peoples of New Zealand. As a result, the first language nests were established in New Zealand in 1982 (Fleras, 1989). The Kohanga Reo, or language nests as they are commonly called, were set up much like preschools. However, as Fleras(1989) states, "Formal teaching methods are eschewed in favour of learning by exposure and verbal exchange between the child and adult"(p.82). It had as its goals the promotion of Maori language, culture and community. To help ensure the use of Maori, they selected supervisors on the strengths of their Maori skills and developed teacher training as a part of their program(Fleras, 1989). As a result, the program has experienced unprecedented success. Growing numbers of people, both children and adults, are now capable of speaking, or at least understanding Maori and have a renewed interest in the Maori culture. As Fleras(1989) writes,

> Much of the program's success can be attributed to the incorporation
>
> of Maori cultural values and communal organization within a
>
> traditional learning context... Reliance on community involvement and
>
> an extended family setting (whanau) furnishes a learning context for
>
> the enculturation of Maori cultural values(p.84).

Thus, the Maori have been able to reinforce the value of traditional networks among their people.

French Immersion

A final program of importance to this study is the French Immersion program founded in Quebec, now available throughout Canada's education systems. French Immersion was introduced in 1965, for the non- French speaking students in Quebec and, since that time it has experienced phenomenal growth. Safty (1991) explains: "The approach was literally to immerse the non-French speaking children in classrooms where the school curriculum would be taught partially in French starting at the kindergarten level"(p.474). This approach soon became very popular and successful. From 1965, when there was one school and very few students, French Immersion has increased to over 17,000 schools and thousands of students (Safty, 1991). Much of the success can be attributed to the growing acceptance of Canada's bilingual character and the academic and linguistic benefits of being bilingual. However, it is important to note that French Immersion has had government and parental support, as well as qualified teachers, curriculum, resources and materials to administer these French Immersion programs. Without such resources immersion would not have experienced such phenomenal success.

Program Requirements

Literature regarding Aboriginal language programs has provided essential components of successful language renewal. These requirements include qualified teachers who can speak the desired language, materials and resources to aide language renewal activities, developed curriculum in the target language, and

community support to promote language renewal. These aspects are what is required in Miawpukek if language renewal is to experience success similar to that of the Maori or Mohawk. Because language is meaningful, unpredictable, subconscious, and unstructured, we need to find an approach that can help develop these characteristics in the language program. Because conversation and communication is so spontaneous, the use of structured and predictable communication is unrealistic at best.

Communicative Competence Approach

From early second-language research, it became apparent that a new approach was required to help re-establish the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek. After doing extensive research and based on my experience as a previous language instructor in Miawpukek, I became aware that the need for Mi'kmaq curricula was great. One approach that may meet the Mi'kmaq language needs is a communicative competence approach, which requires development in four critical areas: culture, communicative activities, situational tasks, and linguistic exercises. The sole aim of such a program is the development of the ability to communicate in the target language. Language is viewed primarily as a tool for communicating and not and end in itself (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1989). It becomes important to develop communicative competence with the students. As expressed by the Nova Scotia Department of Education(1989),

> The development of communicative competence requires the
> development of the knowledge of the code of the language (linguistic

competence), the ability to put language together to form unified texts (discourse competence), the ability to use language appropriately (sociolinguistic competence), and the ability to use verbal and non-verbal strategies to compensate for communication problems (strategic competence)(p.4).

It seems obvious that the easiest way to achieve this type of competence is by making communication meaningful to the learner. However, the classroom environment is not necessarily the best place for this as it does not provide situations for normal, everyday conversation. This makes it vitally important to develop particular situations within the classroom to make them possible. This is referred to as situational tasks (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1989).

Situational tasks are artificial situations that are developed, within the classroom, that resemble real-life situations in which people may find themselves from time to time. These types of activities help make language learning meaningful for the learner. As Wilkins (1978) explains, "Language learning will proceed more efficiently if specific instances of language behaviour are modelled for the learner and if he is given the opportunity to engage in analogous behaviour based on the model provided"(pp. 69-70). Sufficient opportunities must be provided to allow students the chance to apply what they have learned.

Much of this can be organized through the use of thematic units. Based on these themes, situational tasks may be developed for which the learners will find themselves in real life. These tasks also provide the communicative objectives for the units and must be designed to help stimulate the learner to practise

communicating (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 1989). Once the tasks and units are decided upon, then one can begin to develop the necessary linguistic skills required. Much of this can be predicted but will vary from year to year and class to class. All exercises must have as their goal the development of the ability to communicate. Learners are stimulated to choose vocabulary which they feel are important, thus creating the element of interest. It is also important at this time to monitor pronunciation, but not allow the emphasis on correct pronunciation to control the activity. By constantly correcting pronunciation the teacher may cause the learner to become very self-conscious and less willing to try. One should only use correction if pronunciation interferes with the message that is being communicated.

The final area of concern, when developing communicative competence, is that of culture. As noted by the Nova Scotia Department of Education (1989); "Studies have shown that the more learners are able to understand, appreciate and accept a target culture, the more they will be able to master the target language"(p. 11). Before people can understand a language, they must first come to understand the cultural distinctions of the people who speak the language. Culture and language are not mutually exclusive. It is difficult to expect an individual to learn a language of a culture for which they have no knowledge and no respect. Therefore, it is of vital importance that culture be the formation of language learning to the classroom along with the language. This can be partially achieved through understanding history, but more importantly, with regard to Aboriginal languages, elders and community must become an integral part of the classroom.

One cannot separate language and culture. As the Nova Scotia Department of Education (1989) explains, "Language is not learned in isolation and should not be taught in isolation. It is a product of culture and a medium of expressing culture. Culture must be an integral part of language learning and teaching" (p. 5). An elder, Eli Taylor Shkilnyk (1985) further reiterates this point by stating:

"Our native language embodies a value system about how we ought to live and relate to each other...it gives a name to relations among kin, to roles and responsibilities among family members, to ties with the broader clan group...There are no English words for these relationships because your social and family life is different from ours. Now if you destroy our language, you not only break down these relationships, but you also destroy other aspects of our Indian way of life and culture, especially those that describe man's connection with nature, the Great Spirit, the order of things. Without our language, we will cease to exist as separate people"(p. 25).

It is also important that the teacher be conscious not to stereotype the relevant Aboriginal group, whether French, Maori or Mi'kmaq, with whom they are dealing.

Conclusion

Upon examination of a variety of language theories,(Freeman & Freeman (1994), Brandt & Ayoungman (1989), Krashen & Terrell (1988), Genesee (1984), Krashen (1981), Jarvis (1980), Chastain (1980), Wilkins (1978), and Sodhi (1970)), several themes have emerged that identify necessary elements of a successful

language program. Included among them are the following: a) language must be seen as meaningful and serve a function in society; b) there must be outside support for the language program; c) the learner must have a desire to learn the language and be motivated to learn, d) make the language learning environment as close to real life situations as possible, and e) one must have a knowledgeable, qualified teacher of the target language. All of this could be accomplished through the use of a communicative competence approach. This approach attempts to rectify many of the problems experienced by language programs by making language learning more efficient by using it to do things which are meaningful to the learner, which also increases the desire to learn.

The above approach can be successful but, before one can implement such a program, it is important to determine the value placed on the restoration of the desired language, which in the case of the Miawpukek, is Mi'kmaq . The following Chapter will provide an explanation of the methodology of the study that will be conducted to determine the value placed on restoring Mi'kmaq to Miawpukek, as well as examine prevailing attitudes toward the Mi'kmaq language in Miawpukek. Once an analysis of the data is conducted, recommendations will be made toward developing communicative competence in the Mi'kmaq language on the Miawpukek Reserve.

Chapter 3

Methodology and Research Design

Methodology

As noted in Chapter One, the purpose of this research was to identify the language needs of the Mi'kmaq in Miawpukek in an effort to effect programmatic considerations which will increase communicative competence in the Mi'kmaq language. An investigation was conducted to examine factors contributing to language loss, current perceptions and attitudes toward the Mi'kmaq language, as well as the current uses of language in the community, leading toward recommendations to the Miawpukek First Nation for an approach to Mi'kmaq language renewal.

The research began upon completion of a pilot test of the 40 questionnaires and 10 interview guides among parents, teachers, students, school administrators, chief and council and elders of the Miawpukek Reserve who were invited to participate in the research. Participants were made aware that all information that they could submit to the research would be strictly confidential and that they had the option of withdrawing from the interview at anytime throughout the process. After protocols of requesting permission from Chief and Band Council and the Director of Education, and because of the limited size of the sample population, the researcher conducted a sampling of 50 members of Miawpukek to participate in a survey, as well as 10 members of the Miawpukek band and school to participate in extended discussion and interviews. With permission, the researcher tape-

recorded the interviews. Participants were briefed about the purpose of the study and possible benefits of the study, and were then given an opportunity to ask questions or contribute input to the study.

Transcripts of the recorded interviews were prepared from the audio tapes and the completed transcripts of the interviews were reviewed by the researcher to assess any further need to contact participants for clarification of information and also to obtain permission to use the information that was gathered. All participants were given a participant code and allowed to review their transcripts for accuracy and further clarification. At this time participants had the opportunity to add or delete any information that they considered to be inappropriate after reflection on what they had said in the interview.

Site Selection

The people chosen for this study were members of the Miawpukek Band and its government. The research included surveys and interviews with parents, teachers, chief, council, band members and elders. All are Mi'kmaq people who were chosen to provide the researcher with a more complete view of the functions and uses of the Mi'kmaq language in Miawpukek; as well, it provided the researcher with an in depth understanding of the perceptions and attitudes toward Mi'kmaq language renewal/restoration in Miawpukek, Newfoundland. All interviewees had the ability to shed light on the research that was conducted.

As previously noted, the research was conducted on one reserve. This reserve was chosen because it had suffered language loss over the past 70 years

and has only recently began implementing a Mi'kmaq language program to help restore their Aboriginal language to its people. Data were collected from both the school staff and surrounding community members to allow for a more complete understanding of the needs of this community regarding the value placed upon the Mi'kmaq language.

Data Collection Procedures

Qualitative research techniques were used for this study of Mi'kmaq language restoration. This helped to provide a powerful image of what programs exist that would help the restoration effort. The researcher collected data by conducting semi-structured interviews, surveys and recording observational notes after each interview.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The primary data collection techniques that were used in this study are a set of semi-structured interviews. Borg and Gall (1989) state that the interview research method is "unique in that it involves the collection of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals"(p. 446).

This type of interview is reasonably objective, while still permitting a more thorough understanding of the respondents' opinions. Being face to face with the respondents allows the interviewer the opportunity to observe any non-verbal clues and provides the opportunity to probe participants for more complete answers.

Woods (1986) notes that these interviews allow the researcher to find out individual perspectives and stimulate the flow of data.

Because questions were open ended, the interviewer was able to elicit more information than possible through a questionnaire. A disadvantage with the interview is that it can be subject to bias (Borg & Gall, 1989). Interviewers must be careful not to subject the interview to any bias that they may have which would affect the results. Further, it is vitally important that the researcher obtain the trust of the participant. Erickson (1986) believes that trust and rapport are essential toward establishing a "noncoercive, mutually rewarding relationship" (p. 142).

Because semi-structured interviews provide a desired combination of objectivity and depth, and they permit the gathering of valuable data that could not be obtained by any other approach, the researcher chose it as the primary data collection technique.

