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FOR FIRST PEOPLES

MOHAWKS
ABÉNAQUIS
ALGONQUINS
ATTIKAMEKS
HURONS-WENDATS
INNUS MONTAGNAIS
MALÉCITES HURON
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AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
FOR FIRST PEOPLES

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de l'est de la Côte-Nord

It is under the sign of spirituality that was launched the third edition of the Convention on Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples. Mr. Oney Maher, President of the *Cercle des sages de la nation huronne-wendate* and host of the event, introduced participants to a purification ritual of burning sage and dispersing the smoke in the room with an eagle feather, "the Creator's messenger bird," he told us. He added that he was purifying our hearts and minds and removing the negative energies from our gathering. This teaching will guide our discussions, through sharing and mutual aid. The tone was set. The theme of the Convention could not be better introduced: *Gathering for success*. The cultural heterogeneity of the participants was obvious, and all Indigenous and non-Indigenous actors of the field of education came to discuss and reflect on the academic success conditions of First Peoples youth.

But what is the meaning of "succeeding" for a First Peoples child in today's school reality? Since Indigenous people began to take charge of their formal education system, a period historically attested by the application initiating proceedings for the "Indian Control of Indian Education" (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972), one can state with certainty that a fundamental movement has been initiated. Despite coordination and cohesion difficulties in some communities, many of them relating to financial issues, First Nations manage most of their elementary and secondary schools and control their curricula. Teaching material adapted to the historical and cultural reality of the First Peoples is increasing and well-trained Indigenous teachers are emerging in large numbers from Quebec universities (Maheux and Gauthier, 2013). Statistically speaking, it is obvious that the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in terms of academic success and perseverance remains significant at all levels of education. However, as rightly stated by Bergeron and Rioux (2007): "Academic success (among Indigenous people) is not solely measured by a score. […] It is defined more by parents, young people and teachers, in terms of perseverance, ability to make enough effort to obtain passing grades. The notion of perseverance becomes an important dimension of academic success […] When the matter of discussion is the educational situation of Indigenous people, the accounting vision of success must be set aside for a holistic approach" (p. 12). It is precisely "a holistic approach to evaluating success" that the Canadian Council on Learning (2009) proposes in *The State of Aboriginal Learning in Canada*. More and more researchers involved with Indigenous people are adopting this perspective (Commission de l'éducation du Québec, 2007; Montgomery, Minville, Winterowd, Jeffries, & Baysden, 2000; Vinette, 1996; Wotherspoon & Schissel, 1998; Gauthier, 2005). According to them, the fundamental change that is occurring in the academic achievement of Indigenous youth is in the transformation of their relationship to school, to formal education–a relationship that has become much more positive, less reactive, less resistive.

It is in the spirit of incitement to governance and of the progress observed, but also because of important challenges, that the Convention on Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples was created and will soon be in its fourth edition. Let us remember that the first edition of the Convention in 2014 was organized from a general interest, which made it possible to cover a wide variety of fields and to realize the extent to which this event was expected among the actors involved directly and indirectly in First Peoples' education. The second edition, in 2015, in response to the suggestion of several participants, focused on field concerns and invited to discuss on *What Is Done in Schools*. The resulting spirit of collaboration inspired the choice of the theme of the next edition, precisely the subject of this journal - *Gathering for Success* - which, moreover, was most appropriately part of the current social movement emerging as a result of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Accordingly, this issue of the eponymous journal attempts to transpose as faithfully as possible, in a style accessible to all, the content of activities and presentations held during the third edition of the Convention.

In concrete terms, elements covering a wide spectrum of fields, are found in four sections. Firstly, most of the journal renders the content of the various workshops and presentations featured at the Convention, with topics ranging from the integration of cultural content into educational materials to the specificities of second-language acquisition, and the implementation of strategies promoting the First Peoples' holistic learning model. These articles are presented into three subsections: teaching practices, support practices, and collaborative practices. There is also the *Report on School Perseverance*, which presents the recipients for the 2017–2018 School Perseverance Scholarships, while highlighting their determination, resilience and willpower. In addition, a new section entitled *Resources to Discover* will feature many tools and resources, presented during the Convention, that can be used to teach or work with Indigenous learners. Finally, two reports on institutional initiatives are presented: one concerning the pedagogical and identity scope of activities and resources implemented by the Kiuna Institution, and the other highlighting the development potential of collaborative initiatives between Indigenous and non-Indigenous institutions, in this case the *Centre régional d'éducation pour adultes de Uashat* and the *Centre de formation professionnelle du Fjord*.

We hope that this journal reflects both the great synergy that has developed throughout the third edition of the Convention and that there is now greater awareness on the fact that Indigenous education is everyone's responsibility. The fundamental purpose of this publication is to share best practices and winning local initiatives with the largest number of actors in all spheres.

The growing popularity of the Convention on Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples among Indigenous education actors is a clear indication of its importance. It is now an event that is rooted in time. As proof, the fourth edition, which will be held in October 16–18, 2019, at the Palais des congrès in Montreal, is already under preparation. An event not to be missed!

Winds of change are blowing on Indigenous education and the articles in this journal bear witness to this.

Allow yourself to be inspired!

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PART 1

TEACHING PRACTICES

FOR A MORE EQUITABLE ASSESSMENT OF INDIGENOUS STUDENTS' NEEDS:

Knowledge Synthesis of Scientific Literature and of two Atikamekw Communities[1]

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Context

Some studies conducted in Canada and Quebec suggest that Indigenous students have a more vulnerable profile in terms of their educational success (Conseil Supérieur de l'Education [CSE], 2010, Presseau, Martineau and Bergevin, 2006). This is reflected in their over-representation in special education programs (Gabel, Curcic, Powell, Khader and Albee, 2009, Minister's Nation Working Group on Education, 2002). These findings suggest that school is still not equitable (CSE, 2016) and that it needs to address the discriminatory potential of its practices for minority students to offer services that not only respond to the diversity of students (UNESCO, 2017), but support their academic success and perseverance.

Among these practices, those aimed at assessing the needs of Indigenous students must be questioned. In fact, the assessment process is essential for the appraisal of educational success and can, in some cases, contribute to creating educational inequalities. In order to overcome these, the assessment process requires recognition of the specificities and unique realities of Indigenous students. This is expressed by taking into account their socio-economic, socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics. However, taking this into account in needs assessment practices is a challenge for school actors (Banks, 2004). To promote the implementation of equitable practices among Indigenous students, we conducted a research project to answer the following question: What are the promising needs assessment practices for Indigenous students by education professionals?

Objectives

Because of the critical role of need assessment process and the inherent risks associated with its implementation for Indigenous students, a main research objective was determined: to identify promising assessment

practices for Indigenous students likely to experience learning difficulties. Two specific objectives were established: 1) to identify assessment practices taking into account the socio-economic, socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics of these students; and 2) to bring out the issues related to their implementation as well as the favourable conditions in two Atikamekw communities.

The objectives therefore ensure results' relevance of the results for two First Nations communities. In order to be promising, needs' assessment practices must be implementable in their specific context, in line with a model of practices based on informed decision-making (Gambrill, 2013).

Research approach

The first objective required a secondary analysis of scientific literature using descriptive metasynthesis (Beaucher and Jutras, 2007). The analysis focused on 82 papers that explicitly addressed: 1) Indigenous students, 2) School professionals, and 3) Needs assessment practices. The purpose of this analysis was to identify excerpts describing needs' assessment practices which take into account the socio-economic, socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics of these students. To reach the second objective, the excerpts were analyzed to bring out transversal issues to the implementation of the promising practices. Subsequently, the favourable conditions, already established or desired by school professionals involved in the assessment of students' needs in the participating communities, were analyzed in relation with these issues.

In sum, research tasks related to the first objective allowed the identification of 27 promising practices, and the ones linked to the second objective targeted three transversal issues and 40 associated enabling conditions. The next section summarizes the main conclusions of the study.

Key facts

In the following table, the 27 promising practices are organized according to five professional acts that constitute the needs' assessment process. While the number of papers associated to each of those practices is in parentheses, divergent practices are marked with an asterisk and the practices to be substantiated are in italics, the remaining practices are considered consensual in the writings reviewed.

The 40 favourable conditions reported by the school actors involved in assessing student needs in these communities were organized according to three transversal issues in assessing the needs of Indigenous students. Regarding the issue of school-family-community collaboration and school actors, the need to implement mechanisms that better take into account the views of the family was emphasized. With respect to the *attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of school actors towards the student*, the school actors expressed more concerns about under-identification than

to over-identification. With regard to the *service delivery models*, it appears that a better knowledge of the respective mandates of the school actors, in particular the professionals involved in the assessment process, is necessary. In addition, certain obstacles were also identified: the rigidity and the lack of consistency in the modalities of collaboration with the family; the widespread use of formal tests without relevant adaptation; the preeminence of the diagnostic function over the prognostic function of the assessment process; and lastly, the lack of dialogue among school actors and interveners, and the poor harmonization between teachers' practices but also between bilingual and francophone programs.

Key findings

1. The Indigenous student needs assessment process should be based on close collaboration between all actors involved: the student himself, his family, the community and the school actors. This collaboration should not only imply the simple transmission of information from one individual to another. For example, everyone should contribute to the case study, by gathering and interpreting information relevant to understand the student's situation. In this way, each actor can share his or her knowledge and know-how to better identify and respond to the student's needs.

2. The importance of recognizing the cultural and linguistic specificities of Indigenous students was emphasized. School actors are invited to become aware of their own beliefs, attitudes and perceptions about these students. For example, before making any assessment findings, school actors involved must ensure that the student's difficulties are not explained by his or her cultural and linguistic specificities. Using an interpreter or allowing the student to communicate in his or her mother tongue are possible avenues. In other words, school actors must make every effort to develop practices that are culturally relevant.

3. To meet the needs of all students, the service delivery models should be flexible and preventive. Thus, in order for the Indigenous student needs assessment process to contribute to the pursuit of equity in school, it is necessary to ensure that the assessment procedures are comprehensive, which means that they consider the many factors that influence the difficulties of these students; differentiated, which means that they are centered on each student, especially on his/her strengths; and finally, dynamic, which means that they emphasize on the learning process and monitor progress of students by promoting conditions for learning, as opposed to a predictive perspective oriented towards the identification of risk factors.

4. Educational communities are encouraged to examine their own conditions for implementing promising Indigenous student needs assessment practices. This contextualized examination is essential to implement practices based on informed decision-making

Promising practices	
Screening	Conduct interdisciplinary team screening, including the teacher (11)
	Involve student, family and community in the screening (12)
	Adopt a preventive standpoint to perform screening (9)
Case Study	Always conduct a case study (9)
	Collect diverse medical, socio-economic, educational and family information about the student in a holistic perspective (10)
	Conduct observations of the student to complete the case study (7)
	Conduct an interview with the student to complete the case study (6)
	Conduct an interview with the family and community of the student to complete the case study (9)
	Learn about the cultural and linguistic specificities of the student before carrying out the case study (7)
Assessment Procedures	Use only informal procedures and approaches with Indigenous students * (17)
	Use of various assessment procedures* (13)
	Make sure that assessment procedures are implemented by people who share the student's language and culture (21)
	Train professionals who implement assessment procedures (16)
	Develop relevant assessment procedures (18)
	Use reliable and valid tests with Indigenous populations * (29)
	Be cautious in interpreting formal test results (25)
	Inform the student's family about the tests used (2)
	Implement comprehensive assessment procedures (22)
	Implement dynamic assessment procedures (13)
	Implement differentiated assessment procedures (19)
Assessment Findings	*Communicate the criteria for difficulty identification* (1)
	Determine the assessment findings collectively, within a team of professionals, including teachers, and in collaboration with the parents (1)
	Rely on various information to determine the assessment findings (6)
	Make sure your assessment findings of the student's difficulties are not based on his or her cultural and linguistic specificities (8)
Recommendations	*Formulate recommendations in consultation with school team to foster academic success* (2)
	Take into account all the information on the student in order to formulate culturally relevant recommendations (5)
	Make the recommendations available to parents (3)

The 40 favourable conditions reported by the school actors involved in assessing student needs in these communities were organized according to three transversal issues in assessing the needs of Indigenous students. Regarding the issue of school-family-community collaboration and school actors, the need to implement mechanisms that better take into account the views of the family was emphasized.

Development opportunities

Our findings confirm that some knowledge to support equity for Indigenous students is available. However, the pathways for contextualization and appropriation of these promising practices by First Nations communities should be further studied. This is, in our opinion, an essential condition, not only should promising practices be known by school actors, their implementation should be promoted according to their specific context (Borri-Anadon, 2014). ■

NOTES

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TEACHING HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES THROUGH INDIGENOUS COMIC BOOKS

Photo: Lisa Graves

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Although there has been a gradual improvement in the representation of Indigenous peoples in the Quebec curricula and textbooks since the 1970s, considerable parts of First Peoples history, and thus national history, are still too timidly studied in the province's schools today (Arsenault, 2012; Bories-Sawala, 2014; Dufour, 2014). Beyond integration of certain crucial pages of our national narrative into the different curricula, we must remember that the real contribution of this teaching depends not only on the programs themselves, but also on the didactic tools used, the ability of the teacher to transmit this difficult knowledge, and on the student's dispositions to integrate it (Brodeur-Girard in Dufour, 2015). Considering the first evolutionist and then ethnocentric character of Quebec educational programs and textbooks from yesterday to today (Vincent and Arcand, 1979; Trudel, 2000; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015), it seems essential to me that Indigenous memories and stories be transmitted through the use of materials bearing empirical knowledge, capable of generating a true empathetic response conducive to the emergence of a critical reflection on our relationship to the Other. This step is essential to the memory and recognition work, which includes the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the cultural security of Indigenous students.

The transmission of knowledge associated with colonial abuse, to name only territorial dispossession, the residential school system or violence against Indigenous women and girls, can be, in itself, a difficult experience for Native and non-Native youth. The transmission of "difficult knowledge" is defined by Pitt and Britzman (2003) as the process by which representations associated with traumatic, historical or sociocultural events are integrated within the pedagogical curriculum. While it is particularly important to perfect the training of teachers in the field of indigenousness (Brodeur-Girard, 2015; Milne, 2017), it is also essential to provide teachers with epistemological and didactic tools enabling the judicious integration of difficult knowledge. It is thus a question of defusing potential feelings of anger or guilt, which can lead to withdrawal, by organizing activities of reflection, discussion

and dialogue. This article proposes to introduce Indigenous comic strips, and more particularly the corpus of Cree author David Alexander Robertson and the associated teaching guides, as a didactic tool able to facilitate the encounter with the difficult knowledge of Indigenous historical and contemporary realities within the education system. The overview presented here is the result, among other things, of the research begun during my participation in the summer school devoted to Indigenous literature[1] of the Centre d'études et de recherches internationales (CERIUM), the *Socioedupop Project*, my master's degree in Anthropology and my research-creation as part of the doctoral program in Education through Arts at Concordia University.

Indigenous Comic Books and Difficult Knowledge

Several artistic projects have been created to carry the word and share the stories associated with Indigenous realities in a perspective of popularization and cultural mediation. Within this movement, we note, among other things, the emergence of comic strips, graphic novels or educational graphic memories written by Indigenous authors or in close collaboration with them. These stories include *The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book* (Hill 2010), *7 Generations: A Plains Cree Saga* (Robertson & Henderson, 2012a) and *Sugar Falls: A Residential School Story (2012b)*; *The Life of Helen Betty Osborne* (Robertson & Blackstone, 2008); *Betty : The Helen Betty Osborne Story* (Robertson & Henderson, 2015); *Uneducation : A Residential School Graphic Novel* (Eaglespeaker, 2014); *The Outside Circle : A Graphic Novel* (LaBoucane-Benson & Mellings, 2015); The *Artic Comics* series (Kusugak & Kusugak, 2016) and lastly, the Healthy Aboriginal Network publications.

The first graphic novels emerged within the popular comic book movement in the 1960s. Although controversial and often nebulous, the distinction between these two related supports is generally based on format, narrative composition, visual style and thematic content. The graphic novel would thus be more elaborately designed to address a complex set of themes or themes intended for an adult audience, borrowing from a multitude of literary genres (O'English, Matthews, & Blakesley Lindsay, 2006). Through my research, I use the concept of graphic memories to delimit graphic works «inspired by the direct or indirect experience of contemporary subjects within temporally, geographically and culturally defined universes» (Dufour, 2014; 2016). Through a multitude of approaches, genres and narrative processes, we can distinguish Indigenous graphic memories, which aim not only to counter preconceived ideas or the potential stereotypes of non-Native readership, but also to enhance the cultural pride and identity of Indigenous youth by allowing a better contextualization of the inherent issues in history and the present of Indigenous Peoples of Quebec and Canada (2014). It should be noted that several works recently produced by non-Native authors and illustrators (Brown, 2003; Couture, Duquette, & Lemieux, 2014; Sacco, 2016; Hellman, 2016; Rémillard, 2016; Downie & Lemire, 2016; Lapierre & Tzara,

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2017) also help to reverse the stereotyping associated with Indigenous characters within the occidental comic books (Sheyahshe, 2016).

Case Study: David Alexander Roberston, Prolific Cree Writer

By its wide accessibility and openly didactic purpose, the graphic corpus of Swampy Cree author, David Alexander Robertson - who was recently awarded a Governor General's Award for his history book *When We Were Alone* (Robertson & Flett, 2017) - is particularly appropriate to be used in classrooms. His flagship series, 7 Generations: *A Plains Cree Saga* (Robertson & Henderson, 2012a), consists of four albums available in English and French (2013). It concerns the Nêhiyaw (or Plains Cree) collective memories from the early 19th century to the present day. Despite its geographic and cultural specificity, it presents many historical and contemporary themes that can be linked to the experience of other Indigenous nations in Canada (for example, major epidemics, the residential school system, the breakdown of cultural transmission, intergenerational sequelae, and self-destructive violence, etc.). These stories are introduced by Edwin's mother, a young Cree hospitalized because of a suicide attempt. In the hope of restoring his confidence in the future and strengthening his cultural roots, she will tell him four stories associated with their ancestors' resilience. The integration of these

graphic memories in classrooms is facilitated by the use of a teaching guide, available online, offering turnkey activities and avenues for reflection and discussion. The *7 Generations* Teacher's Guide (Sinclair, 2011), a series primarily aimed at a 13- and 17-year-old audience, was designed by Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, Anishnabe Professor at the University of Manitoba and Indigenous comic book Specialist.

For 8 to 11-year olds, Robertson offers the Tales from Big Spirit series (Robertson et al., 2014). The series, illustrated by various graphic artists, features seven Indigenous historical figures from Canada, such as Pauline Johnson, Gabriel Dumont, John Ramsay and Tommy Prince etc. The associated teacher's guide (Ferguson, 2014) facilitates the integration of these memories into the classroom. The series' albums, specially designed to foster the creation of historical connections and literacy development, are built from familiar worlds that can be identified by young contemporary audiences. For example, the memoirs of Tekahionwake Pauline Johnson, known as the Mohawk Princess, are introduced through the school research work of Katya, a young student who is passionate about poetry. Robertson is also the author of The Helen Betty Osborne Story (Robertson and Henderson, 2015), an updated version of his first graphic novel The Life of Helen Betty Osborne (Robertson & Blackstone, 2008), on the theme of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada. These memoirs focus on the sad story of Helen Betty Osborne, a young Cree student who left her community to pursue post-secondary education but was brutally murdered in Manitoba in 1972 by a group of non-Indigenous youths. This album is intended for an audience of at least fifteen years of age and its study can be optimized using a teaching guide (Wyatt Anderson, 2017), also free download, which offers tracks for animation conducive to reflection, discussion and the empathic reflex, going from the particular to the conceptual.

In short, Indigenous graphic memoirs can be interesting educational tools for teaching different school subjects, such as History, but also French, English, Ethics and Religious Culture, Philosophy, etc. While each of the series appears to be specifically designed to match the educational abilities of certain targeted grade levels, it is important to note that all series can, however, be judiciously used in postsecondary education. Through conceptual and practical suggestions, the teacher's guides for various school levels are intended to facilitate their didactic use while offering an interesting alternative for teachers who would not feel sufficiently equipped to enrich the perspectives presented in the usual textbooks. We must remember that the juxtaposition of the image and the written word offers many potential perspectives for understanding the narrative and its educational content (Sinclair, 2011). The study of Indigenous graphic memoirs can be relevantly enriched by the testimony of Indigenous guests or speakers, by organizing educational outings or field trips (communities, museums, theatre or other) or, at the very least, by using didactic or artistic materials properly associated with the Indigenous peoples of Quebec. ■

Figure 2 : Image reproduced with the authorization of HighWater Press.
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(In order of appearance in the text)

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1   Supervisors: Sarah Henzi and Isabelle Saint-Amand.

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PEKUAKAMIULNUATSH-SPECIFIC CULTURAL CONTENTS

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Claudie Robertson, Program Developer, Pekuakamiulnuatsh Takuhikan

Since the taking over of education in 1980, many initiatives have been implemented in the schools of Mashteuiatsh to ensure that they are a stimulating environment, allowing the culture to subsist and be transmitted on a daily basis.

In the 1990s, teachers developed lessons and activities to transmit knowledge about the history and culture of the Pekuakamiulnuatsh.

These contents, although rich, presented no common thread, no tie between the learning cycles. This observation made us think. We had to review our way of operating methods to preserve our culture—the foundation of our identity.

Therefore, after a few years making various attempts, we adopted in 2006 a mode of organization, which was a determining factor in the success of our project. We have established a pedagogical committee that has implemented a structure and strategies for developing a viable program of language and cultural skills.

The actions taken made possible the transmission of substantial knowledge specific to our First Nation and to bring various traditions to life for the students. In this way, we ensure the sustainability of the Pekuakamiulnuatsh culture.

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At the same time, the implementation of the Quebec school reform provided favourable conditions for the integration of cultural content into the *Programme de formation de l'école québécoise (PFEQ).* Indeed, the education sector has seized this opportunity and we have had the will not only to transmit specific knowledge, but also to develop competent young people, strong in their identity and their sense of belonging to the Nation. We therefore wish to train a succession of carriers and transmitters of this knowledge and skills who will be keen in preserving their culture.
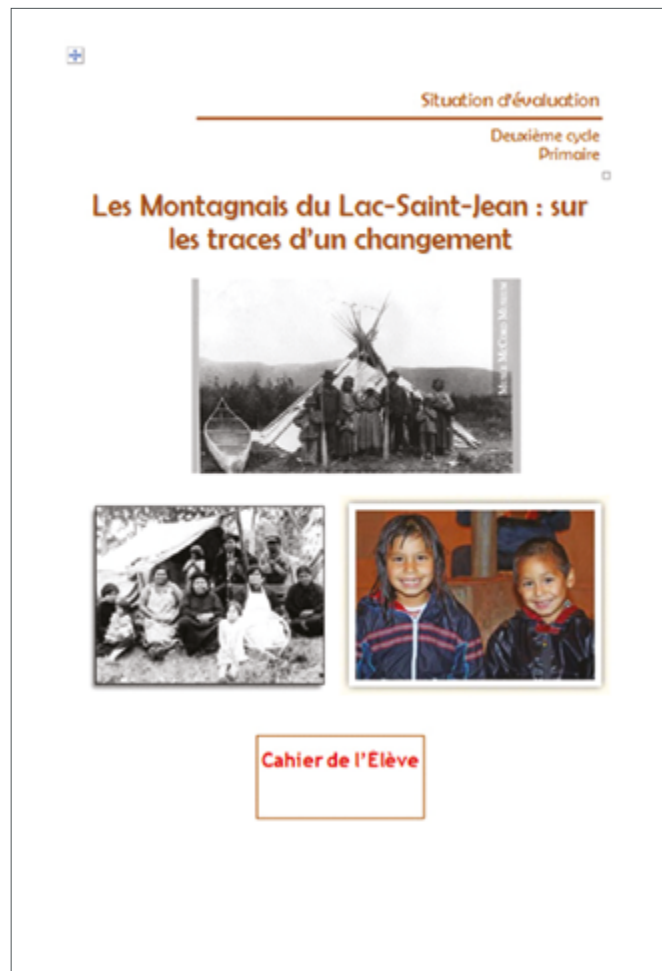
To do this, the committee, made up of pedagogical advisers, analyst-researcher and program designer has taken a step, a plan to carry out this work. It first analyzed existing programs to find that our First Nation is poorly represented in Quebec programs. Subsequently, this committee has identified writings on various themes and has selected content to share with our youth. The last step was the integration of these contents into the training programs. Considering that the priority was to transmit material dealing with the history of the Pekuakamiulnuatsh, it was decided to first insert contents containing our history in the Social Sciences. The clientele targeted by this project was at the level of the 2nd and 3rd cycles of primary school. At the same time, the material was developed for the first cycle of secondary school.