Interviews were conducted with 10 members of the Miawpukek Band. Of the ten, three were parents of children in school, two were teachers at St. Anne's school, two were elders in the community, two were Band Council members and one was the school administrator. The semi-structured interviews were conducted to allow respondents the opportunity to elaborate more fully on issues of importance. The questions are provided in Appendix E.

Interviews were pilot tested with representatives of the groups to be interviewed and adaptations were made accordingly. Interviews were then conducted in a two week period during June of 1997. Prior to the interview participants were contacted and briefed about the purpose of the interview and

given an opportunity to ask questions or voice concerns. The researcher informed the participants of their role in the study and ensured them of anonymity and confidentiality in the treatment of the data collected from the interview.

With permission, each interview was taped and a summary of the data was completed by the researcher and reviewed by the participant. Participants were encouraged to add any information that they felt was missing from their initial responses (Wood, 1986).

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were chosen to supplement the semi-structured interviews. Although it is argued that questionnaires are often shallow (Borg & Gall, 1989), the value of the questionnaire can be found in their inexpensiveness and ability to collect copious amounts of data. The questionnaire process was thus chosen to compliment the data gathered by the interviews alone. Questionnaires also allowed the researcher to conduct research on a much larger population base than would be feasible through interviews. They also provide another valuable source of information for the researcher.

The researcher constructed the questionnaire for this study driven by the research objectives. At first he completed numerous readings concerning second-language acquisition, as well as readings on successful language programs throughout Canada and the world. Questions were drawn up to probe participants for any knowledge they had surrounding the research.

Construct validity refers to the extent to which a particular test can be shown to measure a hypothetical construct (Borg & Gall, 1989). To achieve construct validity the questions were submitted to two university professors who were acting as supervisors for the researcher. They provided information which could then be used as feedback to the questions, which were then revised and passed on to the researcher's committee members for further examination. Upon receiving this feedback, the questions were once again revised to make necessary corrections.

Once this revision process was completed, the questionnaire was then pilot tested with a representative group of three Mi'kmaq band members to address any need to make further adaptations. No difficulties arose at that time. This helped further validate the study and increased confidence placed on the research findings. The questionnaires were then administered by hand to the participants who completed them during a two week period in June. They were later submitted to the community Band Office, Medical Clinic and, eventually, to the school where the researcher could gather them. Once again participant anonymity was ensured and data were treated with extreme confidentiality.

Literature Review

The study of literature concerning second language acquisition and learning is important to provide the researcher with insight into successful language programs that could not be obtained through recorded interviews, but is essential in providing the researcher with the background knowledge necessary to provide

depth to the interviews and help in designing appropriate items for the survey questionnaire. Based on the literature, the researcher was able to develop interview questions and items for the questionnaires that probed the participants for their knowledge surrounding the research.

Reflective Journal

Reflective journaling constitutes making reflective notes on the interview upon immediate completion of each interview (Glesne and Perkin, 1992). The researcher copied down descriptive field notes to help strive toward achieving accuracy but, at the same time, attempting to avoid being judgmental. It helped the researcher capture the overall picture of the setting and the participant who was being interviewed (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). This process helped the researcher become more focussed toward the purpose of the interview and clarify any problems with interpretation and provided a running record of the researchers impressions of the interviewee's mood and attitude toward the research and researcher (Lancy, 1993). Descriptive notes also helped the researcher understand patterns and themes that emerged so that they could be recalled at a later date. It was important that the researcher record any observations and impressions, such as doubt, sensitivity, etc, immediately following the interview to help paint a complete picture (Slavin, 1992).

Triangulation

Triangulation is using several methods to study the same object (Borg & Gall, 1989). By using interviews, questionnaires and a reflective journal, the research becomes more valid and more confidence is placed on the research findings. Shipman (1981) maintains that "when researchers use only one method the result is a one dimensional snapshot of a very wide and deep social scene" (p. 147). This makes it very difficult to make any generalizations from the findings. By conducting a triangulation of the study, the research becomes more reliable. Lancy (1993) believes that the process of cross-checking, triangulation, is a good defence against charges of subjectivity. Triangulation greatly enhances the validity of the research (Woods, 1986, Yin, 1989).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted by,

1. identifying key themes and ideas that emerged during the interviews and transcribing exercises;

2. creating broad categories based on data received after transcriptions have been completed; and

3. coding the data and creating units of information that can be sorted according to identified categories.

The data and comments collected by the interviews and questionnaires were summarized and categorized according to the research objectives. Using SPSS for Windows, the researcher conducted frequency tests on the results obtained from

the questionnaires to identify themes. Anonymity of the participants was honoured in the data analysis and conclusions.

Ethical Guidelines

Ethical procedures, as prescribed by the University of Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on Ethical Behavioural Sciences Research, were followed with respect to guidelines concerning research protocol. Copies of the necessary forms are enclosed in the Appendices .

Summary

This study was a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques that were used to investigate communicative competence in Mi'kmaq on the Miawpukek reserve. The interviews and questionnaires were used to attempt to discover the value placed on the Mi'kmaq language and culture in the community of Miawpukek. The study was very case specific and, therefore, only involved members of the Miawpukek reserve in Newfoundland. Fifty people participated in the questionnaire survey portion of the research, as well as an additional 10 members who participated in the interview portion of the research. Based on these, and sample reading from the literature on second languages, learning and acquisition, the researcher will be able to provide recommendations for the successful restoration and renewal of the Mi'kmaq language to the community of Miawpukek.

Chapter 4

Presentation of Data

The purpose of this research was to investigate the value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to the First Nation reserve of Miawpukek. Data were collected through a series of surveys and semi-structured interviews conducted throughout the Miawpukek reserve. These instruments provided the researcher with valuable information to use in pursuing the research objectives. For the purposes of this research, the remainder of this chapter will be organized around a discussion of the research findings as they relate to the research objectives listed earlier in this thesis. Following the presentation of the research findings, a synthesis of themes and insights is provided in terms of the research objectives.

Characteristics of Respondents

The respondents for the survey and interview portions of this research were selected on the basis of specific criteria. Fifty respondents were chosen for the survey portion of the research who were registered band members aged 25 years and over. In addition, these respondents had children attending school or had attended school in the past 10 years on the Miawpukek reserve and since the school has become a band-controlled school. Of the 50 surveys that were mailed out, 28 were returned giving a 56% rate of return.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first examined demographic data and asked respondents for information on their age, sex, position in the community, numbers of years in the community and number of dependents of each respondent. The second part was a series of statements related to the value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek using a five part, Likert-type frequency scale ("Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree"). Finally, the third part consisted of four questions that probed for further clarification regarding the value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. In addition, respondents were invited to add other comments on matters that might not have been covered by the questionnaire.

The demographic data recorded are found in Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4. Table 4.1 charts the frequency and percent of the respondents according to age group. The largest percentage of the participants, 25.0%, were in the thirty-five to thirty-nine age-group with the twenty-five to twenty-nine and thirty to thirty-five age-groups tied for the next largest at 21.4%. There were none in the fifty to fifty-four range and therefore are not reported table 4.1.

Table 4.1
Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Age (N=28)

Age of Respondents	Frequency	Percent
25-29	6	21.4
30-34	6	21.4
35-39	7	25.0
40-44	3	10.7
45-49	4	14.3
55+	1	3.6
Missing	1	3.6
Total	28	100

Table 4.2 provides details of the gender of the respondents. Of the respondents, 57.6% were female, while 39.3% were male.

Table 4.2
Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Gender (N=28)

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	11	39.3
Female	16	57.1
Missing	1	3.6
Total	28	100

Table 4.3 charts the frequency and percent of the respondents according to their number of dependents. The highest percentage of dependents, 32.1%, was found in both the one and two dependent categories. The next highest was three dependents at 10.7%. It should be noted that six participants, 21.4%, failed to report any dependents and are therefore classified as 'Missing.' Also, no respondents reported having four dependents and therefore this category was left out of the table.

Table 4.3
Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Number of Dependents (N=28)

Number of Dependents	Frequency	Percent
1	9	32.1
2	9	32.1
3	3	10.7
5	1	3.6
Missing	6	21.4
Total	28	99.9

Table 4.4 outlines the number of years each respondent has lived in the community of Miawpukek. The largest percentage of the participants, 39.3%, were

in the thirty-one to forty year grouping with the twenty-one to thirty year grouping

holding the second largest percentage at 25.0%. Only one participant, 3.6%, had

lived in the community for under 10 year. The majority, 88.8%, of the respondents

had lived in Miawpukek between twenty-one and fifty years.

Table 4.4
Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Number of years in the Community of
Miawpukek (N=28)

Number of years in community	Frequency	Percent
0-10	1	3.6
11-20	1	3.6
21-30	7	25.0
31-40	11	39.2
41-50	6	21.4
Over 50	1	3.6
Missing	1	3.6
Total	28	100

The second part of the questionnaire examined the value placed on restoring

the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek by examining the question of who

should be responsible for the restoration process and whether or not it is necessary

and viable to the community. Respondents were asked to respond to specific

statements using a five-point, Likert-type frequency scale ("Strongly Agree" to

"Strongly Disagree"). Responses were scored as follows: Strongly Agree = 1 and

Strongly Disagree = 5. Respondents were then asked to circle their level of

agreement. A mean of 2.5 and lower indicated agreement, whereas a mean of 2.6

and higher indicated disagreement with the statement.

In order to facilitate the presentation of the data obtained from the second area of the questionnaire, items have been grouped according to topic area. After completion of the data collection, statements were grouped into three areas; (a) personal value, (b) community's role and c) school's role. Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 give the mean and standard deviation for the responses to each item of the questionnaire related to value placed on restoring Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. Table 4.5 provides the responses to the statements related to personal value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek by the respondents. The mean and standard deviation clearly showed that there was strong agreement with the statements and, therefore, indicated value in restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. A mean of 1.11 is the lowest mean, for the statement "I am proud to be Mi'kmaq," indicated a very high level of agreement. The means of 4.78 and 3.89 indicated high disagreement and did not show that value is placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek

Table 4.6 presents responses to the statements related to the community's role in the Mi'kmaq language and culture restoration efforts. Based on the responses to these questionnaire items, the respondents agreed that the community should play more of a role in the restoration effort. The statement "Restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture is the responsibility of the community" contained the highest level of agreement with a mean of 1.41. One must note though that in the statement "All Band employees should have to take Mi'kmaq language classes," the mean was much higher, 3.25, indicating that respondents

disagreed with the statement and felt that they should not be required to take

Mi'kmaq classes, but that they be given a choice whether to participate or not.

Table 4.5
Frequency Distribution of Responses to Items related to Personal Value Placed on
Restoring Mi'kmaq Language and Culture to Miawpukek (N=28)

Questionnaire items	Mean	SD
A1. Learning Mi'kmaq language is important to me.	1.89	1.03
A4. Learning the Mi'kmaq culture is important to me.	1.68	.82
A7. Mi'kmaq language and culture are important aspects of Mi'kmaq identity.	1.25	.52
A9. I would like to see more cultural activities within the community.	1.61	.69
A11. I am proud to be Mi'kmaq.	1.11	.42
A12. It is too late to try and restore the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek.	4.78	.80
A14. Learning the Mi'kmaq language is too difficult.	3.89	1.16
A15. Mi'kmaq language and culture are important to our survival as Mi'kmaq people.	1.22	.51

Table 4.6
Frequency Distribution of Responses to Items Related to the Role of the Community
in the Restoration of the Mi'kmaq Language and Culture (N=28)

Questionnaire items	Mean	SD
A5. Restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture is the responsibility of the community.	1.41	.75
A6. It is important to have Mi'kmaq language classes for all members of the community.	1.64	1.13
A8. All Band employees should have to take Mi'kmaq language classes.	3.25	1.56
A10. The community should place more emphasis on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek.	1.57	.88

Table 4.7 presents responses to statements relating to the school's role in

the Mi'kmaq language and culture restoration effort. These responses indicated

that children should learn Mi'kmaq language and culture; however, the agreement is not as strong as in previous cases, thereby questioning the primary role of the school in language restoration. These responses showed a weak agreement concerning Mi'kmaq language and cultural restoration.