For example, it was decided to introduce the Mashteuiatsh Ilnus instead of the Iroquois. The first module developed by the pedagogical committee proposes the society of Pekuakamiulnuatsh around 1800, under the theme "The Montagnais of Lac-Saint-Jean from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, in the wake of change." Provided to elementary students, this module helps them understand the changes that have occurred, and the reasons for these changes, which have influenced our way of life. Concretely, it locates the territory and the time in addition to addressing the major themes, such as those of colonization, the population and the causes of its demographic decline, life on the reserve, and traditions and beliefs. At the secondary level, primarily at the first cycle, the program addresses two main themes: social organization and decision-making. In Secondary II, we learn the impact of the arrival of Europeans and what was happening on the territory of the Pekuakamiulnuatsh. The development of the "ability to read the organization of a society on its own territory" (ministère de l'Éducation, 2006) is one of our priorities. Young people are therefore working on the elements of the Quebec school curriculum incorporating the specific content of the Pekuakamiulnuatsh. Young people can see and "interpret the changes that occur over time" or "compare social organizations" in our community, but also at the global level.

The second priority was the integration of cultural content into Ethics and Religious Culture. The Pekuakamiulnuatsh have rich traditions and beliefs in the religious field. Still according to the method of work adopted by the pedagogical committee, material was created. It includes festivals, gatherings, *teuehikan*, knowledge of nature and animals, religious heritage, rituals and ceremonies, etc. In high school, we consider as subjects our religious traditions and the establishment of our institutions. Students have the opportunity to learn religious elements of the world, of Quebec and of our Nation.

The purpose of this transmission of knowledge is also to enable young people to concretize the concepts learned in class. At the same time, cultural knowledge dealing with the way of life in the territory was developed. This integration of knowledge provides high-school students (1 to 5) with a multitude of experiences of life in the territory during their schooling. Young people have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills. There is an increase in self-esteem—they feel valued. The learning becomes meaningful and that is very motivating.

Young people are therefore working on the elements of the Quebec school curriculum incorporating the specific content of the Pekuakamiulnuatsh. Young people can see and "interpret the changes that occur over time" or "compare social organizations" in our community, but also at the global level.

The grand winners: our young people in the community.

The success of this project to integrate cultural content into the Quebec school program inevitably involves a wide range of valuable partners and leaders. Community transmitters, parents and teachers are mobilized and support the project. The pedagogical committee is still in place to revise the content, so that the material produced is more and more relevant and capable of stimulating the students' interest. In addition to its progressive nature, other elements have ensured the success of this initiative, including close collaboration with several local partners, such as the *Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh* and the Heritage and Culture sector of our organization. Another crucial and important factor is the commitment of our political representatives to the education community. They ensured the deployment of necessary and sufficient resources for the transmission of culture to be a priority.

The grand winners: our young people in the community who are now carriers of rich knowledge. The enthusiasm of students, teachers and parents for this project demonstrates the importance of this project and ensures its sustainability.

After nine years of implementation, the education sector has developed a strong expertise in the integration of cultural content. This avenue is very inspiring and conclusive. From this experimentation, which is rich in benefits, we keep the same operating mode. Proud of our identity, of our culture, we continue our role of transmitter and we will develop, in the coming years, cultural content in art–the Pekuakamiulnuatsh art. ◼

We have had the will not only to transmit specific knowledge, but also to develop competent young people, strong in their identity and their sense of belonging to the Nation. We therefore wish to train a succession of carriers and transmitters of this knowledge and skills who will be keen in preserving their culture.

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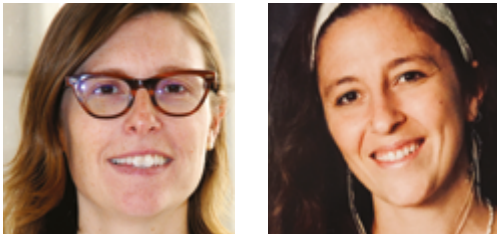
TOOLS FOR TEACHING LIFE NARRATIVES

Indigenous Skills in the Classroom

Constance Lavoie, Professor, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

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Background

> The life narrative is an oral genre and dialogical teaching practice which involves taking a retrospective look at an experience allowing both the narrator and his interlocutors to reflect, inform, describe, feel the present or understand the future by a reflexive return on the past. (Lavoie & Blanchet, 2017, p. 206)

Recognized as one of the oldest forms of communication, life narratives form the core of the oral tradition in First Nations. In Indigenous communities, the elders tell the younger ones the story of their lives in order to transmit, over the generations, values, beliefs, knowledge, skills, a collective memory (Mac Lean & Wason-Ellam, 2006). Life narratives thus play an essential role in keeping cultures alive (Unesco, 2014). Seen as an essential practice in the education of children, the educational potential of life narratives has, in recent years, attracted increasing attention for research in educational sciences (Archibald, 2008; Billy, 2015).

Educational potential of life narratives

At the ministerial level, life narratives are part of the oral genres to experiment from the first cycle of elementary onwards for the practical application of speaking and listening (MELS, 2006). Used in class, it contributes to the development of active listening (listening

comprehension), stimulates exchanges, promotes reflexivity and builds learners' confidence, encouraging them to take their turn at communicating (Archibald, 2008; Ignace, 2008; Michel, 2012). Unlike passive communication media such as television, life narratives imply interactivity and meet a need of involvement, reciprocity and reflexivity (Mac Lean and Wason-Ellam, 2006). The teacher can also use it to work differently on reading comprehension and anticipation strategies (for example, to formulate predictions, to infer implicit elements of history, to identify key ideas, to establish personal links with history, etc.) (MELS, 2006).

Several researchers have written about the importance of life narratives in Indigenous school contexts (Archibald, 2008; Ignace, 2008; MacLean & Wason-Ellam, 2006; Michel, 2012). In the belief that narratives tell the child's history and origins and guide the child throughout his or her life, these authors agree to give a holistic value to life narratives used in the classroom.

Although it allows considerable advances in literacy—which refers to the ability to understand and use written information in everyday life—, the educational potential of life narratives is not limited to language-related learning. Indeed, as personified oral genre, rooted in the experience and contextualized, life narratives contribute to the establishment of values and consolidation of identity (Bruner, 2002). They act in this respect as vectors of ethical education (Cortes, 2016).

Life narratives can also be used for the teaching of history, such as learning the origin and the names of places, clans, rivers, etc. For Archibald (2008), life narratives are also a source of reconciliation with the past, in addition to ensuring the preservation of skills. UNESCO (2014) maintains that life narratives are a form of intangible cultural heritage to be transmitted in order to preserve knowledge and skills in homes and schools. In addition, Article 13 of the Indigenous Peoples Declaration, which was signed by Canada in 2010, states that:

> Indigenous peoples have the right to revive, use, develop and transmit to future generations their history, their language, their oral traditions, their philosophy, their writing system and their literature, as well as choose and keep their own names for communities, places and people. (Unesco, 2007, p. 7)

Article 14 adds that Indigenous peoples have the right to use cultural methods of teaching and learning, which include life narratives.

Objectives

Although life narratives are incomparable between them, Lavoie and Blanchet (2017) have highlighted a certain structure to accompany teachers in understanding their main stages. The data has been revisited with the aim of identifying a pedagogical model for the use of life narratives in the classroom. The presentation of the educational model aims to honour the legacy of Indigenous know-how.

Some methodological guidelines

The results presented here come from three exploratory studies in which the life narratives were used. Data from these projects have allowed researchers to document the strategies used by teachers and Indigenous Elders. Some data come from non-participant observations, which took place during eight sessions of Elder-led life narratives with preschool children in the Innu community of Unamen Shipu (Lavoie, Mark and Jenniss, 2014). In a second research project, nine third-grade teachers used life narratives in the classroom. This second project took place with each of the following Innu communities: Maliotenam, Matimekosh-Lac John, Pakua Shipu, Pessamit, Ushat and Unamen Shipu. In addition to these two data collections, two semi-structured interviews were conducted with elders from two Indigenous Nations: Algonquin (Timiskaming) and Mohawk (Akwesasne). Their wisdom and expertise in the life narratives have qualified and enriched the interpretation of the results of the first research projects.

Results

From the research conducted, strategies used for planning, realization and integration of life narratives in a school context were identified. The pedagogical model is thus presented according to these three phases. In addition, an educational planning tool facilitates the testing of proposed strategies.

Life narratives can also be used for the teaching of history.

INDIGENOUS SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Planning Strategies

- Choosing the moment (early morning, end of day)
- Choosing the narrative (content, know-how, intention)
- Structuring the narrative (narrative weaving)
- Preparing notes, lexical cards
- Visualizing and repeating the narrative
- Predict movements
- Organizing the space (story corner, circle, lighting)

CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Realization Strategies

- Establishing an opening routine and trigger (object, music)
- Reformulating or repeating some passages
- Imitating or mimicking (sounds, words, movements)
- Creating analogies (animals, objects, etc.)
- Involving the audience (questions, repetitions, sounds, movements)
- Varying the pace (breathing, silence, etc.)
- Adding dramatic effects (voice modulation, expression, etc.)
- Skipping or condensing certains épisodes (ellipse)
- Creating expectations or comments (chronological breakdowns)
- Stretching actions (dillatation)
- Établishing visual contact with everyone
- Checking the listening with a formula

CONTEXT

Integration Strategies

STORY AND EXPERIENCE

- Promoting thanks
- Stimulating reflection and interpretation (group, talking circle, dyad, solo)
- Proposing enrichment activities (drawint, crafts, role play, repeat)
- Encouraging students to share the narrative

Figure 1: Pedagogical model of life narratives based on the Indigenous expertise.

Canvas for organizing a life narrative in class.

PLANNING STRATEGIES

1- I choose to share the following life narrative _____ for _____

2- To prepare myself, I organize my narrative :

? (To situate) = questions for the audience

?

?   ?

Triggering element / Chronological breach / End, acknowledgments

STRATÉGIES DE RÉALISATION

3- I begin my narrative with the following triggering element :
_____

4- I vary the rhythm for _____

5- I do the movement _____ in order to _____

6- I use the following dramatic effect : _____

7- I compare _____ (element or character) with _____ (animal or elements of nature)

8- I ask the following question to my audience : _____

9- To keep my audience's attention, I use the following strategy :
_____

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

10 - After my narrative, I ask those who have listened to me to
_____

Discussion

In the planning phase, it is useful for the narrator to prepare notes, lexical cards or word lists to guide his narrative. Participating teachers have used words cards to provide guidance for the structure of their narrative as to enrich the vocabulary of their students. The value and significance of the words proved to be important: "*It serves to increase the vocabulary of young people and to manipulate words since they have meaning and they (students) understand the meaning*" (interview May 2015, teacher, Unamen Shipu). In the context of lexical erosion of words specific in Indigenous communities, the integration of certain words in life narratives can help to preserve and transmit them from one generation to another. For participants from different studies, "choosing the story" and "choosing the moment" are preparing strategies to life narratives. However, to Archibald (2008), it is important for narrators to embrace narratives surfacing in unplanned ways within their daily lives, without predetermined pedagogical intention, to build sense with the interlocutors within the integration phase. This observation brings us back to the «seize the moment," idea mentioned by several participants.

The results demonstrate that the life narratives establish a space of respect within which everyone's experience is recognized as legitimate knowledge. Testimonials from teachers and elders indicate that life narratives would build bridges between class and family. Thus, the implementation strategies proposed in the model would contribute to awareness rising, to the ideological position as well as to the identity enhancement of the child. In this sense, the life narratives impose themselves as a holistic and disciplinary teaching practice that would help individuals in their overall development.

Conclusion

Life narratives prove to be a rich educational practice that can be updated in multiple ways in the classrooms. They include specific planning, realization and implementation strategies. By knowing them and using them, teachers will enrich their practice with oral storytelling in the classroom. The model developed remains flexible and must be used to guide teachers and not to dictate their practice. Serving as a model to his or her interlocutors, the narrator must also cultivate integrity and humility in the transmission of his or her life narratives.

In light of research with teachers and Elders of First Nations, it appears that life narratives inspired by Indigenous tradition, is an oral genre modelled and transferable to many disciplines, and this, at all school contexts. Ultimately, the life narrative pedagogical model, presented at the 2017 edition of the Convention on Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples, aims to pay tribute to Indigenous "tradition setters" who inspired its development. ■

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SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AMONG INDIGENOUS STUDENTS IN QUEBEC:

an Educational Tool Adapted to their School Realities

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Background

A great number of studies report the benefits of social and emotional learnings (SEL) at school (Shanker, 2014; Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2017). However, SEL are still little explored in the context of Indigenous education, which gives an exploratory character to the educational tool presented in this article. In Indigenous school environments, building a positive and caring classroom climate could be a lever for students' well-being and academic success. Indigenous children growing up in conditions of emotional precariousness sometimes experience the impact of intergenerational trauma, which requires sustained attention (Clarke, 2007). School perseverance and success implies establishing a safe learning environment for children. The development of SEL contributes to creating these conditions conducive to learning. Integrated into the classroom routine, their teaching has an impact on the school results, but also on the overall development of the child. In fact, by promoting a healthy management of emotions, relational behaviours improve, psychological stress decreases, and the ability to learn increases (Taylor et al., 2017). For schools in the various First Nations communities in Quebec, these learnings bring significant advances. The values of empathy and respect promoted by SEL also correspond to the precepts of peace education rooted in the intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2014).