Table 4.7
Frequency Distribution of Responses to Items Related to the School's Role in the Mi'kmaq Language and Culture Restoration Effort (N=28)

Questionnaire Items	Mean	SD
A2. It is important for Miawpukek children to learn the Mi'kmaq language.	1.21	.50
A3. Restoring Mi'kmaq language and culture is the responsibility of the school.	2.64	1.25
A13. The school should place more emphasis on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture.	1.96	1.13

This concludes the quantitative portion of the survey. As noted earlier, fifty-six percent of the original volunteers responded to the questionnaire. The respondents perceived that it is important to restore Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek and that this restoration is a collective responsibility. The personal value placed on restoring Mi'kmaq language and culture had an average mean of 1.46, showing strong agreement. With regard to the community role in this process, there was strong agreement that the community should take more of an active role, with an average mean of 1.54. (The mean of 3.25 was omitted from this average because the wording of the question had severe impact on the response received. Because of the use of the word should, people responded negatively because they

felt they were being forced). However, respondents were somewhat less sure, (average mean = 1.94), as to whether or not the school should play a larger role than it already does. The overall perception was that a definite need existed for more Mi'kmaq language and culture in the community.

Responses to Written Questions

The third and final area examined by the survey was the written questions. These questions probed for information in a variety of areas. The first question was, "Do you see restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture as a necessary and viable undertaking for this community?" Of the 28 people who returned their questionnaires, 23, (82%), answered this question affirmatively. All 23 agreed that it is necessary and viable to restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek, signifying unanimous agreement on this statement. The following comments have been selected to reflect this attitude:

> "Yes, because it is a part of our culture and tradition and being able to speak and understand only a few words gives one a sense of pride."

> "Yes, because it helps preserve our culture and heritage. It is a part of who we are and for our culture and language to survive means the survival of the Mi'kmaq people."

> "I do see the Mi'kmaq language as a viable undertaking for the community because with our language and culture, we as Mi'kmaq Indians become a lot stronger and personally I think it would bring our community closer together."

The second question, "What obstacles do you think stand in the way of restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek?", yielded a similar number of responses with 22 people, or a 79% response rate. From these

responses many of the respondents felt that individual attitudes represented the biggest obstacle:

> "Attitudes of the individual. No pride in being a Mi'kmaq, just there for the money."

> "The greatest obstacle will be apathy. Individuals that do not take the lead and just sit back and watch nothing being done."

Still others identified time restraints difficulty and low self-confidence as impediments to restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture:

> "There may still be fear of being different or the idea of the language being too difficult to learn. Time would also be a factor to consider because even in a small community like ours, there's just so much happening."

Finally, there were a few people who felt that there were no obstacles that could stand in the way of restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek:

> "I don't think there are any obstacles standing in the way. It's being taught in the school and there used to be sessions outside of the school one time. This seems to be working fine."

The third question was, "What suggestions or recommendations would you make to the community to help the restoration process?" Sixty-eight percent, or 19 respondents, unanimously agreed that more Mi'kmaq needed to be introduced throughout the community and school:

> "More access to Mi'kmaq tapes, videos, etc, that the individual can take home and learn in the privacy of their own home."

> "We need to make use of the community channel."

> "If someone would teach the Mi'kmaq language so everyone could have a chance to learn it. This would help people become proud toward speaking the Mi'kmaq language."

There was a strong urgency that something has to be done before it is too late:

> "Wake up and smell the coffee!!! We are Mi'kmaq. Don't let our differences sink into oblivion."

The fourth question, "What do you see as your role in this restoration effort?", had a response rate of 71%, or 20 out of 28 responding. The majority of respondents felt that their role centred around becoming an active participant and supporter of the restoration effort:

> "To encourage and support any effort made by the community to bring about this restoration."

> "My children are learning and they are teaching me. I think the restoration process may begin in the school but must continue at home with the family unit."

> "My role in the restoration process is to do all that I can to encourage my child to learn the Mi'kmaq language and culture and in turn teach his children and so on."

It was agreed that the community needed to become more supportive of this process, especially within their homes.

The final statement, "Please feel free to make any other comments that you feel are necessary, that may have been missed by the above questionnaire and survey", yielded the lowest response. Only 29%, or eight out of 28 of the respondents, contributed to this portion of the questionnaire. Responses to this question varied:

"It will take a while for the language to restore itself. It will take a community effort. Start with the kids for they are the future. Immersion programs would help tremendously."

"I feel that the community should play a major role in the restoration of our culture and language. Our elders do have a wealth of knowledge that must be recorded and passed on. The school should be the main focus point for language restoration."

Generally, it was felt that we must continue current efforts but at the same time get the community more involved in this process. Also, our Elders are not being used for the wealth of tacit information that they possess. The community needs to come together if this effort is to have any success.

Interview Data

Respondents chosen for the interview portion of this research had similar demographic characteristics and delimitation as respondents for the questionnaire. To begin, a description of the interview process and a profile of the interviewees are presented. Then the interview questions will be examined on the basis of responses to each question. In turn, the final section is a summary of the findings accumulated by the interview process and is organized around themes that emerged from the interviews conducted.

The Interview Process and the Interviewees

Interviews were conducted with a purposive sample selected from band members who agreed to take part in this portion of the study. Interviewees were

chosen to represent a variety of different age-groups from ages twenty-five and older. A total of ten interviewees were selected and interviewed.

The purpose of the interview was two-fold: first, to obtain clarification on the history of language loss in Miawpukek, and second, to obtain additional information as to the value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. The respondents are listed by age, gender, years in the community, and number of dependents in Table 6.1.

Table 4.8
Profile of the Interviewees (N=10)

	Age	Gender	# of years in community	# of dependents
1.	45-49	Male	41-50	1
2.	35-39	Female	11-20	4
3.	35-39	Female	31-40	2
4.	30-34	Male	31-40	1
5.	50-54	Male	50+	3
6.	25-29	Male	21-30	0
7.	25-29	Male	21-30	0
8.	50-54	Female	50+	0
9.	55+	Male	50+	0
10.	55+	Male	50+	0

Interviews were conducted within a two week period, at a time and location chosen by the interviewee. Interview times ranged from 9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Locations chosen were either the interviewee's place of work or the interviewer's home, which was left to the discretion of the interviewee. Interviews lasted from approximately thirty to forty-five minutes. The interviews consisted of a semi-structured format in that specific questions were asked, but respondents were free to comment on anything they wished to share. Interviewees were provided with a

written copy of the questions so that they could follow along with the interviewer. A copy of the questions are provided in Appendix D. The interviewer tried to keep interruptions to a minimum, only stopping for clarification or explanatory purposes. All interviews were taped and later transcribed by the interviewer.

Interview Responses

1a) How do you remember the Mi'kmaq language being lost? This question elicited several perspectives with most respondents indicating that they were of the opinion that the church and school were the major contributors to the loss. A typical and well informed example reads as follows:

> "The church they...well you know I was telling you about Steve's night and all that. Well, they also used to have prayers like that, 2 or 3 nights in a row, for certain things. The church didn't like it because they couldn't understand what they were doing. They couldn't understand the language and it seemed like it was over their head I suppose. They were kind of proud priests and they had their own way. They'd go to church and if they had sing-song in the church that was all right, that was their way of doing it. They didn't like any of this because they couldn't understand it. They put a stop to that. And the Mi'kmaq Indian, he thought a lot of his church you know and he really believed in church. Well, we all do I suppose but not so much as good a belief as they had. So when the priest got mad with them because he thought they were doing something bad, they didn't like it very well. He threatened to take away Absolution, they called it then. You got to go and tell your sins and all that you know and go to receive. Now he threatened he would do that if they didn't stop. Now to lose that they would never think because to lose that would be the last thing they'd want to happen to them. So some of them got packed up and left and some of them stopped doing their prayers and talking their language and more or less they were afraid of the priest and if they wanted to do something they'd do it on the sly of the priest."

Still another account tells of how intermarriage played a major role in the loss of the Mi'kmaq language:

"I remember it being lost through marriage, through people marrying the white women. Everyone talked Mi'kmaq when I was small but you see my father married a woman from outside Conne, and not only him, you find a lot of men married white women and soon nobody talked Mi'kmaq in the homes. So it gradually went out. All the older people used to talk it when they went in the country or when they went to church somewhere. No one ever tried to impress on me how important it was because as it was then no one saw the importance of it that much because if it was lost then...If somebody had showed me the importance of learning the language I surely would have because I know I've heard every Mi'kmaq word ever spoken and I pretty well could understand them one at a time but to convert it, I wouldn't know how to do that...That's my perception of the language and I'm sure that's how it went because I can remember everybody here talking Mi'kmaq but when you went home you never heard it anymore."

Others spoke of what they had heard:

"During the early years I guess, back in...back when...it was sort of like the language was forbidden, just forbidden I guess."

"I don't remember it being lost. I remember parents and grandparents talking about one time how elders and love ones were speaking it, how they just stopped speaking. Hearing stories of how they weren't allowed to speak it in school and how people quit school because of that and how it was just weeded out more or less."

"I remember a few of the older people like Maurice Jeddore and those fellows speaking it once in a while, that's about it. They didn't feel comfortable with speaking it because of the church values that were placed on them back then. That's what I gather from their sayings."

1b) How was it retained after this? yielded these responses:

"It was retained by the people. The only time they did that was in the country or when people came visiting, when Mi'kmaq people came visiting here. They would talk the Mi'kmaq language when they got together outside of the church. They were fluent in the language so they kept it going until they all started to die out and the language went with them."

"They'd do their own thing down here. If somebody died or drowned, then they'd do their wake and do their sing-songs... They did what they thought was the truth. They'd do that anywhere one time as far as I know. If you drowned in the country one time the old man said, they went in after you. They'd pray every night, every time it came dark wherever they camped.

> They had the rosary and singing until morning sometimes...They kept doing their own thing.

As is evident, most of the language was retained through private gatherings and when people from other reserves, such as Eskasoni, visited the community. Other interviewees talked of this as well:

> "By memory I guess. Sometimes at supper I remember my Grandfather using Mi'kmaq words for butter or milk but mainly when we had visitors."

> "I think they just spoke among themselves and with people they knew and grew up with...Grandfather used to tell me that even when he was young and growing up, he said lots of the language that he picked up was by listening to conversations around the table. The elders would get together, his father and that, would get together but they wouldn't teach the language because the church forbid it right, so he said he picked it up by listening. But he was never taught. It was mostly in the households at night when the family got together. He said it was never spoken out around."

1c) When was the last time you heard the Mi'kmaq language being spoken in the community? yielded more response. Although the language is virtually extinct, many have memories of hearing it being spoken. The main memory of its use focuses on an elder, Nicholas Jeddore, "Nickly", who passed away in the early eighties:

> "Nickly is the last fellow I heard who talked Mi'kmaq all through. Nickly was the last of our own people who used the language. I heard it after from people up in Eskasoni."