The Grandes Rencontres project, established by the Jasmin Roy Foundation, the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES) and the Peace Grantmakers Network, brings together various partners from the education and training sector and organizations that are involved in the establishment of a positive and caring school climate, including Chaire de recherche sur la sécurité et la violence en milieu éducatif of Université Laval. These organizations and partners, dedicated to the prevention and treatment of violence and bullying, provide training to practitioners in the Quebec school system.

A project reflecting indigenous school realities

In an effort to reach Indigenous school communities, an adaptation of the training workshops was proposed as part of the Convention on Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples (PRSCPP). The content of the Grandes Rencontres on SEL was presented to the First Nations Education Council who wanted to deepen the literacy of needs and emotions. In a context of openness to the educational realities of First Peoples and Inuits of Quebec, we were mandated by the Jasmin Roy Foundation to develop the educational tool *The Social and Emotional Learnings of Indigenous Students* with the financial support of the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones. Without being an end in itself, it offers concrete ways allowing teachers to promote these learnings among their students.

A close collaboration

Various collaborators have been consulted for the development of this tool, which takes the form of a large, double-sided plastic poster, accompanied by a teaching guide. Emotions and needs are represented by circular pictograms, in accordance with Indigenous aesthetic. The Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite de l'Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, the Institut de l'éducation socioémotionnelle (Institute of Socio-Emotional Education), the MEES, and the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones of Quebec have all contributed to ensuring the relevance, validity and sustainability of the tool illustrated by the artist Karen Golden.

Translation into eleven languages

In an attempt to reach educational settings of the various Indigenous nations and to enhance their respective first languages, the emotion poster has been translated into the eleven Indigenous languages spoken in Quebec[1]. To this end, members of the various communities were consulted, through the Anishnabe Elder, Francine Payer. We would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Centre de développement et de formation de la main-d'œuvre (Wendake's Huron-Wendat Workforce Development and Training Centre) (CDFM) and the Tshakapesh Institute. All of these collaborators have converged on the same goal which is of creating an evocative and self-supporting tool that reflects Indigenous school environments.

The launch of the educational tool at the Convention

During the 2017 edition of the PRSCPP Convention, each participant received the big poster. Posters were also available on site, in English and in the eleven Indigenous languages. The presentation of this tool was included in a Grandes Rencontres workshop animated by Sylvie Bourgeois[2]. The educational tool can be downloaded free of charge via the Jasmin Roy Foundation website[3].

These learnings refer to five important components in the development of the person: self-awareness, self-regulation of emotions, social awareness, interpersonal skills and responsible decision-making.

Reference framework

In order to understand the potential of SEL, some concepts need to be clarified. These learnings refer to five important components in the development of the person: self-awareness, self-regulation of emotions, social awareness, interpersonal skills and responsible decision-making. These five components are interdependent and affect the human being's cognitive, affective and behavioural skills (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor and Schellinger, 2011).

What are the SEL for?

The literacy process consists of exposing students to the range of emotions and needs they may experience at school and at home in order to facilitate their identification and regulation. Benefits are felt on the learning community in general: pro-social behaviours increase as aggressive behaviours decline. In the long run, research has shown that young adults who have developed social and emotional skills are more persistent in school, have higher levels of education, have better socioeconomic status, demonstrate better psychological health and are more involved in their community (Durlak et al., 2011).

Emotions

With varying intensities, emotions are there to help us adapt to each situation. They are necessary for personal and social development and can contribute to academic success (Coppin & Sander, 2010). For students at the primary level, the research consulted allowed us to set the choice on seven basic emotions (joy, sadness, fear, anger, surprise, disgust and confidence), broken down into more complex emotions that intensify if left unchecked (Plutchik, 2002). On the developed poster, an empty circle is left for the "emotion of the moment", which can occur during a situation experienced in class and which deserves to be addressed in groups or individually. Exposure to this range of emotions would contribute to the development of emotional intelligence, which "allows […] to introduce a space between our feelings and our actions" (Bohler, 2017, p. 1).

Needs

We all have different ways of responding to situations we encounter. Each child experiences the spectrum of emotions in his own way. The resulting needs are just as varied. Chart 1 presents the needs identified for the Indigenous students' Emotions and Needs Literacy Project.

7 main needs	4 social and emotional learnings
Introspection : I need to understand what I feel.	SELF-AWARENESS
Expression : I need to express what I feel.	
Regulation : I need to learn to master my emotions.	SELF-CONTROL
Empathy : I need to understand what the other feels.	SOCIAL AWARENESS
Belonging : I need to be part of a group.	RELATIONSHIPS
Acknowledgement : I need to be acknowledged, respected.	
Guidance : I need to be helped, supported.	

Chart 1: Social and Emotional Needs of Indigenous Students [4].

Added to this is the decisional learning that is associated with the freedom to choose and the responsibilities involved (Shanker, 2014).

Figure 1: Three pedagogical angles favourable to the integration of SEL in the classroom.

Guidelines for indigenous school practitioners

The SEL contribution to First Peoples must be recognized and prioritized. To do this, consulting and experimenting research with other populations supports the process and is a source of motivation (Taylor et al., 2017). Indeed, if the school team is convinced of the need to integrate the SEL, it will be able to promote it. From this mobilization and in consultation, a strategic plan can be established to equip the various actors involved. The educational guide that accompanies the Emotions and Needs Literacy Tool includes a bank of activities to inspire their practice. In order to cultivate these learning experiences in Indigenous schools, certain paradigms must be respected. The sensitivity of the intervention lies in the fact that it must consider the realities of each school environment and each child. The tool created by the Jasmin Roy Foundation is designed to be integrated into the daily routine of the class, without making the teacher's task more cumbersome. Here are some concrete ways to introduce SEL in schools.

Three options can be explored to integrate SEL in schools. These are the explicit, integrated and applied angles[5].

Explicit teaching makes it possible to directly cover the contents related to emotions and needs by means of visual support. For example, from the two-sided poster, students are invited each day to name the emotion and need they feel. This way, the "feel" of the group can be obtained, making it possible to deploy the appropriate interventions. The integrated approach to a discipline makes it possible to treat notions through a story's characters. In an applied manner, the teacher can reinvest the learnings acquired in a contextualized situation, for instance, during a conflict between students. The teaching of SEL can be done in the same way as regular teaching, which is sequentially. To maximize their reach, the teacher must

minimize competition by cultivating a spirit of cooperation among students. Modelling also provides them with benchmarks, while positive feedback allows them to find ways to develop self-image and positive status among their peers. The ability to detect emotional signals in others is also reinforced (Durlak & Weissberg, 2010).

Conclusion

While delivering literacy of emotions and needs, the teaching tool will, we hope, contribute to the well-being of Indigenous students in Quebec. By discovering various colourful pictograms facilitating identification, students will realize that it is possible not only to positively manage their emotions, but also to healthily satisfy the needs that arise from them. By introducing a regular SEL-related educational practice in communities, the tool could contribute to the development of an Indigenous-sounding pedagogy. Indeed, students in a school environment resembling them, and where they can express themselves with confidence, will remain more persistent and have a better chance of success (Shanker, 2014). Still in experimentation, this tool is presented in all humility, with the intention of helping the students to open up on their emotions, but also to nourish the teaching practice in the Indigenous schools of Quebec. Its use will be tinged with the sensitivity of the practitioners using it. ∎

NOTES

1   It should be noted that the tool could not be translated in Naskapi due to a lack of expertise in this particular language. It has been replaced by the Ojibwe, which is a language neighbouring the Quebec territory. We are, however, interested in receiving the translation into Naskapi, which would allow the development of the poster for this nation.

2   Sylvie Bourgeois, Regional Support Officer for dossier climat scolaire positif, violence et intimidation, regions of Laval, Lanaudière and Laurentides, MEES.

3   Jasmin Roy Foundation website: http://fondationjasminroy.com/initiative/alphabetisation-des-emotions-chez-les-premieres-nations/

4   Inspired by Shanker (2014), Taylor et coll. (2017) the content of this table is adjusted according to the expertise of Tara Wilkie and Sophie Langri, Founders of the Institut de l'éducation socio-émotionnelle and creators of the social and emotional learning workshop for the Grandes Rencontres.

5   Figure adapted from those of Wilkie and Langri, 2016.

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DESIGN AND EXPERIMENT OF A BILINGUAL (FRENCH-*ANICINABEMOWIN*[1]) METAPHONOLOGY PROGRAM IN *ANICINABE* SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE FIRST CYCLE OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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Background

The educational success of Indigenous people is an important issue in Canada. In Quebec, for Indigenous communities with agreements[2], the annual drop-out rate before the end of secondary school in 2010 was 85.2%, while for the province as a whole it was 17.4% (ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013). Still in Quebec, for about one third of Indigenous students, the language of schooling is not their first language[3] (L1) (Hot, 2013) and the vast majority use a linguistic variety different from that of school (Ball, 2009; Mowatt-Gaudreau & Maheux, 2009). It can be assumed that the high drop-out rate reflects a difficult academic path for these students, particularly due to the difficulty of learning the language of instruction. On the one hand, students with an Indigenous language as L1 must quickly master the majority language, in reception and production, to appropriate the school subjects taught (Conseil Atikamekw de Manawan, 2012) without benefiting from a second language approach (L2) in this learning process (Terraza, 2009). On the other hand, the use of a linguistic variety that is different from the language of schooling can make access to literacy difficult (Daviault, 2013).

A substantial amount of research emphasizes the importance of developing the metalinguistic capacities[4] of learners, both in L1 and L2, to apprehend written language (Fleuret & Montesinos-Gelet, 2011). More specifically, the studies show the link between metaphonological abilities[5] and learning to read. These abilities play a key role in decoding–a fundamental strategy leading to the development of automation and fluency in reading. In the field of language didactics, for several decades, researchers have emphasized the importance of legitimizing the language repertoires of students in learning L2 (Fleuret,

The studies show the link between metaphonological abilities and learning to read. These abilities play a key role in decoding–a fundamental strategy leading to the development of automation and fluency in reading.

2013; Moore & Sabatier, 2014) or the language of schooling (Fleuret, 2017). Allowing students to build on their knowledge of L1 promotes, among other things, cognitive transfer between the two languages (Cummins, 1979). Some studies, both in L1 and L2, show the major role of children's literature in the appropriation of the written language and in the consideration of cultural diversity (DeRoy-Ringuette & Courchesne, 2017; Dupin de Saint-André, Montesinos-Gelet, & Boudreau, 2015; Fleuret, 2013 and 2017). Other research highlights the influence of family literacy practices on students' academic literacy skills development[6] in both L1 and L2 (Bastien, 2017; Fleuret, 2012), and the importance of more emphasis on heritage languages[7] in the development of literacy skills[8] at school (Taylor, Bernhard, Garg & Cummins, 2008). For this reason, it seems appropriate to examine these different aspects with Indigenous young learners in the first cycle elementary education as part of this research.

Objectives of the study

In the context of the design and experiment of a bilingual metaphonology program, this study has two objectives: 1) to describe the development of metaphonological awareness (French-*Anicinabemowin*) of first cycle elementary pupils in *Anicinabe*[9] school environment; 2) describe the changes observed in pedagogical practices and family literacy practices as a result of the experiment of this program.

Methodology

To achieve our research objectives, we will use the experimental design of a pedagogical and formative system[10], an approach that can be described as "a series of approaches, with the intent of producing new theories, artifacts, and practices that account for and potentially impact learning and teaching in naturalistic settings" (Reinking & Bradley, 2008, p. 17). Thus, we will be able to access rich and meaningful information by using various tools: the initial anonymized questionnaire for teachers (sociodemographic data, knowledge of Indigenous youth literature, language representations, training needs, etc.), parents (socio-demographic data, family literacy practices, language representations, etc.) and students (knowledge and representations of languages). Secondly, we will use measurement and control instruments (in French and Algonquin): the N-EEL (metaphonology sub-test) and the K-ABC (decoding sub-test, reading and comprehension sub-test[11]). Third, participant observation in the classroom is intended to interact with participants and to better understand the phenomenon being studied. The actors will report their impressions in a logbook to analyze and guide the process. Fourth, a semi-structured interview will be conducted at the end of the research with parents and teachers to report on observed changes (if any) to the objectives of this study.

Participant observation in the classroom is intended to interact with participants and to better understand the phenomenon being studied.