> "And the last fellow I heard talk Mi'kmaq was Nickly. He talked to fellows from Eskasoni when they come down or whatever. He spoke very fluently too but he rarely spoke it though. The reason why he didn't use it was because there was no one to use it with."

That was the most recent account of someone speaking Mi'kmaq in the community. Others had accounts of when they were much younger. The language has not been used in the community for several decades though as a language for conversation:

> "Well, fluently, to hear people sit down and talk the language in the community was probably about, it would have to be about ah 40 years ago."

The language has been gone for so long that many respondents had difficulty recollecting. For the past 40 or more years English has been the language of use in Miawpukek.

Question two also contained three parts. It's focus was Mi'kmaq knowledge.

2a) What do you consider to be distinctive Mi'kmaq knowledge remaining in the community? Answers varied but the common theme throughout was lifestyle and connection to the land:

> "The way we approach things. Our approach to life and the way we look at life is different. We are more relaxed, we don't get so tight about things. There's certain mannerisms. It's like an open door policy. Come in have a cup of tea and the door is never locked. We are more open and welcoming toward everyone. Maybe that comes from the way we were brought up. Maybe that comes from our ancestry. It's just the way we look at things, we are more relaxed. The people themselves are different. The value we put on things are different."

> "Well the few things you got left like what we do, our customs. We go eeling, making something like snowshoes. That's the only thing that connects us to the past. Our life style."

> "Your Lifestyle, your connection to the land if anything makes Conne River Mi'kmaq."

2b) What language situations exist today that carry Mi'kmaq knowledge? Respondents were mixed in their view regarding this statement. Most felt that there

was very little, if any, language situations that existed which carried Mi'kmaq

knowledge:

> "In this community, none. Our language today is English. No matter how in our heart and soul we want it to change, we still are stuck in this mode of speaking English and describing the land in English, or talking about the animals in English, and becoming more and more Anglicized and not the way it should be."

2c) In what ways and what language situations is this knowledge currently transmitted to future generations? showed that many respondents felt that this was not being done:

> "Is it being transmitted? No I don't think it's transmitted as it should be. I think the school right now is the only base and it's not significant what they are doing. So it's really not being transmitted, no I don't think it's being transmitted at all. I really don't."

> "I don't see it so much now a day because I used to hang around with the older crowd. But now it seems like the kids don't have as much respect now, I think that's a big deal. They don't have so much respect for their elders and that's where the culture and everything is starting to lose the older ways."

> "That's the problem, they're not! I don't know if it's because of something we are doing or if it's something that they are still afraid of."

The first two questions were designed to investigate the history of language

loss and obtain insight into the current level of Mi'kmaq knowledge remaining in

Miawpukek.

3. Do you feel it is important to restore/renew the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek? Why or why not? The responses were unanimously in

favour of restoring/renewing the Mi'kmaq language and culture:

> " I feel that it is of great importance. It's one of the things that the community is lacking right now. It's on the right track but it's not where it should be when you talk about language and that."

"Oh God yes! That would be a good thing. You know the reason it would be, because if they started speaking the language it would be just like it was one time. You would come here and everybody would talk Indian. But if an Indian comes from somewhere else and comes to Conne and speaks to someone in Mi'kmaq, he can't get an answer unless he uses English. That makes people wonder why we are Indian or Mi'kmaq? We can't speak the language, but we are really Indian. It would be a damn good thing to have back."

"I think it is important. If you get the Mi'kmaq knowledge, these things have been gathered over centuries of doing things right and doing things wrong and I think especially where we don't have a lot of resources, we can learn and take what we got and adapt them the same way our ancestors did."

"Most definitely. From a personal point I guess it was something that you knew was there and that you like to speak it but never could. You hear people that come in from Nova Scotia and places and you hear them talking Mi'kmaq and it sort of a made me feel like I'm missing something, like I should know what they're saying but didn't."

"Absolutely! I may not see it but hopefully my grandchildren will. We need to continue what's happening now with the school and with the mood in the community because the opportunity is there now and if we don't do it now we'll never do it."

Although there was strong agreement that it would be a good thing, there was still

some skepticism:

"In order for it to be important, I think it has to be wanted and has to be needed and I think the people here, number one, of the 600 people here they don't have the want or desire to restore the language. This is no fault of their own. It's because they have no background to the language. You have to look back two generations to find out the last time the language was officially spoken within small meeting circles and stores and community gatherings. These people here are all young parents and they have no background and to them it's like learning German or French. What's the need? Where am I going to use it? To them its probably more beneficial to learn French basically because they never really had any desire to learn the language."

It was obvious that respondents felt that the language and culture are important, but

the question remained as to whether or not that is the popular opinion.

4. What major obstacles do you think stand in the way of restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek? Out of this question came two areas of concern. The first and most popular concern was the attitudes of the people:

> "The one thing I see is the attitudes of people in Conne based on attitudes of people outside of Conne. What I mean by that is for years Conne, or natives, have been labelled as being either drunks, greasy, lazy, etc. If you tell a person this long enough they tend to believe it themselves. I know for a fact that ,for me personally and others, when people used to go away to university and someone asks them where came from, 95% would say Milltown or Bay D'Espoir. They would never say they came from Conne and the reason being was because of the connotations associated with being a Mi'kmaq Indian. Until people accept the fact that being Indian is really good, there will be limits and restrictions and people will not feel good about bringing back the language or culture."

Another obstacles that was mentioned by a few of the respondents was the lack of fluent speakers or teachers of the Mi'kmaq language:

> "Finding someone to teach the language is probably one of the biggest obstacles. There are not many people left in the community who can talk it and sometimes the dialect changes from community to community and we will probably never get the kind of language we had back. We would probably have to adapt the mainland Mi'kmaq. Finding someone to teach it and getting people to learn and getting people to talk it to one another will be difficult."

> "One of the biggest obstacles we have is that we don't have fluent speaking people in the community. We need more intermarriage with other reserves. We have two Mi'kmaq speaking people from other reserves here already and hopefully we'll see more. I guess some of the ways we have is the Pow Wow. That's one of the best things that could have happened for this community in terms of the language."

Both concerns can be best summed up by the following quote:

> "The most significant thing is that the number of people that know nothing about the language out weigh those that do and those that want it restored.

When you have only a little tiny group that want to restore, as opposed to the vast numbers that don't see a need for it, but not necessarily don't want it, that's what is going to influence it. You really don't have this drive to restore. I really don't know what would have to happen in order for everyone to say we need to restore this language. You would almost have to check with other reserves and see how they are doing it or have done it."

5) What suggestions or recommendations would you make to the community to help the restoration process?. The majority of the respondents agreed that the most urgent need is to get the community, especially the parents, involved in the language and culture:

"Well, one thing for sure is to encourage people like yourself to be more involved and to have all our teachers involved in the language, or anyone that wants to be involved, particularly young people in the school. Right now when people are taught in school they go home and don't hear the language and have no one to interact with and that's got to be an important part of it."

"I guess you could offer it, if the community and band were involved, to people outside the school. I'm sure there are people who wouldn't mind taking some evening course. As a parent, myself, I wouldn't mind taking a few basic courses because with my child coming home with her work I would be able to help her. I wouldn't mind getting some basic language and help with the alphabet and pronunciation and I could probably help her."

Other recommendations were offered as well:

"The main one would be to hire a full time teacher that's fluent in the Mi'kmaq language and probably teach it to the older generations to as well, at least to the people that's interested in it."

"The school should keep doing what they are doing and maybe push it even further. Don't let the work that is being done with the Native curriculum be forgotten two years down the road. The community, parents and elders, well the elders have done their job and maybe all they can do is keep talking and hope people will listen. For parents you need to instill pride in who they are and impress upon them that being Mi'kmaq is something to be proud of."

6) What would be your role in this restoration effort? Although some felt that there wasn't much they could personally do, they were very quick to say that they needed to become more involved than they presently were:

> "...make sure I am or if I am able to, to come up to the adult classes and learn just as well as everyone else."

> "I would try to learn it first of all myself. I did take a few classes back when they offered it back in High School and that went away and kind of went flop somehow. I was pretty interested then and I would try to learn again now and try to help the kids along as I learn too, or help whoever would be willing to listen."

Still others felt that because of their age there was not much they could do:

> "I couldn't do a hell of a lot just a scattered old word that's all. What I got, I got from my father. What I would be able to do wouldn't be a hell of a lot now because I wouldn't know how to go about it. I don't know enough Indian to start it up."

People appeared to be content with their own level of understanding and feel that although it is too late for them, it is important for the younger generations to obtain knowledge about their Mi'kmaq heritage.

7) Do you see restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture as a necessary and viable undertaking for this community? Why or why not? When answering the part of the question that dealt with necessity, support was unanimously in agreement toward restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture:

> "I'm going to say yes because even if the children from this school come out just speaking phrases and words, they have more than what we had. So, as they grow up and their children grow up, we can develop the language beyond the phrases and the words. You will have parents who are knowledgeable, interested and supportive."

"Absolutely. If we are going to survive as Mi'kmaq people in Newfoundland. We need it to survive as Mi'kmaq people with the kind of dignity and tact that we deserve or should have."

When asked whether or not restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture is a viable undertaking for the community, there were mixed feelings. Although some felt positive as to what could be accomplished, others had doubts:

"Yes, it's necessary but whether it can be done is where I got my doubts about it. That's where I got my doubts. I think if the funding was cut off right now there wouldn't be anything going much further. That's the way I see it."

"Yeah, it should be viable quite easily. If you look at some of the things that have been done in the past five years here, restoring the language is very little compared to how far we have come."

"Looking at where we came from and what we've done in the past 25 years, language should be no problem at all. We've built a community, we've come from a community that a fought like dogs because no one wanted to be recognized as Indians or Mi'kmaq, nobody wanted to live on the reserve, nobody wanted anything to do with the outside world, but we've done all those things. We've taken control of the school and education from the church was unthinkable. The sky's the limit. We can do any damn thing we want, but we just need the desire to do it and the right people."

Although there was definite enthusiasm toward restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture, still some doubt exists as to the viability of this effort.

8) What does being Mi'kmaq mean to you? The concept that kept coming back time after time was pride in who we are. It was obvious that being Mi'kmaq meant a lot to those interviewed:

"As an individual, it's a part and parcel of the package that I'm wrapped in. I'm a package and it's a part of me. I have the memories of the language , I have the memories of the experiences on the land, I have the memories of stories, all that goes into making me a package. I'm not wrapped in white wrapping paper. I don't have French language, I don't have French experiences. These are my experiences. Experiences I had growing up in this community is what makes me Mi'kmaq. It's just part and parcel of who I am. My experiences, my memories."

"A Mi'kmaq person to me is one that is really proud of who they are, where they've come from, what baggage they hold and where they are going to go with that baggage. A Mi'kmaq person is one that looks upon himself with pride, his family with pride and community with pride and is able to stand up with pride and proclaim he/she is a Mi'kmaq person and not be ashamed of it."

"I suppose I can say I'm a Mi'kmaq or you're a Mi'kmaq but it has to come from the heart. It has to be something you have to be proud of and you have to be proud to be a part of. Being Mi'kmaq I guess is different. I guess you're a special person. You're no better than anyone else but it certainly makes you special in your own way."