The metaphonology program will build on Yopp's (1988) typology, which includes a variety of tasks on a continuum of difficulty and will be developed in French and Algonquin languages. Among these tasks, some will be prioritized in the program, depending on the results of the tests offered to students. This program will be enriched with a body of children's literature highlighting Indigenous culture and will serve as a trigger for metaphonology activities. Teachers will be trained in children's literature based on their initial knowledge and the needs of the students. Parents will be invited to participate in classroom reading activities and one or more thematic workshops according to their needs. The development of this corpus will involve the selection of literary works[12]

according to the interests of the students, their social and cultural experience, as well as the translation of texts in Algonquin language. The program will last approximately 12 weeks. Three measurement times are targeted at the beginning, middle and end of the program. Interventions with participating class groups will take place on a weekly basis during teaching hours in French and Anicinabemowin.

This study will contribute to enriching the state of knowledge of language teaching in Indigenous contexts by developing of culturally relevant resources adapted to student characteristics. It will also help to support teachers in new teaching practices and maintain the link between school and family. This approach will make it possible to refine the expertise of teachers in teaching didactics of languages in an Indigenous context and to improve their written corpus in *Anicinabemowin*. ■

NOTES

1   In Algonquin language.

2   The statistics on the educational progress of Indigenous students come from the communities that signed the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* in 1975 and, in 1978, the *Northeastern Quebec Agreement*.

3   The first language of an individual is "that which he first acquired, chronologically, at the time of development of his language capacity. 'First' does not mean the most useful, nor the most prestigious, any more than 'second' does not mean 'secondary' [Free translation] (Cuq, 2003, 152).

4   Metalinguistic capacities can be defined as the ability of a subject to consider language as an object of reflection (Gombert, 1990).

5   Refers to the child's ability to recognize the different sound units of the language (phonemes, syllables, words) and manipulate them deliberately (Gombert, 1990).

6   We use the term *literacy* in the sense of David (2015), since its definition is not limited to literacy in a particular writing system. It includes a set of practices that mobilize writing with specific purposes according to specific contexts.

7   The term "heritage language" refers to languages other than official languages in Canada, English and French, or to Indigenous languages (Duff and Li, 2009).

8   This neologism, borrowed from Jaffré and David (1998), testifies to the recent interest in the beneficial effects of early contact of children with the written language.

9   The term *Anicinabe* Means "Algonquins" in their ancestral language.

10   The *Formative and Design Experiments* (Reinking & Bradley, 2018), a specific approach to the field of literacy research, is not an experimental research method (which includes the use of a control group); rather, it involves the development of an experimental model that will be systematically tested and modified accordingly.

11   The French-language instrument, which will include a limited number of items per type of task, will be adapted to the students' knowledge, that is to say, the tasks for each of the items evaluated will be adapted to a context that is familiar to them.

12   The choice of literary works will be based on the quality criteria of Dupin de Saint-André and Montésinos-Gelet (2011).

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THE COMPLEMENTARITY OF SPEAKING AND WRITING

In the Teaching of Languages in Indigenous Environments

Robert Sarrasin

The languages of instruction in Indigenous communities

Language teaching in Indigenous communities in Quebec follows two pedagogical systems: majority language instruction (L2) and Indigenous language instruction (L1). The latter system prevails in nations where language preservation is strong. This is the case for the Atikamekw, Cree and Inuit people. This teaching takes place at the primary level, with application methods that may vary locally, such as the school year until the system fully applies (3rd, 4th, 6th grade). Attempts to implement language teaching are also beginning to be made in Atikamekw high schools. Subsequently, students move on to learning in L2 - with, possibly, maintaining a certain proportion of teaching in L1.

The other system, namely instruction in the L2 majority language only, applies to children of Indigenous tongue in communities where the use of the native language is high, particularly the Innu communities of the Basse-Côte-Nord, and to half of the Atikamekw primary school students. L2 immersion also applies to cohorts of Indigenous students once the program is completed. It seems that the well-established teaching practice of this second language as a mother tongue (Morris et al., 2007) continues to predominate (Da Silveira, 2015; Visser & Foret, 2014).

In communities where the language is still spoken, some Indigenous youth are simultaneous bilinguals, in the sense that they acquire the Indigenous language and majority language more or less simultaneously, for example, when they have studied in the city and then return to school in their community; some are even native bilinguals when they are constantly exposed to both languages from birth. But in

communities where this is no longer the case, many young people are now unilingual native speakers of French (or English).

This range of linguistic situations requires diverse educational responses, but their disparity also makes it possible to identify the underlying patterns of any language learning pathway. The sometimes-rigid distinctions between the particular didactics of writing and speaking, as well as the often-excessive weight of the academic tradition of writing, must then fade in favour of a more inclusive pedagogy of the linguistic realities. Let us then go back to the starting point, the language itself in its original manifestation.

The entrenchment of the spoken language

Speaking is the natural state of language, the path of its acquisition. Long before being read or written, words and sentences are heard and spoken in a continual interplay of interaction that is at the very foundation of social life and linguistic development. The sensory and mnemonic entrenchment of speaking is deep, through breathing, articulation, sight, and gestures accompanying the speech, and the cultural meanings attached to it. Prosody is a good illustration of this articulation since it can express both a meaning (a question, a degree of intensity, an uncertainty, etc.), an emotion, and mark the boundaries of words and constituents, for example a variation of intonation (noted ⌣) or a pause #, as in this Atikamekw statement:

MICta miro kicikaw ## mekwa ⌣ pipon. [Emphasis on *micta*]

(It is a) VERY nice day # during the winter. = On a nice winter day

These cues are useful for babies in their discovery of linguistic organization; they also guide the adult listener in the interpretation of utterances, both in the mother tongue and in the second language.

These three layers of meaning - linguistic, prosodic, gestural and facial - constitute the natural dynamics of oral language and provide as many niches for learning the language, as can be done in so-called reflexive oral activities: «The students are encouraged, through questions and discussions, to express themselves on the components, on the effects of the different oral elements (sight, intonation, lexicon, etc.), on the communication situation, on their knowledge and on the mobilization of various strategies» (Allen, 2017, 5th paragraph).

Speaking and writing, an inseparable couple

Oral language acquisition does not end when entering school; morphological, syntactic, semantic, discursive development, as well as comprehension, continues throughout primary school (Daviault, 2011). The development of oral language has an impact on the learning of writing. «At the primary level, the level that a student can achieve in reading is determined by his or her level of oral comprehension.» (Biemiller, 2003, p.1). It is not a ques-

tion of some language problem, but of a strictly developmental logic, which the child's social environment can, however, stimulate. Generally, in low-literacy settings, there is often a more limited use of language. In Indigenous communities, this also concerns the ancestral language, constantly at risk of being weakened because of its minority status in the global sociolinguistic context, even when it is taught; in this case it is not so much the lesser literacy as the loss of language, particularly lexical, that has an impact. This explains why most of these children, especially in Indigenous communities, start school with a less diversified oral language experience and a low lexicon. However, the level of vocabulary in preschool and early primary level is critical for success in reading: to understand a text, you must know the meaning of words, which are also built general knowledge and culture. « […] the extent of receptive vocabulary in kindergarten remains a significant predictor of later receptive vocabulary and subsequent [read/write] performance» (Morris et col., 2018, p.13l).

Beginner learners who show a significant lack in this respect see their difficulties in the expected performance for each grade level increase year by year and with it, the risk of dropping out. As a group, these children do not need remediation or therapy, but a pedagogical approach adapted to their situation, using, among other things, the «pragmatic» dimension of the vocabulary (the link between the school situation and extracurricular reality) and the dynamics of language communication. A primary school teacher in a disadvantaged area recounts her own experience in these terms: «If you cannot communicate well, you cannot write well. Then, as we communicate well orally before communicating in writing, I tell myself [that] working well in oral communication will facilitate writing and reading" (Lafontaine, 2016, paragraph 32). This testimony shows in a concrete way what is meant by entrenchment of oral language. Finally, there is a saving of time in the learning of writing when school oral language is duly considered.

School oral language

The role of speaking in teaching has always been essential to serve as a vehicle for transmitting other knowledge: formulating, questioning, arguing, describing, clarifying, etc. However, the oral daily practice of speaking does not guarantee the development of all the components of a general oral language proficiency. That is why the speaking must become an element of instruction, both in comprehension and expression, through a variety of communication situations with reference to the diversity of contexts in which this skill must be deployed.

Focusing on these specific linguistic aspects of speaking plays a similar role to learning of the objectives of writing, which are studied as such, even if all fields of knowledge make use of them. It is a form of metacognition that can be started very early. In an experiment on verbal interactions between French-speaking Grades one-to-six pupils, Sarrasin (1984) reports: "It is striking to see how well children are able to perceive

the requirements of speech types and evaluate the performance of their peers in the first year." P. 509.

The old dichotomy between written abstract thinking and oral concrete thinking must be challenged, because it is not the modality that determines the degree of abstraction, but rather the nature of the language task. This applies regardless of the language. Identifying important ideas from a presentation by a classmate or an audio presentation (after careful listening), rephrasing an idea more explicitly, developing a common point of view in a group discussion, discussing a solution to a difficult problem, all these situations can be mentally demanding, especially if performance objectives on the language itself are added.

School oral language is a natural part of teaching when it is part of an approach that recognizes speaking and writing as two manifestations of the same language competence, and which systematically focuses on the complementarity of these two modalities. Speaking supports writing; in return, the written language helps to refine oral comprehension and the production of complex and varied discourses.

This didactic orientation is fully aligned with a broader conception of literacy, no longer limited to reading/writing, but encompassing all language skills and their use in any personal or social circumstances that require it. This is well expressed in the definition of literacy given by the *Réseau québécois de recherche et transfert en littératie* (2016): "The ability of a person, an environment and a community to understand and communicate information through language on different media to participate actively in society in different contexts."

This statement recognizes the often-overlooked reality that literacy is also a collective ability, because as noted, the level of literacy that exists in an environment influences children's literacy learning. In addition, the notion of collective literacy takes on an even broader reach when we consider that expectations about literacy and the way we think about it varies with sociocultural contexts (UNESCO, 2006, chap. 6). Therefore, in an Indigenous environment, where the body of texts in ancestral languages is limited, school oral language can also serve to stimulate written productions, whose development can be oriented according to what communities perceive as necessary to express in their language through this means. This type of literacy does not proceed from any previous conception since it is created as it is developed.

Second-language communication

As mentioned at the beginning, for many Indigenous young people, the majority language is a second language, a reality that schools do not consider. Following their study on performance on 601 Innu first-language children from six Innu elementary schools, Morris et al. (2007) state: « When children are asked to master a new language and, at the same time, to adapt to school and pursue literacy, they are put in a situa-

tion where the majority have no hope to succeed. Very early on, children start to experience failure [... It must] be recognized that these are non-French-speaking students who must quickly develop literacy in French. Then, it is a question of creating the conditions that will allow children to learn oral French in the first place and then to access literacy, without, however, their mother tongue being excluded from school." p. 47. In other words, the second language must be taught as a second language. What does this mean?

Speaking in L2

Since the 1960s, a trend in L2 has developed known as pedagogy of communication, which emphasizes the systematic learning of oral communication skills through authentic learning situations. It is known that at the neurocognitive level, procedural knowledge (what one does, skills) and declarative knowledge (knowledge) is stored in separate brain areas that do not communicate directly with one another. Thus, the implicit knowledge of the language is acquired through the practice of verbal interactions in contexts of communication, without paying attention to the form of utterances. The rules that are learned in this way remain unconscious; therefore, native speakers are generally unable to explain these rules (unless they studied them in school). Knowing how to speak spontaneously does not automatically provide knowledge of grammar. Conversely, grammatical knowledge, which is consciously learned through study, does not in itself confer the ability to use it spontaneously. According to Paradis (1994, 2004), this cerebral dichotomy explains that speakers are not grammarians and that grammarians do not transform themselves into speakers.

Speaking is the most direct way to acquire the implicit knowledge of L2 and this is what teaching must begin with, regardless of the school level at which this teaching begins, with emphasis on the correction of errors. Because this is the starting point for everything that follows. «[...] at the beginning of learning to write in L2, a learner's written productions are only the reflection of his oral productions. [...] until the correct form has been frequently used spontaneously orally at first, it is unlikely that the learner will be able to use it correctly in writing. At this level, writing is only a transposition of speaking. « (Germain & Netten, 2005, pp. 1–2).

Since proficiency in L2 results from both the practice of communication and the study of grammar, and one cannot replace the other, both are needed. So, once the study of the oral language has begun, not before, Germain and Netten recommend as a didactic sequence: 1. speaking; 2. reading, and 3. writing, in this order. Then, it is necessary to «complete the picture by having pupils read the texts written by their classmates and make them talk about them so that they can reuse the language structures they have learned.» (Germain & Netten, 2012, p. 18). The complete sequence is then oral-reading-writing-reading-oral, according to a spiral

of themes and contexts more and more varied. They conclude as follows: «[...] a pedagogy of L2 specific literacy starts with speaking and ends with speaking.» (Idem, p. 18).

Similarities between L1 and L2

At the beginning of elementary school in L1, pupils already have the implicit knowledge of their language and the cultural reflexes conveyed specifically by the language, by its structure, and which guide the choice of words, formulations and nuances that the speaking allows to express, for example on the prosodic level; this aspect constitutes a substantial challenge in L2.

In school contexts, however, there are significant similarities in learning L1 and L2, provided that one has a globally correct view of L2 learning (for instance, in agreement with empirical practices and experimental data). For example, in L1 as in L2, the introduction to the written language is all the more effective when one follows the normal course of learning, which starts from speaking to reading and writing, under the cerebral dichotomy mentioned. A large part of school knowledge is declarative, for example, the vocabulary of the different school subjects. In this respect, L1 and L2 are cognitively similar; the same applies to new implicit apprenticeships (projects, outings, meetings, observations in nature or in the laboratory, contact with artistic or musical productions, workshops, etc.). The sequence [oral (implicit)] – [reading – writing (declarative)] then illustrates a more general mechanism of: 1. simulation or concrete experience, 2. Reflection or notional study on this experience; and 3. Reproduction and enhancement of the experience. ■

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DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING GUIDES

Towards Teaching Practices Integrating Indigenous Cultural Knowledge

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Context

Educational activities and practices focusing on cultural enhancement are recognized for improving school retention among Indigenous youth. (Blanchet-Cohen, 2015). It is in this context that the teaching guide project, focusing on Indigenous cultural knowledge, was born at the request of *La Boite Rouge vif* (BRv). BRv is a non-profit Indigenous cultural organization whose mission is to highlight the variety and richness of the Indigenous cultural heritage, often unknown to non-Natives and sometimes neglected by Natives themselves. Thus, the BRv works, in a will of transmission and diffusion of this cultural knowledge, in order to foster and rebuild a process of identity assertion (Bellemare et Morasse, 2016).

The BRv team is multidisciplinary and includes researchers, assistants and research professionals working in a variety of disciplinary areas such as arts or education (Bellemare & Morasse, 2016).

Collaborative approaches have made it possible to work with First Nations communities to build and develop diverse resources with them based on cultural data developed in an Indigenous context (Bellemare and Morasse, 2016). In 2010, on the occasion of the renewal of the permanent exhibition at Musée de la civilization, the BRv organized a concertation tour (La grande concertation 2010-2013), which raised an incredible amount of material from more than 700 people from eighteen different communities. In this context of collaborative creation, 5000 pages of verbatim were collected, as well as 250 hours of videos and

about 10,000 photos (Bellemare and Morasse). This consultation process was carried out with the participation of the Mamo advisory group, with one representative mandated by each of the eleven First Nations and Inuit of Quebec. As a follow-up to the opening of the exhibition and to this amount of material reflecting current and living Indigenous cultures, the Mamo group and the BRv have deemed it necessary to make this material accessible to all First Nations and Inuit so that it can be available and usable in various contexts, meeting the needs of education, cultural transmission and different socio-political actions. Thus, BRv and its collaborators have created a dozen cultural transmission tools aimed at using these contents.

Objectives

In the perspective where the will is to disseminate and promote Indigenous culture, these tools were created and then first relayed to the communities participating in La grande concertation as part of the *2016-2018 Retour/Return Tour*. Productions such as the book *Voix, visages et paysages* (Kaine, Kurtness et Tanguay, 2016) or the *Pisitimmariit – De véritables experts* (La Boite Rouge vif, 2016) are good examples of material resulting from this collaboration with First Nations communities.

The importance given to the transmission and enhancement of this heritage has oriented the BRv towards the development of an education axis whose ambition is to offer teachers ways of integrating the material collected during La grande concertation. Thus, the pedagogical guide project was created from the logic of diffusion which allows not only to share, to make known and to acknowledge the First Peoples heritage in both Native and non-Native context, but also to enrich the various teaching disciplines of the Quebec Education Program (PFÉQ), at elementary and secondary levels (Ministère de l'Éducation [MEQ], 2006 b, 2006 c ; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport [MELS], 2007) and promote academic achievement and retention among First Peoples (Blanchet-Cohen, 2015).

This is a real dialogue and not a mere consultation.

FIRST COLLABORATIVE CYCLE

BRv's consultation tour in 18 indigenous communities.
Prospects for collaborative creation with First Nations.

Figure 1: First Collaborative cycle - Collaborative-Creation Approach.

Description

These developments are part of a collaborative approach that takes into account several stages allowing employees to work together on different levels. The first collaboration movement was, as we said, a collaborative creation perspective between BRv and First Nations. The figure 1 reflects the spirit of this first iteration, which allowed a consultation-creation process (Kaine et coll., 2016).

Then, a second collaboration with BRv and didactic researchers from the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC) resulted in two prototypes of educational guides: one at the elementary and the other at the secondary level, following a day of consultation with First Nations members working in the field of education to identify the needs of the environment with regard to existing tools and equipment. Although many ideas were shared during this meeting, the BRv and the researchers first chose to create these two prototypes. These first guides are based on a similar work, namely the "Innu Meshkenu - Tracer son chemin" comic book, which tells the story of Dr. Stanley Vollant (Couture & Duquette, 2014). A few consultation meetings helped to co-locate (Desgagné, 1997) the needs and issues of the project, in order to take into account the concerns of everyone: the creators of BRv and the UQAC didactic specialists. For example, given the abundance of material and the short deadlines, choices had to be made since it was impossible to explore every corner of the material offered by BRv.

These choices focused on the resources offered by interactive vignettes from exhibitions, notably accessible at the Musée de la civilisation in Québec City.

SECOND COLLABORATIVE CYCLE

Development of educational guides.
Prospects for collaborative creation with researchers in didactics.

CONSULT
COSITUATE

COPRODUCE

COLLABORATE

Figure 2: Second Collaboration Cycle - Cultural Perspective and Didactic Perspective.

Conclusion and development perspectives

The project is now entering a third phase. In order to develop contextual, meaningful and viable material (Von Glaserfeld, 1995), it is now necessary to work closely with teachers working in Indigenous communities. Indeed, it is crucial to understand the meaning and peculiarities of First Peoples teaching and learning in order to build meaningful resources.

As figure 3 shows, a third collaboration cycle should soon be implemented to develop sustainable solutions taking into consideration the cultural reality of First Nations. Such collaborative development will build, test and modify educational resources that will take into consideration the practices of teachers working in Indigenous settings. The success of such projects depends on the investment and the consideration of community actors, who must be more than just interpreters of turnkey or stereotypical practices, since these do not correspond to neither the needs nor opportunities of those who are its driving force. ∎

These vignettes provide a vivid and focused approach to many aspects of Indigenous culture and heritage. This collaboration made possible the merging of various perspectives (Morissette, 2013) and the co-production of the guides integrating BRv's artistic and cultural creation expertise with the didactic expertise of UQAC researchers. This is what is found in the figure 2.

The didactic perspective has enriched the cultural material developed by the BRv with educational development tracks consistent with the Training Program of Quebec Schools (MEQ, 2006b, 2006c; MELS, 2007). In this context, the guides address different teaching disciplines of the Quebec Education Program (MEQ, 2006b) at the elementary, with regard to some aspects of Indigenous culture and heritage related to different objects and themes, notably the Teueikan or Innu drum, which remains a sacred object common to many First Nations (La Boite Rouge vif, 2016).

As for secondary education, Indigenous medicine and the use of plant, animal and mineral resources (La Boite Rouge Vif, 2016) have become dominant as a result of the still widespread use of traditional medicine among Indigenous people (Vollant, 2017), but also the exploitation of remarkable properties of certain plants in modern medicine (Vollant).

The approach consisted in proposing contextualized activities around First Nations cultural elements while forging significant links with several areas of the Quebec Education Program for primary education (MEQ, 2006b), and more particularly in science and technology at the secondary level (MEQ, 2006a).

The importance given to the transmission and enhancement of this heritage has oriented the BRv towards the development of an education axis whose ambition is to offer teachers ways of integrating the material collected during *La grande concertation*. Thus, the pedagogical guide project was created from the logic of diffusion which allows not only to share, to make known and to acknowledge the First Peoples heritage in both Native and non-Native context, but also to enrich the various teaching disciplines of the Quebec Education Program.

THIRD COLLABORATIVE CYCLE

Cosituate

Collaborate

Coconstruct

FIRST COLLABORATIVE CYCLE

BRv's consultation tour in 18 indigenous communities.
Prospects for collaborative creation with First Nations.

**Development of educational guides.
Prospects for collaborative creation with researchers in didactics.**

SECOND COLLABORATIVE CYCLE

Cosituate

Collaborate

Coconstruct

Cosituate

Collaborate

Coconstruct

THIRD COLLABORATIVE CYCLE

**Development of teaching guides and materials.
Perspective of collaborative creation with teachers working in an indigenous environment.**

Figure 3: Third Collaborative Cycle - Collaborative Creation Perspective with Teachers.

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ENRICHING SCIENCE EDUCATION THROUGH INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE:

Epistemological Reflection in Intercultural Dialogue

Françoise Lathoud, Certified Teacher and Independent Consultant

The challenge of science education includes the decontextualization of knowledge, the lack of connection with the reality of students, the difficulty of students in transferring their learning to new situations, and their demotivation or disinterest in issues and scientific careers. This situation is mainly due to the gap between the daily culture of young people and scientific culture, a phenomenon amplified in an Indigenous environment (Aikenhead & Elliott, 2010).

After half a century of claims and studies promoting the introduction of First Peoples' knowledge into school, the discourses and pedagogical practices in sciences differ widely from one class and province to another. According to the five-stage scale of inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in the Afonso Nhalevilo (2013, cited in Eun-Ji Amy Kim, 2015) school system, Quebec, for example, is at the level of "colonialism", with Indigenous content representing 0.12% of the science curriculum[1]. At the other end of the spectrum, Saskatchewan views Indigenous knowledge as "a way of knowledge in parity with the sciences of life, physical sciences and earth and space sciences, and the cultural perspective is considered as a ''learning context'', at the same level as scientific inquiry, technological problem solving and decision-making in science, technology, society and the environment" (Eun-Ji Amy Kim, 2012). These pioneers, who integrate Indigenous ontology, axiology and epistemology into the school system, inspire me.

Drawing on my personal and professional experiences in a bicultural environment[2], I will attempt here, after having characterized the issue of science learning, to show how the inclusion of Indigenous educational and socio-ecological cultures can address several challenges inherent to this field of education, while giving it added value.

Cleavage between Indigenous youth and scientific culture

In the first part of the article, we will examine the roots underlying the failure of scientific education for most people by describing the three dimensions of the cleavage between Indigenous youth's daily culture and scientific culture: that of language, that of concept representation, and that of the mode of understanding[3].

The first difficulty is the differences between scientific language and everyday language. Indeed, certain words, such as "energy" or "work" in physics and "character" in biology, have different meanings in everyday life. Other words are completely unusual like "ion" or "phenotype" and must be integrated quickly to understand the phenomena studied. In a second language, comprehension and retention of vocabulary are all the more demanding on a cognitive level.

The representation of concepts is, for its part, accentuated by cultural differences for ontological or axiological reasons. For instance, from elementary school onwards, students are challenged with six Atikamekw seasons (with respect to activities on the territory[4]) as opposed to four occidental seasons (linked to solstices). In this case, the two ways to conceive seasons are complementary. However, the definition of "living" can lead to a conceptual conflict: whereas in sciences, reproductive capacity is one of the criteria for considering a "living" organism, certain stones are considered "living" by the Atikamekw, as also are the mountains or Mother Earth (*nitcotco aski*[5]). The representation of the forest also differs widely from one group or person to another: a biologist sees it as a pattern of interrelationships between several species, a forest industry worker, an economic value, a hunter, bears and moose, a grandmother, blueberries at the end of the summer, and adventurers, wellness or personal development. *Notcimik,* a term used by the Atikamekw referring to the forest, means "the place where one comes from", and the images associated with it have a strong historical, social, identitarian, dietary, utilitarian, educational, medicinal and spiritual impact, as described by Saint-Arnaud (2009) for the Anicinabek.