9) What do you think would happen if all this knowledge of the language and culture were lost? Why? Answers varied but the majority of the respondents felt that we would continue to survive but not as a Mi'kmaq community. We would assimilate to being like all the other surrounding communities:

"I think you would lose a society and wouldn't be any different from any other society. You would lose a unique group of people, the Newfoundland Mi'kmaq. The community would lose pride in itself. The people itself wouldn't become extinct, but your children wouldn't have a sense of who they are and wouldn't have as much pride in themselves. Knowing your culture is one of the biggest things that puts pride in a community."

"I think we would die as a people, as a Mi'kmaq community we would die. We would become like the Beothuk people. We survived this long and we would want to survive longer. Basically, if we don't have all of those things in tact we would die."

"If you lose the language, you lose the culture and you lose the people, eventually the community itself would be gone. If our way of life is gone then we would become just another cog in the wheel. Native peoples should never be looked at as just another cog in the wheel. We are separate and unique entity. This is a Mi'kmaq community and if we lose the language and culture we become just another community in the Bay."

Without the Mi'kmaq language and culture, Miawpukek was no longer distinct. Even

though they could still lay claim to the fact that they are Mi'kmaq, one would not be

able to distinguish them from any of the other communities that make up the Bay

D'Espoir area.

10) Are there any other comments you would like to make concerning Mi'kmaq

language and cultural restoration efforts that have not already been made?

Many different comments were made but surprisingly many felt that the Mi'kmaq of

Miawpukek have come a long way from near language death in the community and

are moving in the right direction. The respondents agree that we need to continue

with what we have and build on it:

> "Just that Conne River is getting on a track to where it should have been
> going years ago. Everything is starting to come together. Before it was
> enough to say you were Mi'kmaq and be done with it. Now we can actually
> show others through your drumming and dancing, and hopefully in the near
> future through talking, that you are Mi'kmaq. It now seems that we are not
> only taking ourselves more seriously but other communities are taking us
> more seriously. Others are coming and wanting to experience our culture
> also. Down the road I see more culture in the community and people having
> enough pride to share their knowledge and hopefully end the prejudice that
> now exists."

> "Well the only thing I feel is that we may as well let her go the way she's
> going. Keep what we got and if we could get more great, but not let things go
> any further. Keep things the way we are living right now. That's the only thing
> I could think that might help. It's hard to get back in the past. Hang on to
> what we got."

We must continue along with what we are doing and hope that we do not lose what

little we have left that makes us Mi'kmaq. Although we have come far and fought

many important battles to get where we are, we still have a ways to go to reclaiming our language and cultural identity.

Summary

This section presented the information gathered from the interview portion of the research. Respondents talked candidly about their experiences and feelings regarding the questions asked of them throughout the interview. Many different views have been addressed representing a cross-section of Band Members found on the Miawpukek reserve. Most respondents placed great value on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture, but had some doubt as to whether or not this is the popular opinion shared throughout the community. The interview section closed with additional information that the interviewees wished to add. Much of the information gathered throughout the interview process would not have been provided by a questionnaire alone.

Chapter 5

Discussion of the Data, Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications

Discussion of the Data

In this section the data are analysed according to the research objectives set out in Chapter One. Not all the research objectives will be discussed in this section. Only three of the research objectives, and the research findings associated with them, will be discussed. Each objective will be discussed in separate sections. Research objective number Four will be discussed in the recommendations section. Research objective number Five was also omitted from this section because it has already been discussed in the Literature Review section of this study. We will begin by examining the first research objective.

Description of Mi'kmaq Language Situation in Miawpukek Including Factors that have Contributed to Language Loss

The first research objective has two sections. The first sought to describe the Mi'kmaq language situation as it currently exists in Miawpukek, while the second sought to examine factors that have contributed to Mi'kmaq language loss.

As noted earlier in this study, the Mi'kmaq language is almost extinct in the community of Miawpukek. No known fluent speakers of the Mi'kmaq language remain in the community, the last fluent speaker, Nicholas Jeddore died in the early 1980's. What Aboriginal language that does exist is found primarily in language instruction in the school, and even there it is minimally used. Students in grades kindergarten to grade six receive five classes of Mi'kmaq language instruction in a

14 day cycle. These classes are 40 minutes each, which provides a total of three hours and twenty minutes of Mi'kmaq language instruction every 14 school days. Clearly there is not near enough language input. Brandt and Ayoungman (1989) argue that most children receive 3700 hours of input before producing any language. At the current rate students only receive 56 hours of Mi'kmaq language training a year. As Wilkins (1978) explains, "One year in the classroom provides the equivalent of from one to three weeks contact in a language acquisition situation" (p. 31). At best current practices will give us phrases of Mi'kmaq language but not the language itself. Unless more time and effort are given, current practices will yield very little results.

The Mi'kmaq language is currently nearing extinction in Miawpukek and is at Stage 8 of Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruptive Scale for Threatened Languages. This is the most difficult stage for retrieval because only a few speakers remain who have knowledge of the Mi'kmaq language (Fishman, 1990). If something is not done soon to record and retain the language, it may be too late. Schools alone cannot be responsible for this. As Fishman (1990) states, "Schools cannot succeed, whether their goals be Restoring Language Shift (RLS), or merely history or mathematics instruction if the relationship between teachers, parents and students is such that they are estranged from each other and the curriculum" (p.30). There must be a total community effort. These sentiments are echoed by Chastain (1980) who wrote:

"...the overall vitality of second language study depends on the extent to which it is supported and promoted by individuals and groups

outside the profession itself. The opposing forces are too powerful and the resources of the profession too limited to insure success without assistance" (p.2).

Without overall support, any effort that is made will continue to experience limited success.

This lack of total community support continues to be a problem in Miawpukek. When respondents were asked whether or not the community should place more emphasis on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture, there was overwhelming agreement (Mean 1.57). There was also strong agreement (Mean 1.41) to the statement: Restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture is the responsibility of the community. However, when the question was phrased to shift the responsibility to the individual, the response was much less affirmative (Mean 3.25). Although there is a need for community involvement, it appears that individuals are not willing to commit their time and effort. This is reflected in the following quote taken from one of the interviews.

> " ...the community has be willing to go that extra step and spend that money on that. The community has got to want this. There's a block there and everybody feels it's the school's job. It's should be something that is a community thing."

The respondents noted the need for community involvement but were less willing to commit their own time and effort to the cause.

The second section of Objective One examines factors that have contributed to Mi'kmaq language loss. Information for this section was gathered strictly through the interview portion of the research. Not all interviewees responded to this

question. Some felt that they had no memory of how the Mi'kmaq language was lost and, therefore, could not answer. Others gave vague accounts of what they remembered or were told. The majority of the information gathered for this question came from the Elder members that were interviewed.

The first factor alluded to by the Elder respondents, who shall remain nameless, that affected Mi'kmaq language loss was the influence of the church. Respondents told of how the priest did not like the Mi'kmaq prayers and songs because he did not understand them. The priest thought it was something pagan, so he threatened to take away their church if they did not stop. Jackson (1993) writes: "In 1924 the pastor (St. Croix) abolished the office of Chief. Since then, the Mi'kmaq's have gone without a Chief. Poor Noel left the settlement in disgrace for his insubordination, for Cape Breton" (p.164). The Mi'kmaq were very religious and respected the church very much. As a result, several families left to go live elsewhere, while others discontinued practices of praying and singing in Mi'kmaq. Eventually, the language began to die. The Mi'kmaq language was then only spoken in private gatherings outside of the church. The community's faith in the church had waned but still remained despite their Mi'kmaq language slowly starting to die off.

Contrary to this, another respondent spoke of how intermarriage contributed to the demise of the Mi'kmaq language.

> "I remember it being lost through marriage, through people marrying the white women. They all talked Mi'kmaq when I was small but with the marrying of the white women the Mi'kmaq language was no longer spoken in the home."

The husbands spent most of their day away from the home earning money for the family and upon returning would eat supper and go to bed to prepare for another hard day at work the next day. The only language the child would hear was the English language that was used by the mothers, their teachers and other children. Eventually, English became the language of communication throughout the community.

A third factor was the changing economic times. One respondent told of how, in her generation, people were out in the outside world seeking employment thus creating a need to speak English. If one wanted to survive economically in that society, they would have to adopt the English language. Edwards (1993) argued that "the most important aspects of the social pressures leading to language shift have been the powerful attractions and rewards associated with mainstream language and life" (p.129). This phenomenon was supported by Memmi (1967) when he wrote:

> If he wanted to obtain a job, make a place for himself, exist in the
>
> community and world, he must first bow to the language of his master.
>
> In the linguistic conflict within the colonized, his mother tongue is that
>
> which is crushed (p.107).

So, in an effort to survive in the modern world, the Mi'kmaq had to sacrifice their own language. The emerging lifestyle was no longer based on subsistence economy but on a commercial economy; consequently, Mi'kmaq men were forced to the leave the community to find work, taking with them all hopes of retaining the

Mi'kmaq language. As a result, the Mi'kmaq language eventually died out and was no longer a language of function within the community of Miawpukek.

Assessing Current Language Use and Function in which Mi'kmaq Knowledge Still Prevails

The second research objective of this study was to assess the current language use and functions in which Mi'kmaq knowledge still prevails. Although the Mi'kmaq language is virtually extinct in the Miawpukek community, this does not mean that Miawpukek does not contain any Mi'kmaq knowledge. Even though English may be the language of function, Miawpukek still possesses Mi'kmaq knowledge.

To obtain information regarding Mi'kmaq knowledge, participants were asked to respond to the question: What do you consider to be distinctive Mi'kmaq knowledge remaining in this community? It was unanimously agreed that the thing that makes Miawpukek Mi'kmaq is its lifestyle, connection to the land and the pride people have in those things. This was clearly illustrated by the following quotes taken from several different interviews.

> "Well I guess people have a strong sense of culture and pride in their community and their heritage, even if we are struggling to hold on to our customs or starting to get them back. People still know where they came from and still respect that and still show a lot of pride which can be seen through the way the community embraces it's culture and cultural dress and their language."

> "Your Lifestyle, your connection to the land if anything makes Conne River Mi'kmaq... If you talk to people from Nova Scotia, the fluent Mi'kmaq speakers who visit here in this day and age, the thing that they will say to you is Conne River has more, even though we don't speak the Mi'kmaq

language, Conne River has more culture than we'll ever have and that's the connection to the land that they are talking about. And this concept of being able to survive."

"Well the few things you got left like I say what we do, our customs. We go eeling, we going making something like snowshoes. That's the only thing that connects us to the past. Our life style... That's was our way of living anyway, living a normal Mi'kmaq way of life."

Although the Mi'kmaq language may have been forbidden, no one could stop us from practising our culture. As this interviewee explains,

"No, that was one of the things that they couldn't stop. They could stop language and you know as they went out into the monetary world and started working for wages and working for money, mixing with white people to get along in the white man's world they had to speak the language, but they could also still be connected to the land without the language. They still bought into the concept that I can survive off the land."

Cajete (1994) supports this view when he writes:

As time went by, and societies became more complex, the people

lived in communities of increasingly greater density. They built towns

and cities and evolved into more complex societies, but they did not

forget that everything came from Nature and that Nature was indeed

the field of their being (p.95).

Despite all the losses that occurred in Miawpukek, there was still a strong connection to the land. They continue to value nature and therefore their way of life that embraced it, thus ensuring the Mi'kmaq culture would remain.