The epistemological gap that exists between the intuitive way of learning the everyday life of students and the structured approach to acquiring knowledge in science is the third major challenge to overcome in teaching. One of the pedagogical strategies is to create cognitive conflicts, their resolution leading to the transformation of students' initial beliefs and the integration of new ways of conceiving phenomena. However, this approach can affect self-esteem and engender a negative attitude towards school, even anxiety, as well as a rejection of a way of thinking, strongly related to identity (Scott, Asoko, & Driver, 1991). Biculturalism is then called "subtractive", that is, it removes value from the initial situation; it is part of a posture of cognitive imperialism, inherited from colonization. Indeed, the confrontational characteristic of the cognitive

Anchoring learning in the local socio-ecological dynamics, promotes young people's commitment while having an impact beyond the school setting. For example, genetic exercises related to crossbreeding can feed discussions about genealogy and racism, two important social issues in community and intercultural relations.

conflict approach, coupled with a dualist world view, is inconsistent with Algonquian educational cultures, which are holistic and non-interventionist. Another common practice in science education is laboratory experimentation, resulting from positivist epistemology that denies or attempts to eliminate possible interactions between the "researcher" and his subject. In the classroom, planning for observation, analysis, hypothesis formulation or outcome prediction generally leaves little room for initiative and holistic experience. This dirigiste approach can be limiting for students whose predominant type of intelligence is naturalist-ecologist[6], numerous in Indigenous communities, who are nonetheless good observers.

Taking advantage of biculturalism in science education

While the bicultural context of Indigenous communities creates challenges for the acquisition or construction of scientific knowledge, it also offers valuable resources to reduce language, conceptual and pedagogical problems. In this second part, we will describe them using the Indigenous learning characteristics: collective, intergenerational, rooted in the socio-ecological environment and the holistic, experiential and personalized languages.

Typical of collectivist societies, the communication technique of the speaking circle can become the learning community's centre of life. Based on principles of listening and free expression, it promotes empathy, awareness, sense of belonging, self-affirmation, knowledge sharing. The

associated mode of communication encourages to talk about one-self, which avoids confrontation, and allows the personalization of learning. The expression in the form of life narratives leads to the contextualization of learning and develops systemic and holistic thinking, including the intellectual, emotional, physical and even spiritual dimensions of the experiences told. Practised at the end of the learning cycle, it is conducive to metacognition, reflexivity, critical and holistic thinking (Lathoud, 2016).

The intergenerational character of traditional Indigenous learning could be introduced in school by inviting the members of the community to share their knowledge related to the environment, such as chiefs of territories or wildlife officers, to enrich theoretical knowledge. Elders and their system of local socio-ecological knowledge, their language intrinsically linked to the territory as well as their mode of transmission and acquisition of knowledge (stories of life, stories, legends, songs, prayers, dreams[7], ceremonies) can be an asset in science education.

Language, the gateway to worldviews, is another pillar of Indigenous education. Contrary to the trend of exclusive use of the language of instruction, it may be relevant to encourage young people to translate the concepts studied (Mady and Garbati, 2014). In fact, some notions, new in sciences, are very ancient for Indigenous people. Biomimicry, for example, nowadays inspires high technology, whereas it has been practised since the beginning of times by Indigenous people, who consider animals in particular as teachers. The concept of ecosociosystem, now placing the human being within the ecosystem, is also closer to the indigenous representation of human-territorial relations. In biology, the comparison of biotic/abiotic scientific categorization[8] and animate/inanimate indigenous categorization is another fine subject of intercultural dialogue. Certain representations remain however incomparable. Indeed, it is difficult to compare the theories of evolution with legends such as that of creation, which tells us that humans were transformed into animals to save the humanity, whereas there was only sand on earth. To avoid the harmful effects of cognitive conflict, harmonious cohabitation between indigenous and academic cultures can be achieved through "double vision" (Etuaptmumk in Mi'kmaq)[9]. It allows us to consider, from one perspective, Indigenous knowledge and learning styles and, from the other,

At the other end of the spectrum, Saskatchewan views Indigenous knowledge as "a way of knowledge in parity with the sciences of life, physical sciences and earth and space sciences, and the cultural perspective is considered as a "learning context", at the same level as scientific inquiry, technological problem solving and decision-making in science, technology, society and the environment" (Eun-Ji Amy Kim, 2012). These pioneers, who integrate Indigenous ontology, axiology and epistemology into the school system, inspire me.

their Euro-Canadian counterparts to use both perspectives for the benefit of all. This attitude, which corresponds to the highest level of the collateral learning spectrum of Aikenhead and Jegede (1999), is, moreover, adopted by researchers who are influenced by parallel ways of thinking and who have beliefs that are sometimes inconsistent with their scientific rationality. (Morin, 1986).

Anchoring learning in the local socio-ecological dynamics, another unavoidable part of Indigenous education, promotes young people's commitment while having an impact beyond the school setting. For example, genetic exercises related to crossbreeding can feed discussions about genealogy and racism, two important social issues in community and intercultural relations. The proximity of the territory and contemporary infrastructure of health, water treatment, waste or exploitation (mining, hydroelectricity, deforestation) allow an experiential learning–the suggested observation being rather of participative type. Access to traditional food or medicine preparation practises is enriching for science education, since it also adds an interdisciplinary and holistic perspective. In the study of animal systems and functions, for example, dissections can be supplemented with vocabulary in the Indigenous language, medicinal properties, knowledge of the relationships between species, their climate-related habits, symbolic representations, and rituals, life narratives of the elders and legends. In chemistry, preceding the aspirin[10] synthesis experiment with the traditional production of a willow decoction, from harvesting to medicinal application, allows students to become familiar with chemistry vocabulary and practice (boiling, extraction, filtration, solution, mixing, separation) while acquiring ancestral knowledge.

Thus, in addition to reducing the language, conceptual and pedagogical barriers of science education, the introduction of indigenous epistemological elements allows the development of systemic, holistic, reflective thinking rooted in the socio-ecological reality of young people, in addition to increasing the sense of belonging to the community and to the territory and to enable the acquisition of certain skills in intercultural dialogue. This could inspire teachers struggling with a curriculum that some might consider a relic of colonization, like Alice Keewatin (2002) who refused to teach in an Indigenous community, saying that it would contribute more to the problem than to its solution. ■

NOTES

1   Secondary Cycle 1.

2   I have created and led several educational projects on Atikamekw and Inuit territories, some as part of doctoral research in environmental education. I spent three years on the ancestral territory with an Atikamekw elder from Manawan.

3   These are combined with limitations in financial, material, human, educational and social resources and dynamics involving historically documented intergenerational traumas.

4   *Sikon* pre-spring; *Miroskamin* : spring; *Nipin* : summer; *Takwakin* : fall; *Pitci-pipon* : pre-winter; *Pipon* : winter.

5   My Mother-Earth.

6   Nine types of intelligence have been documented by Gardner (1999): visual/spatial, corporal/kinesthetic, musico-rhythmic, naturalist-ecologist, verbo-linguistic, logico-mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and existential.

7   For the "scientific method" followers who might be reluctant to open up to a "spiritual" dimension of learning, let us recall that it was after his dream of the snake biting its tail that the chemist Kékulé discovered the cyclic formula of the benzene molecule.

8   Living/nonliving: some scientific categories are debatable. Are viruses alive if they depend on other organisms to reproduce? Algae, which photosynthesize, are they plants? Are red blood cells cells when they have no nucleus?

9   Metaphor from Albert Marshall.

10   Originally, aspirin was derived from the willow tree.

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TOWARDS A UNIFYING MODEL INTEGRATING INDIGENOUS CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE INTO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL UNIVERSE EDUCATION

Christine Couture and **Catherine Duquette**, Professors, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi – Members of CRIFPE-UQ

With the collaboration of **Shannon Blacksmith-Charlish**, Student, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

Background

In the spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015), which calls for "training teachers on how to integrate teaching methods and Indigenous knowledge into the classroom" (p. 9), we are working with Native and non-Native students of the bachelor's degree in preschool and early Childhood and Elementary Education at Université du Québec à Chicoutimi to identify knowledge and approaches that can be used in developing learning situations enhancing Indigenous culture. This work is in the scope of the development of interdisciplinary projects conducted jointly in the courses of Didactics of Science and Technology and of Social Universe (History and Geography). As part of these projects, First Nations students play the role of experts and share their cultural knowledge with the rest of the class. This sharing makes it possible to engage in a collective work which consists in imagining avenues of development integrating approaches and knowledge from the Native culture into Science and Technology and Social Universe education. The model we propose is part of an extension of these areas of development fostering the perseverance and academic success of First Peoples students.

Towards a unifying model

According to Le Goater (2007), Indigenous cultural knowledge refers to knowledge, skills, practices and representations developed and maintained by people whose history is interwoven with the natural environment. This knowledge is based on oral transmission that gives great importance to elders. They are perceived as a circle of "tropical relations", or even interdependence, where the modification of one of the elements influences the whole of it (Pouliot, 2014). In First Nations, learning is also represented by a holistic approach that continues throughout life (Canada Council on Learning, 2007). From these elements, we suggest a model that echoes this idea of the circle, rooted in the living environment, to

Living environment   **Problems to solve**   Territory

Solutions

STUDENT

Observation Contextualization

Tools, objects and techniques

Lifestyles and traditions

Analysis   **Comparison**

Figure 1 : Model for teaching Science and Technology and Social Universe while integrating Indigenous cultural knowledge.

mobilize Indigenous cultural knowledge, including an approach linking Science and Technology with Social Universe.

In this model, the proposed method (yellow circles) shows that the links to be established between school subjects are not limited to content, but also include approaches. Whether in Science and Technology or in Social Universe, remember that the goal is not to acquire knowledge, but to engage students in approaches allowing them to build their knowledge - which is consistent with learning models based on observation and experience. Therefore we suggest, for Science and Technology and Social Universe education, a common approach (Couture and Duquette, 2017), which starts from a problem to be solved, to make way for observation and contextualization, including comparisons and analyzes, to find solutions that contribute to knowledge construction. This approach, deployed to explore a living environment, a territory, lifestyles, traditions, tools, objects and techniques, make it possible to integrate not only knowledge,

but also ways of learning that are in line with Indigenous culture. Furthermore, the approach promotes a holistic work of the different themes, since, for them to be fully understood, the student must work from both their scientific and social aspects. For example, "tools" can be addressed on the technology side, in terms of their production, and on the social universe side, in terms of their use in society. Entering through this process is therefore a first step towards promoting Indigenous culture in teaching Science and Technology and Social Universe.

Once established, this intention to explore the living environment, the territory, lifestyles, traditions, tools, objects and techniques with a common approach requires a connection work with the Training Program (MELS, 2009). To do this, we have chosen integrative themes making it possible to address prescribed learning in Science and Technology and in Social Universe for the elementary level. These integrative themes are as follows:
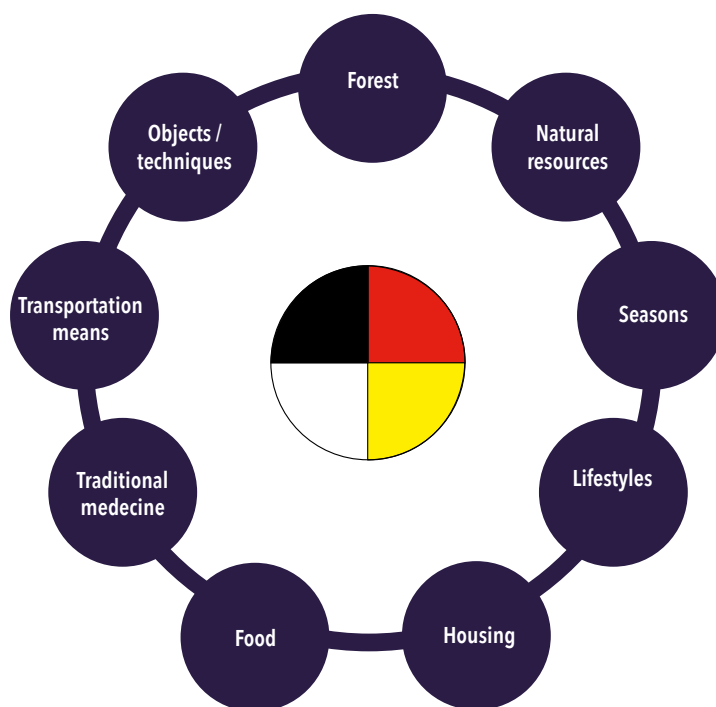
Figure 2 : Integrative Themes

In that respect, the forest, natural resources, seasons, lifestyles, housing, food, traditional medicine, transportation means, objects and techniques are all themes that make it possible to work on prescribed learning in Science and Technology and Social Universe (MELS, 2009), since they mobilize Indigenous cultural knowledge and a holistic approach. Examples such as the birch tree, the moose and the territory can be studied in the perspective of these different integrative themes to work on the learning targeted by the program. This connection of concrete examples, with integrating themes and targeted learning, is the second step that we suggest to integrate Indigenous cultural knowledge into the teaching of Science and Technology and Social Universe.

The example of the birch tree

To illustrate the connection between a concrete example and the learning progression (MELS, 2009), using integrative themes, let us examine the example of the birch tree which, because of its presence in our forests and the use made of it by First Peoples, connects several elements of Science and Technology and Social Universe.