Assessing Community Attitudes Toward Mi'kmaq Language and Cultural Restoration

The third research objective was to assess the community attitudes toward Mi'kmaq language and cultural restoration. The quantitative data for this research objective were gathered through Section Two of the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a series of statements using a Likert-type frequency scale ("Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree"). The responses were scored as follows: Strongly Disagree = 5 and Strongly Agreed = 1. Data presented in Table 4.5 indicated that this sample of individuals placed great value on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek (Average Mean, 1.46). The respondents strongly disagreed with the statements that it is too late to try to restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture (Mean, 4.78), and learning the Mi'kmaq language is too difficult (Mean, 3.89). Even though both are high means, they still indicate value being placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture. However, these means were left out of the averaging process because they would have distorted the findings. Because of the low variation in responses (Average Standard Deviation, .74), it was obvious that the majority of respondents agreed that restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture is important to Miawpukek.

The data presented in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 focussed on the role of the community and school in this restoration effort. Table 4.6 showed strong agreement toward the community needing to put more emphasis on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture (Average Mean, 1.54). However, data presented in Table 4.7 indicated that respondents were less certain about whether the school needs to

put more emphasis on the restoration of the Mi'kmaq language and culture (Average Mean, 1.94). The high variation in responses in Table 4.7 (Average Standard Deviation, .96) also indicated that respondents were less certain about whether the school needs to place more emphasis on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture. The overall perception gathered from the data indicates that the Mi'kmaq language and culture are definitely valued in Miawpukek and, furthermore, that there is a need for more emphasis to be placed on restoring this vernacular to the community of Miawpukek.

The qualitative data added detail to and extended this perception that great value is placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. Of the 28 people surveyed, and the 10 people interviewed, 33 (87%) agreed that it is important to restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. One respondent described the perception as follows:

> "Yes I do. It's a part of us, our heritage and who we are. I think it would allow us to have a better understanding of who we are. Even with the little bit of culture we have now, people are developing a lot of pride in themselves."

Respondents continuously spoke of the urgent need to restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture. The frequency with which respondents mentioned the need for more language and cultural activities indicated the high value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. When they were asked for obstacles that might stand in the way of this process, their answers varied.

What did come out dramatically throughout the interview, and also in the question portion of the survey, was the frustration with the negative attitudes of people throughout the community of Miawpukek. Several interviewees and survey

respondents indicated that many people had no desire to make the necessary effort that is required to make this process a success. When asked about the obstacles that might stand in the way of this restoration effort, one participant responded as follows:

> "I think a lot of attitude. People's attitude that they don't care and so long as the money is coming into the community they figure, 'Well so long as I get my 14 weeks or get my stamps, then we can always call ourselves Chinese.' I think a lot of people have no pride in being Mi'kmaq."

People have survived so long without the Mi'kmaq language and culture that it becomes difficult to convince them that these things are important.

Another source of frustration came from the lack of fluent speakers and teachers of the Mi'kmaq language. Several participants mentioned the need for more Mi'kmaq teachers who are fluent and qualified to teach the Mi'kmaq language. The current program is only implemented through grade six with two language teachers, but the Mi'kmaq content is minimal with neither teacher having formal language instruction training.... The teachers are doing the most with what they have, but with limited resources and knowledge of the Mi'kmaq language, students will continue to receive only a minimal amount of the Mi'kmaq language. As Wilkins (1978) explains, "In short, the qualities of language teachers define the potential limits of achievements of their pupils" (p.55). One cannot expect students to achieve and succeed in areas that he/she is not proficient in. Wilkins (1978) further states:

> His skill and his personality are instrumental in creating the conditions
>
> for learning. His skill is dependent on two factors, his own proficiency

in the language and his knowledge of and expertise in methods and techniques of language teaching (p.53).

Frustrations will continue to develop until something is done to compensate for the current lack of a fluent, qualified, Mi'kmaq language teacher.

From this study it is evident that the people of Miawpukek recognize a need for change in the current situation. However, there was little indication as to how this change was to take place. To facilitate this process, respondents were asked to identify what their role would be in the restoration process. It was here that respondents appeared to lose direction. Although a definite need exists to restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture, very few people were willing to commit themselves to this effort. Even those who recognized the need for more involvement from themselves personally were hesitant to commit their time and effort to making the restoration process work. One respondent had this comment to make:

> "Right now, the biggest thing for me to do is to learn it myself. Being in the position I am, I could probably help teach the younger ones. If kids see that someone like myself, who is doing pretty good in the community, who's got a job and financially well off and they see it's important to me, then they might see that there is something to this."

By using such words as "probably", and "might", it became obvious that these people are not quite sure as to what their role is in this effort.

Leadership is urgently needed. It was apparent that this was a team without a coach, where everyone is doing his/her own thing. There is a current lack of focus which is necessary for the restoration process to be successful. What is required here is for someone to take the reins and lead this restoration process so that things can start to move forward. Most people find it difficult to find the time to dedicate

themselves to this effort because of the time consuming responsibilities they already have. Some are too busy with work, while others have family responsibilities and do not have the time or energy or resources required for such a job. If the restoration of the Mi'kmaq language and culture is to become successful, there is a need to organize a committed group of individuals who share the same goals and who support and accept the challenges ahead of them. No matter how slow progress is, they must remain focussed to achieve their goals (Fishman, 1991). Only then will Miawpukek come to obtain the language and culture it so desires.

Discussion Summary

This section has used the data gathered from the questionnaires and interviews to address the research objectives outlined in Chapter One. Respondents placed great value on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek but were aware that many obstacles may still stand in the way and that we still have a long way to go before we start seeing the results of current efforts. They were conscious that Miawpukek has come a long way over the past few years, which gives us great hope for the future. However, the current lack of qualified Mi'kmaq language teachers, limited resources, as well as the negative attitudes shared by many members of Miawpukek will make this struggle even harder.

Community involvement was recognized as one of the more urgent needs if there is any hope of restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture in Miawpukek. The question of who is responsible to initiate the restoration process is still an area of uncertainty. People are so busy with their every day responsibilities that it is

difficult to find someone who can be truly committed. Such an effort requires significant time which most people do not have without neglecting other commitments. This poses great concern about whether Miawpukek can successfully restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture. We may have come a long way over the years, but there is still a long distance to travel. Involvement by all is essential if this journey is to be a successful one.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the language needs of the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek in an effort to effect programmatic considerations which would increase the communicative competence in the Mi'kmaq language. This would lead to a set of recommendations to the Miawpukek First Nation for an approach to language renewal. To investigate this purpose, fifty band members of Miawpukek were administered questionnaires to help determine the value that they place on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture. As well, ten other band members were asked to participate in extended interviews. Only participants aged twenty-five and older, having children in school or had attended school in the past ten years were asked to participate in the study. A reflective journal was also used to help facilitate the investigation. All interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed and analysed.

Participants for the study were located by forwarding letters, as well as personal contact by telephone, to request their assistance in this study.

Questionnaires were then administered to fifty volunteers and interviews were conducted with a purposive sampling consisting of two parents, two council members, two teachers, two elders, the Director of Education and the Chief of Miawpukek. Thus a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology was employed.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program was used to analyse the quantitative data for the study. Frequency tables were constructed from the demographic data and the responses to the questionnaire statements were analysed to obtain means and standard deviations for each statement. The interview data were analysed by question for underlying themes.

Responses to the questionnaires and the interviews indicated that the people of Miawpukek placed great value on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture even though they expressed much frustration toward the lack of qualified teachers and resources necessary to make this effort successful. Participants identified an urgent need for the Mi'kmaq language and culture, but much uncertainty surrounded who would be responsible for directing this effort. The people of Miawpukek are so involved in established roles that it becomes difficult to find someone who has the time to dedicate to this worthwhile cause. Although a definite desire exists for restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture, how it will be done remains a question of grave concern.

Research of this nature is important because progressively more Aboriginal groups are experiencing language loss among their people. As noted by the Assembly of First Nations (1990);

Only 16 per cent or 21 First Nations have flourishing languages; 21

per cent or 28 First Nations have enduring languages; 26 per cent or

35 First Nations have declining languages; 26 per cent or 35 First

Nations have endangered languages; and 11 per cent or 15 First

Nations have critical languages (p. i).

With increasing numbers of Aboriginal languages in decline, studies such as this

provide some hope that all is not lost. Other Aboriginal groups can use this study

to help them better understand their own situations, as this researcher did through

studying groups such as the Maori, Mohawk and Siksika. This study of the Mi'kmaq

of Miawpukek, Newfoundland provides the literature with yet another unique

Aboriginal experience.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study. <u>The

first major conclusion of this study is that the people of Miawpukek do place great

value on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek.</u> There was

great pride placed on being Mi'kmaq and tremendous desire was expressed in

restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. Participants unanimously

agreed that it was important to renew the Mi'kmaq language and culture and that

it is a critical part of who we are as a Mi'kmaq people. This conclusion confirms the

work of Shkilnyk (1985) who wrote:

Our native language embodies a value system about how we ought

to live and relate to each other...it gives a name to relations among

kin, to roles and responsibilities among family members, to ties with

the broader clan group...There are no English words for these

relationships because your social and family life is different from ours.

Now if you destroy our language, you not only break down these

relationships, but you also destroy other aspects of our Indian life and

culture, especially those that describe man's connection with nature,

the Great Spirit, the order of things. Without our language, we will

cease to exist as separate people (p.25).

The Mi'kmaq language and culture are growing in importance as more and more

people see this value.

Some of this may be attributed to the growing cultural awareness brought

about by the growing recognition of the Mi'kmaq choir by groups outside of

Miawpukek. This is also personified by the introduction of traditional Pan-Indian Pow

Wows to Miawpukek over the past several years. Respondents spoke of how such

activities have brought culture back into the community, bringing with it an

understanding of what it means to be Mi'kmaq, thus instilling a renewed sense of

pride in being Mi'kmaq. Although some negative attitude toward being Mi'kmaq still

exists, it is slowly being replaced by this renewed pride. More people are coming to

realize that being Mi'kmaq is something to be proud of.

The second major conclusion of this study is that in order for this restoration

effort to become successful, the community has to become more involved. The

group of respondents participating in this study strongly agreed that the community

needs to become more involved with restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture.

Currently, restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture is largely considered a function of the school. The school represents only a fraction of the community and until the community becomes more involved, little will be accomplished toward restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture (Chastain, 1980; Fishman, 1990).

The overall success of language and cultural restoration is largely dependent on the extent to which the community supports it. As Genesee (1984) writes: "Language learning and therefore, language teaching in school can not take place in isolation if they are to be useful and successful. They must be integrated with the other social and cognitive aspects of the child's development and of the child's schooling" (p.5). Too often people depend entirely on the school, leaving the child with no way of reinforcing what they have learned outside of the school environment.

Children's attitudes toward language renewal are often reflective of those of their parents: and, if parents show no desire to learn the language, the child will soon follow. Until the community becomes more involved in the restoration effort, children will see no reason to learn the language and will have no desire to learn it (Brandt & Ayoungman, 1989). It is interesting to note that although the respondents of the study expressed great interest in restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture, little is being done by the community. It is possible that this is due to the lack of an opportunity to get involved and that these people have come to accept this situation as normal and, therefore, do not see this situation as being that extreme. Rather they are more willing to tolerate the situation as it is.

The third major conclusion of this study is that Miawpukek needs to obtain a teacher who is both fluent in the Mi'kmaq language, knowledgeable of language teaching methods and certified to teach the Mi'kmaq language. From the group of respondents that were surveyed and interviewed, one is given the impression that, although current teachers are doing as much as possible with the knowledge and resources that they possess, there is still a definite need for fully fluent and certified Mi'kmaq language teacher. The current teachers are not weak teachers, but they do not have sufficient knowledge of the Mi'kmaq language to achieve the level of language proficiency that this community desires.

From the literature concerning successful language programs throughout Canada and the world, it became obvious that all of these programs had one thing that Miawpukek lacked, certified language teachers. Lowenberg (1985) examined three First Nations schools and two Provincial schools concerning their Aboriginal language programs. All exhibited signs of being very successful and all had certified, fluent language teachers. This conclusion is confirmed by Wilkins (1978) who stressed how the quality of the language teacher directly influences the learner's potential. Wilkins (1978) writes: "If the learner's exposure to language is only exposure to carefully-controlled language, it is only this kind of language that he will learn to comprehend" (p.34). This endorses the need for a certified, fluent Mi'kmaq language teacher in Miawpukek.

The fourth major conclusion of this study is that Miawpukek still suffers from negative attitudes toward the Mi'kmaq language and culture within the community. Respondents spoke of how, throughout the community, people are Mi'kmaq for the

benefits it gets them and not because it is a part of their ancestry. A common phrase was that : "They're Mi'kmaq for the money!" It was not about being Mi'kmaq but rather what being Mi'kmaq could get them. This is compounded by the fact that Miawpukek has been without its language and a lot of its culture for so long that it is no longer viewed as being important or necessary toward their survival as Mi'kmaq people. As one respondent explains:

> "I don't know in terms of cultural identity if it's important, but as for functioning in the every day world it's not important. I mean you will get people my age who say, look I'm this old, and I've survived quite well without it. Why do I need it now right? You get some of the teenagers who say I'm not going to spend the rest of my life here, I'm going to go somewhere else. In that sense, I'm not saying it's not important, but for people who argue that way I can almost see the validity of it."

Because the language and culture have been absent from the community for so long, it becomes very difficult to convince people of the importance they still hold with regard to being Mi'kmaq people. Brandt & Ayoungman (1989) explain this phenomenon when they write:

> Many people have been socialized by negative experiences in their
>
> past schooling; by deliberate policies which had as their aim the
>
> eradication of native language and cultures; or simply may feel that
>
> the time has passed for the language and that the language of the
>
> future is English (p. 46).

Although many respondents favour introducing the language and culture to their children and grandchildren, they feel it is too late for them. This suggests that more emphasis needs to be focussed on changing community attitudes so that being Mi'kmaq is seen as something to be proud of. Until people realize the importance

of the Mi'kmaq language and culture and dispel the negative attitudes that currently exist throughout Miawpukek, progress will continue to be slow and cumbersome.

The fifth major conclusion of this study is that there is a definite lack of direction and focus concerning efforts being made to help restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture. Respondents expressed concern that too often good ideas go to waste because nothing is done to follow through with them. Many different committees have been established to study the language and culture situation but rarely does anything come of it. There is a lack of accountability and genuine effort on behalf of these committees. It is urgent that Miawpukek establish a committee or group that is active, accountable and committed to making this restoration effort work (Fishman, 1991). Too often we have ten people, going ten different ways, doing ten different things. Miawpukek needs to develop an approach where everyone is working toward the same goal and remains focussed toward achieving that goal. The community must decide what function of the language and culture that they want to restore and proceed from there and then concentrate the efforts on school and community to provide a base for the revitalization efforts. Therefore, it is important that we first recognize the problem and then treat it. Unnecessary treatments do not yield results and may contribute to further complications.

Recommendations

Recommendations to the Miawpukek First Nation Band Government

It was not the intent of this study to evaluate any teachers or band members who participated in this study. It was rather to investigate the attitudes and possibility of restoration of the Mi'kmaq language and culture to the First Nation community of Miawpukek and areas related to that topic. The Miawpukek Band Government may appreciate some suggestions from the researcher to help this restoration process. These recommendations are based on the findings of the study.

1. That the Band Government, in conjunction with the Director of Education, work toward obtaining the services of a certified, fluent Mi'kmaq language teacher, or work toward certifying current language instructors with current information on language learning, acquisition and teaching methods.

2. That more effort be focussed toward getting the community of Miawpukek, which includes all band members, involved in learning the Mi'kmaq language to help insure success in bringing back the Mi'kmaq language and culture;

3. That a restoration committee be established that is not only active and accountable, but also has clearly defined guidelines and policies. Progress is to be revisited twice a year to help the community attain its goals.

4. That the Band Council continue current cultural activities (i.e. Powwows, Mi'kmaq Choir, etc), but support, initiate and fund further cultural activities that will help build

a more positive attitude toward the restoration of the Mi'kmaq language and culture in Miawpukek;

5. That the school investigate other approaches to language renewal among Aboriginal peoples and from that develop an approach that meets the needs of the Mi'kmaq of Miawpukek;

6. That the Band and school make sure that the tacit knowledge possessed by the Elders of the community is not lost and that efforts are made to record and obtain this knowledge so that it may be transmitted to future generations;

7. That a history of Miawpukek be recorded and transmitted to future generations so that they may develop pride in themselves and come to know who they are as Mi'kmaq people; and

8. That we be patient in our struggle to restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek. Processes such as these are long term and we need to take the small gains and build on them.

9. That curriculum for language restoration be investigated with Mi'kmaq who are literate and fluent in Mi'kmaq to assist in the efforts of language recovery.

10. That the Band, school, community and all residents of Miapukek pool their resources to help insure the Mi'kmaq language and culture survive throughout this century and in the distant future.

Implications

Implications for Further Research

The study of the restoration of the Mi'kmaq language and culture on the First Nations Reserve of Miawpukek was an exploratory study designed to investigate the value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture by members of Miawpukek. Further studies can now be conducted which build on the data obtained. The following areas of study are suggested for further investigation:

1. In-depth interviews with Elders from the Miawpukek Reserve to help establish a history of the Miawpukek reserve and Mi'kmaq knowledge;

2. A replication of the current study with other Aboriginal groups who are also experiencing similar language loss among their people;

3. Continued research studies which will help develop programs that will aid the restoration of endangered Aboriginal languages;

4. Development of a curriculum designed to help restore the Mi'kmaq language and culture to the Miawpukek reserve;

5. Investigation into the changing linguistic and cultural attitudes in Miawpukek and how this will affect programmatic considerations of the future; and

6. Continued research studies which develop other conceptual frameworks and models for investigating attitudes toward restoring other endangered languages, increasing the possibility of generalizing the results and extending the validity and reliability of the instruments.

Closing Thoughts

This study has done wonders to open my eyes toward the importance of restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek and I hope it does the same for other members of the reserve. I have chosen the following quotes to summarize this importance:

> The language of a people is their life, but in so many cases this life is endangered. Within several communities the traditional language is spoken by only a handful of Elders. In other cases the last speaker of some languages passed away earlier this century and, in a deep sense, this may also mean the end of those societies. A people can no more live without its language than a tree can grow without roots (Peat, 1994, p. 220).

And finally:

> A language can not be saved by singing a few songs or having a word printed on a postage stamp. It can not be saved by getting 'Official status' for it, or getting it taught in schools. It is saved by its use (no matter how imperfect), by its introduction and use in every walk of life and every conceivable opportunity until it becomes a natural thing, no longer laboured or false. It means in short a period of struggle and hardship. There is no easy route to the restoration of a language (Shield, 1984, p.337).

<div align="right">Ta'oq!</div>

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Appendix A

Application for Approval of Research Protocol

University of Saskatchewan

Application for Approval of Research Protocol

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Title Of Study: The Restoration of the Mi'kmaq language in the First Nations Community of Miawpukek.

Description of Study

This qualitative study seeks to identify the cultural and linguistic issues facing the Mi'kmaq people of the Miawpukek Reserve in Newfoundland in their efforts to revitalize the Mi'kmaq language by conducting a survey of attitudes and

perceptions of Mi'kmaq language use, and an investigation of the language contexts in which Mi'kmaq knowledge prevails in Miawpukek, Newfoundland, and finally examine current Aboriginal language approaches aimed at restoring languages in different Aboriginal communities. Finally, this will lead the researcher toward the development of recommendations to the Miawpukek First Nation for a language renewal approach.

Objectives of Research

The main objectives of the proposed research will be:

1. to assess the community attitudes toward Mi'kmaq language restoration and growth;

2. to assess the current language uses and functions in which Mi'kmaq knowledge still prevails;

3. to describe the current language situations in Miawpukek, focussing on the factors that have contributed to the loss of the Mi'kmaq language;

4. to examine literature of current Aboriginal language teaching methodologies used for language restoration or renewal; and

5. to discuss the merits of second language teaching methodologies and offer recommendations for improving the status of language in the community, including an outline of roles and responsibilities of different institutions and individuals.

Benefits of Study

The proposed research will address gaps in the current research literature regarding Aboriginal language teaching methodologies by

1. providing for representation for an Aboriginal group not previously represented;

2. expanding the current academic literature that focuses on language restoration and renewal among Aboriginal people;

3. helping non-Aboriginal teachers to understand Aboriginal heritage and enable them to accommodate their teaching methodologies to better reflect practices relevant to Aboriginal communities;

4. contributing to existing academic curriculum resources focufocussed helping Aboriginal communities establish communicative competence in their respective languages; and

5. providing the community of Miawpukek with a better understanding and appreciation for the need for language and cultural renewal.

Funding

Provisions for funding required for conducting this research will be the responsibility of the graduate student, Roderick Jeddore.

Subjects

The researcher will solicit, by a purposive selection process and based on accessibility, 100 research participants from the Mi'kmaq people of the Miawpukek

Reserve in Newfoundland to participate in a survey, as well as 10 participants who will be asked to participate in an interview. Participants will include parents, teachers, students, school administrators, chief and council and elders. A letter will be sent to all band members outlining the details of the study and requesting their participation in the study. Attached you will find a copy of the information sheet that will be sent to the participants, as well as a copy of the consent form that the participants will be asked to sign. It is expected that most who are requested to participate will accept the invitation to participate in the study. The researcher will inform the chosen participants of the interview date, time and location of their scheduled interviews once their participation has been confirmed,

Methodology

Parents, teachers, students, school administrators, chief and council and elders of the Miawpukek Reserve will be invited to participate in the research study through a formal letter sent to them. After protocols of requesting permission from Chief and Band Council and the Director of Education, the researcher will ask 100 members of Miawpukek to participate in a survey, as well as 10 members of the Miawpukek band and school to participate in interviews. With permission, the researcher will tape record the interviews and allow participants the opportunity to participate in informal discussion so that they may ask any questions they might have or seek clarification of any area they are not sure of. Participants will be debriefed as to the purpose of the study and possible benefits of the study, the

confidentiality of their participation, and their ability to withdraw from the study at any time.

Transcripts of the recorded interviews will be prepared by the researcher or bonded typist. Each participant will be given a participant code and allowed to review their transcripts for accuracy and further clarification. At his time participants will have the opportunity to add or delete any information they wish.

Data Analysis

Data analysis will be conducted by:

1. identifying key themes and ideas that emerge during the interviews and transcribing exercises;

2. creating broad categories based on data received after transcriptions have been completed; and

3. coding the data and creating units of information that will be sorted according to identified categories.

When completing the above analysis, the researcher will make use of the SPSS data analysis program where it is deemed appropriate or necessary by the researcher.

Risk or deception

Participants will be informed of the following:

1. the purpose of the study;

2. that all interviews will be conducted by the researcher and that participants responses will be kept confidential;

3. that they have the right to participate in only those questions with which they feel comfortable and may withdraw from the study at any time;

4. that recording equipment will be used during the interviews;

5. that typing of the transcripts will be conducted solely by the researcher or bonded typist;

6. that during the writing of the research, all transcripts and tapes will be locked in a filing cabinet accessible only by the researcher; and

7. all transcripts and tapes will remain locked in a filing cabinet until the research is completed and the thesis defended, at which time the researcher will destroy them.

Finally, all participants will be afforded the right to claim a voice in the research study by signing a release form relinquishing the right to personal confidentiality after they have reviewed the transcripts and interview notes.

Appendix B

Permission Letter to Approach Potential Participants

Permission Letter To Approach Potential Participants

#7-320 Clarence Ave. S.

Saskatoon, Sk.

S7N-1H6

Date:

Mrs. Edwina Wetzel, Director of Education

St. Anne's All Grade School

Conne River

Newfoundland

A0H-1J0

Dear Mrs. Wetzel:

I am writing to you in my role as a graduate student in the Master's program, Department of Education Administration at the College of Education, University of Saskatchewan. I have completed my course work and I am preparing to conduct research for my Master's thesis, on the Mi'kmaq language. My research is titled Investigating Communicative Competence in the Mi'kmaq Language on the Miawpukek Reserve. Through my teaching experience at our community school in Miawpukek, I have become interested in restoring the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek. This research will explore community and school staff perceptions and attitudes toward the Mi'kmaq language, as well as explore the functions and uses of the Mi'kmaq knowledge and language still remaining in Miawpukek to help assess the future content areas of language education and to assess attitudes toward that

work. From this I hope to develop recommendations for the Miawpukek First Nation Band toward restoring/renewing the Mi'kmaq language in Miawpukek. I seek to have the enclosed letter of invitation to participate in my research be forwarded to all teachers who are of Mi'kmaq identity at our school. I am looking for members who are willing to participate in my research interview, as well as a preliminary survey questionnaire.

The methodology that I intend to use is a qualitative interview format developed from a variety of similar studies conducted elsewhere in Canada, accompanied by a quantitative questionnaire survey to help analyse community and school staff perceptions and attitudes toward the Mi'kmaq language. I intend to develop recommendations based on findings derived from the analysis of the information gathered from the interviews and surveys to aid Mi'kmaq language restoration on the Miawpukek reserve.

I would be happy to talk with you further about the research and provide you with a copy of my research proposal if required. Thank you in advance for your anticipated assistance.

Sincerely,

Rod Jeddore

Permission Letter to Approach Potential Participants

#7-320 Clarence Ave. S.

Saskatoon, Sk.

S7N-1H6

Date:

Saqamaw Mi'sel Joe and Council

Conne River

Newfoundland

A0H-1J0

Dear Saqamaw Mi'sel Joe;

I am writing to you in my role as a graduate student in the Master's of Education Program, Department of Education Administration at the College of Education, University of Saskatchewan. I have completed my course work and I am preparing to conduct research for my Master's thesis on the Mi'kmaq language. My research in titled <u>Investigating Communicative Competence in the Mi'kmaq Language on the Miawpukek Reserve.</u> Through my teaching experience at our community school in Miawpukek, I have become interested in restoring the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek. This research will explore community and school staff perceptions and attitudes toward the Mi'kmaq knowledge and language, as well as explore the functions and uses of the Mi'kmaq language still remaining in Miawpukek to help assess the future content areas of language education and to assess attitudes toward that work. From this I hope to develop recommendations

for the Miawpukek First Nation Ban toward restoring/renewing the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek.

I seek to have the enclosed letter of invitation to participate in the study be forwarded to all council members, as well as band members who self-identify as being of Mi'kmaq identity. I am looking for 50 members, including parents, teachers, school administrators, elders and chief and council, who are willing to participate in filling out a survey questionnaire and 10 people who are willing to participate in interviews. This will allow me to make my selection from those willing to offer their knowledge and experience to the study.

The methodology that I intend to use is a qualitative interview format developed from a variety of similar studies conducted elsewhere in Canada, accompanied by a quantitative questionnaire survey to help analyse community and school staff perceptions and attitudes toward the Mi'kmaq language. I intend to develop recommendations based on findings derived from an analysis of the information received from the surveys and interviews to aid the restoration of the Mi'kmaq language on the Miawpukek reserve.

I would be happy to talk with you further about this research and provide you with a copy of my research proposal if required. Thank you in advance for your anticipated assistance.

Sincerely,

Rod Jeddore

Appendix C

Introductory Letter to Potential Participants and Consent Forms

Introductory Letter to Potential Participants and Consent Form

Rod Jeddore

#7-320 Clarence Ave. S.

Saskatoon, Sk.

S7N-1H6

Date:

Dear Participant:

As you may be aware, I am currently enrolled in the Master's Program at the College of Education, university of Saskatchewan. I would like to invite you to participate in my research study, the completion of which is part of my degree requirements. Through my teaching experience at our community school I have become interested in restoring the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek.

I plan to first conduct a survey of approximately 100 band members to explore community and school staff perceptions and attitudes toward the Mi'kmaq language, as well as to explore the functions and uses of the Mi'kmaq language that are still prevalent in Miawpukek to help assess the value placed on the Mi'kmaq language and culture by the people of Miawpukek. From this I hope to develop recommendations toward restoring/renewing the Mi'kmaq language in Miawpukek. Concurrent with the survey, I will also be conducting several interviews of selected members who agree to participate in them. I would like to tape record the interviews, transcribe them, and analyse the participants responses. During interview sessions you will be free to participate at your discretion, and I will ask each participant to check the transcriptions for accuracy once it has been prepared.

Transcriptions will be coded to maintain confidentiality. Interviews will be approximately 30-45 minutes long and each participant that is interviewed will be provided with a copy of the interview notes for their verification. To ensure confidentiality the tape recordings, notes and transcriptions will be destroyed two months after completion of the research. Finally, participants may take part in any portion of the interview or survey that they feel comfortable with and may withdraw from the study at any time. If this occurs then your contribution to the interview will not be used. I hope that you will be able to participate in the study and contribute your valuable knowledge and experience to my research.

Thank you for considering becoming a participant in this study. If you would like more information please contact me at home (306-242-6857) or at school (306-966-7711). If you would like to identify yourself as an interview subject please fill out the attached form, keeping one copy for yourself and returning one to me as soon as possible. I anticipate scheduling an interview with you sometime soon. I will be contacting people to be interviewed with the exact time and location of the interview.

Sincerely,

Rod Jeddore

Consent Form

Participant Consent

(Participant's Copy)

I _____, understand the above and agree

to participate in Rod Jeddore's study, **"Investigating the Restoration of the**

Mi'kmaq language and Culture on the First Nations Reserve of Miawpukek"

I am aware that everything I say or submit to the research will be treated with

extreme confidentiality and my anonymity is ensured.

Date: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Participant's Consent

(Researcher's Copy)

I _____, understand the above and agree

to participate in Rod Jeddore's study, **"Investigating the Restoration of the**

Mi'kmaq Language and Culture on the First Nations Reserve of Miawpukek"

I am aware that everything I say or submit to the research will be treated with

extreme confidentiality and my anonymity is ensured.

Date:_____

Participant's signature: _____

Home Mailing Address: _____

_____

_____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Appendix D

Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Profile: Circle one or fill in the blank.

Age: 25-29   30-34   35-39   40-44   45-49   50-54   55+

Sex: M   F

Position in community:_____

# of years in community: 0-10   11-20   21-30   31-40   41-50   Over 50

# of dependents: 1   2   3   4   5   6   Over 6

Opposite each question, please circle the answer that best describes your response. This questionnaire in designed to investigate the value you place on the Mi'kmaq language and culture. All responses will remain confidential and you may withdraw from this study at any time. Please feel free to respond to only those question with which you feel comfortable. Each question should be marked as follows:

Strongly Agree   Strongly Disagree

    1   2   3   4   5

Please circle your level of agreement. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Agree			Strongly Disagree	
1. Learning the Mi'kmaq language is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
2. It is important for Miawpukek children to learn the Mi'kmaq language.	1	2	3	4	5

3. Restoring Mi'kmaq language
and culture is the responsibility
of the school.   1   2   3   4   5

4. Learning about Mi'kmaq culture
is important to me.   1   2   3   4   5

5. Restoring the Mi'kmaq language
and culture in the responsibility of
the community.   1   2   3   4   5

6. It is important to have Mi'kmaq
language classes for all members
of the community.   1   2   3   4   5

7. Mi'kmaq language and culture are
important aspects of Mi'kmaq identity.   1   2   3   4   5

8. All Band employees should have
to take Mi'kmaq language classes.   1   2   3   4   5

9. I would like to see more cultural
activities within the community.   1   2   3   4   5

10. The community should place more
emphasis on restoring the Mi'kmaq
language and culture to Miawpukek.   1   2   3   4   5

11. I am proud to be a Mi'kmaq.   1   2   3   4   5

12. It is too late to try and restore
the Mi'kmaq language to Miawpukek.   1   2   3   4   5

13. The school should place more
emphasis on restoring the Mi'kmaq
language and culture.   1   2   3   4   5

14. Learning the Mi'kmaq language
is too difficult.   1   2   3   4   5

15. Mi'kmaq language and culture
are important to our survival as
Mi'kmaq people.   1   2   3   4   5

16. Do you see the Mi'kmaq language and culture as a necessary or viable undertaking for the community of Miawpukek? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

17. What obstacles do you think stand in the way of restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

18. What suggestions or recommendations would you make to the community to help the restoration process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

19. What do you see as your role in this restoration process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

20. Please feel free to make any other comments that you feel are necessary, that may have been missed by the above questionnaire and survey.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix E

Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Participant #_____   Tape #_____

Counter #_____   Date: _____

<u>Profile:</u> Circle one or fill in the blank.

Age: 25-29   30-34   35-39   40-44   45-49   50-54   55+

Sex: M   F

Position in community: _____

# of years living in community: 0-10   11-20   21-30   31-40   41-50   Over 50

Of dependents: 1   2   3   4   5   6   Over 6

This interview will probe you for information regarding Mi'kmaq language loss and the value placed on restoring the Mi'kmaq language by members of Miawpukek. All information gathered in this interview will be held strictly confidential and participant anonymity will be ensured. You may feel free to answer only those questions with which yoo are comfortable and may withdraw from the interview at any time. Your complete honesty would be greatly appreciated.

1.a) How do you remember the Mi'kmaq language being lost?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

b) How was it retained after this?

_____

_____

_____

_____

c) When was the last time you remember the Mi'kmaq language being spoken in the community and in what situations was it spoken?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. a) What do you consider to be distinctive Mi'kmaq knowledge remaining in the community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

b) What language situations exist today that carry Mi'kmaq knowledge?

_____

_____

_____

_____

c) In what ways and what language situations is this knowledge currently transmitted to future generations?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Do you feel it is important to restore/renew the Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What major obstacles do you think stand in the way of restoring Mi'kmaq language and culture to Miawpukek?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. What suggestions or recommendations would you make to the community to help the restoration process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. What would be your role in this restoration effort?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Do you see restoring the Mi'kmaq language and culture as a necessary or viable undertaking for this community? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. What does being Mi'kmaq mean to you?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. What do you think would happen if all knowledge of the Mi'kmaq language and culture were lost? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Are there any other comments you would like to make concerning Mi'kmaq language restoration efforts?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____