From this analysis, it becomes easy to imagine different learning situations that may or may not be integrated into an interdisciplinary project. For example, it would be possible to make a canoe model in science and technology, while exploring the means of transportation and lifestyles at different times, but also the geography of the territory and the community migration during the seasons. Such an analysis makes it possible to

The birch tree	Science and Technology	Social Universe
Present in our forests	Human beings and their environment	Strengths and constraints of the territory
Fewer mature birch trees than before	Human beings and their environment	Use of the territory from yesterday to today
The bark is harvested at the change of seasons	Seasons	Strengths and constraints related to the climate
Housing, tools, means of transport, traditional medicine	Objects/techniques	Transportation means Lifestyles
Tents (cover)	Objects/techniques	Housing
Birch water contains minerals	Energy - dietary requirements	Elements of everyday life food
Herbal tea to relieve diarrhea and hemorrhages	Material - transformation	Cultural reality
Canoe production	Objects/techniques	Transportation means
Drums, snowshoes, tool handles, baskets	Objects/techniques	Expressions of art Elements of everyday life

integrate Indigenous cultural knowledge into the teaching of Science and Technology and Social Universe, without adding work, since the targeted learning is treated using examples that are part of the teacher's choice.

By addressing these examples using the proposed approach, it is also possible to integrate learning models based on observation and experience–for instance, by leaving the classroom to promote learning. Let us take again the example of birch trees. During forest outings, children can observe birch trees grow, tree features, the tropism associated with them, and other elements of the science and technology program. At the same time, students can question the influence of birch trees in their culture by determining how they were used in the past (canoe construction, housing, etc.), attempting to reproduce or model these uses (build a canoe model with bark found in the forest) and finally, define their use in today's society. This way, they develop the learning targeted by the Social Universe program while continuing the work in Science and Technology. In short, this approach gives greater flexibility to the teacher who can implement activities meeting the learning requirements while promoting Indigenous cultural knowledge.

As an extension

The model we have developed, to help students integrate Indigenous cultural knowledge into Science and Technology and Social Universe, could also help teachers to see how, based on examples from Indigenous culture, they can work on the learning targeted by the program. With this model, which proposes to integrate not only Indigenous knowledge, but also an approach based on observations and experiences, we encourage teachers to foster active learning of Science and Technology and Social Universe, establishing complementary connections between these two school subjects. This has the advantage of promoting a holistic vision of school content, a vision that resonates well with the characteristics of Indigenous cultural knowledge and lifelong learning. We believe that this model, in addition to promoting Indigenous culture, meets the orientations and requirements of the current training program. It is therefore a model that we suggest to all teachers, for all students, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous, to work together to better understand our history, our society and our environment. This new perspective may allow today's students to project themselves differently into tomorrow's world. ∎

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RESOURCES
TO DISCOVER

COMMUNITY LITERACY AGENTS

Collège Frontière | L'alphabétisation,
Une leçon pour la vie.

Literacy:
Learning for Life.

Frontier College

Communities in Northern Quebec wishing to improve their literacy level are often faced with limited resources, whether economic or due to accessibility. In response to requests from some communities to strengthen their capacity to provide community-based literacy skills, Frontier College, a pan-Canadian literacy organization, has developed the Community Literacy Agents (CLAs) concept, an initiative to support family literacy activities such as reading circles, individual tutoring, family literacy nights, and skills development workshops.

Community Literacy Agents provide literacy skill development activities on an annual basis in First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities. The CLA concept also includes a significant community capacity building component to ensure project continuity. This concept is based on Frontier College business models and other models that can be adapted to the culture, traditions and current situation of the community. The key to this community resource is the hiring and training of individuals who act as multiplying agent within their own community.

The participation of parents, elders, municipal council or band council members gives the assurance that the experience gained and developed by the CLA remains within the community once the project is completed.

The training and support offered to CLAs may vary depending on whether full-time mentors/coaches or remote assistance are combined with personalized training sessions.

In general, the role of Frontier College evolves gradually from an active role of trainer and lead facilitator to a resource agency for each participating community.

Authors : **Mélanie Valcin,** Regional Manager (Quebec and Nunavut), Frontier College, **Krystyna Slawecki,** Regional Coordinator - (Quebec and Nunavut), Frontier College and **Gisline Fortin,** Community Literacy Agent, Frontier College

COMMENTS

"I enjoyed the family workshop to learn more about how to show a child–even a baby–to communicate at a young age. I would like to have more and more opportunities [to participate] in all activities to better integrate reading to my children and make it an important interest from an early age. '

– Parent, Matimekush

"It's an interesting program in the community, it's worth continuing. There is a big change in children. They are more interested in books, they name the images and they are always happy to see Gisline when she arrives. "

– C.P.E. Uatikuss Management, Matimekush

" They have more interest in reading and their writing is more fluid. Writing a book together was very popular with the students. All I hope for is that these activities will continue for next year, as students greatly appreciate the Community Literacy agent's after-school circle. "

– Teacher, École Kanatamat, Matimekush

BENEFITS

• Assessment of literacy needs.

• Direct support for children, teens and adults who have literacy challenges.

• Significant employment and in-depth community literacy training for a locally hired person in the CLA position.

• Acquiring community literacy skills and experience for community members (participation in activities and training workshops).

• Capacity building for the developing community and implementation of sustainable literacy programming.

• Resource Toolkit for CLAs adapted to the context and needs of the community and available to all.

TARGET GROUPS

Children, teens, adults, families.

LIBERTOX :
AN EDUC-ACTION DRUG PREVENTION APPROACH

LIBERTOX IS AN EDUCATIONAL DRUG PREVENTION MULTIMEDIA AIMED AT ADOLESCENTS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, BASED ON BOTH AN INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL APPROACH, AND FAVOURING COLLECTIVE PROJECTS AS A SOURCE OF MOTIVATION RATHER THAN ADDICTION.

1 BECOME AWARE

THE WINGS OF DREAMS

PASOWETAMOWIN

NAC E ITI NATCIPARIK

Young people are organizing a trip to Europe. Drug abuse will jeopardize the smooth running of the project. Scenario in 19 episodes, with soundtrack.

The Wings of Dreams scenario is a smooth introduction to tackle a delicate issue: reading a story is not personally compromising, but, through fictional characters and using the questions found throughout the whole scenario, young people are encouraged to openly discuss various situations. This exercise prepares to address the other modules. Also available in **Atikamekw version: Pasowetamowin nac e iti natciparik** (The great desire to make a trip).

2 GET INFORMED

Drugs and their Effects

 a) A general explanation of the effect of drugs and the ascent – capping – descent sequence.

 b) The various categories of drugs: physical and psychological effects (mainly for educators).

Drugs and the Brain

General information on brain function.

Drugs in the Past and Today

Comparison of uses and contexts of substance abuse.

The Libertox content is **multidisciplinary**, that is why its use by a team of teachers or practitioners would help to get an optimal result. The problem of drugs cannot be treated simply in terms of permission or prohibition.

A genuine educational process is necessary, which brings one to get information, and then think, about oneself, one's environment, one's relationships with others, the influences or constraints that weigh on oneself and one's family, and the forces governing us. Who am I? What are my aspirations?

Youth behaviours are closely linked to the pressures of their environment; the willingness to change individually can be difficult to take or hold, especially in a tight-knit environment. Therefore, Libertox supports **actions of a collective nature**, in the form of small projects within the reach of a class, a school or a youth centre. Acting together promotes a more sustainable outcome.

3 THINK

Addiction and Freedom

Types of addiction / Personal and social aspects / Feeling of helplessness and the notion of freedom.

Motivation and Joy of Life

For whom do I exist? / Survival / Boredom / Demotivation / Influences

Models of Life

Behaviour Models: images of drugs in the immediate environment and in mass culture. Who are my models and why?

4 TAKE ACTION

Experience collective actions instead of using drugs.

Collective project management grid.

LIBERTOX.COM

Author : **Robert Sarrasin**

RioTinto

Rio Tinto is proud to support
the Convention on Perseverance
and Academic Achievement
for First Peoples and to sustain
the spark that guides our youth
toward a promising future.

Canada's Top 100 Employers 2019

riotinto.com/canada

AND WHAT IF ANE ANTAN KAPESH, JOSEPHINE BACON OR SAMIAN
WERE INTRODUCED IN THE FRENCH COURSES

TRACER UN CHEMIN/ MESHKANATSHEU:

A NEW TOOL TO DISCOVER FIRST PEOPLES AUTHORS AND TO WORK THEIR TEXTS IN UPPER SECONDARY AND COLLEGE CLASSROOMS
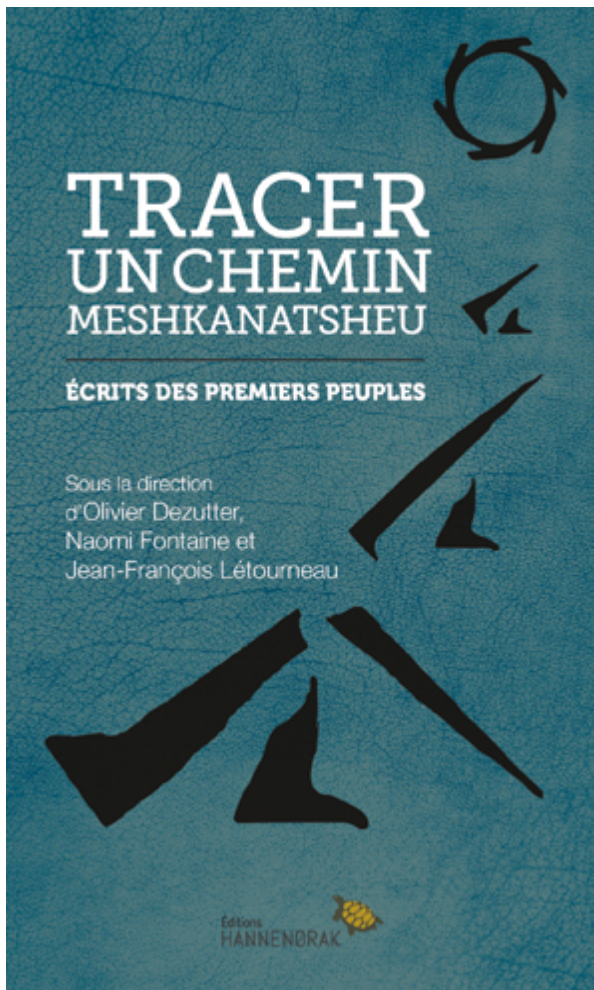
PROJECT CHALLENGES

- A concrete way to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) recommendations which call for greater integration of Indigenous peoples' cultures and languages into school curricula and to "deconstruct the misrepresentations concerning First Peoples" (Lavoie, 2016).

- A work in harmony with the objectives set in the second-cycle secondary and college level French programs, and aimed, through the reading of these texts, at developing both reading skills and critical thinking on the challenges at stake in literary creation as well as the political and cultural history of Quebec.

- An opportunity for Indigenous students to get to know themselves and develop their pride in their identity, to "decolonize the French courses", and finally to discover models of writers with whom they can identify.

- An opportunity for non-Indigenous students not only to know and recognize a particular aspect of "the linguistic and cultural diversity of the contemporary world" (MEQ, 2001), but also to go beyond stereotypes.

Authors : **Olivier Dezutter**, Professor, Université de Sherbrooke, **Naomi Fontaine**, Author and Teacher and **Jean-François Létourneau**, Professor, Cégep de Sherbrooke

NEW TEACHING MATERIAL

AN ANTHOLOGY

Three generations of writers and authors of 47 texts, most of whom have chosen to write in French and attest to a duty of memory, affirmation, liberation and of sharing through writing and creation.

Thirty writers from different nations and communities, including An Antan Kapesh, Bernard Assiniwi, Joséphine Bacon, Margaret Sam-Cromarty, Charles Coocoo, Rita Mestokosho, Louis-Karl Picard Sioui, Samian, Natasha Kanape Fontaine, Manon Nolin.

A variety of genres: poetry, song, novel excerpts, short stories, tales, theatre excerpts, manifestos.

Seven thematic chapters: "Le chemin ", "Il y a de cela bien des lunes ", "Les six saisons ", "Je m'appelle Humain ", "Là où tu te perds ", "Les jours des feux ", "Le territoire de ma langue ".

Traces of a duty of memory, affirmation, liberation and of sharing through writing and creation.

Some minimal information about each author as well as some notes about certain cultural elements mentioned in the texts.

A TEACHER'S GUIDE

Activities that challenge reading, writing and speaking skills.

A mode of reading and working around texts fostering:

- enhancement of the "subject reader" (Rouxel and Langlade, 2004) in the process of understanding and interpreting texts;

- a balance between the emotional and rational dimension of reading;

- reading which is not limited to cultural (folkloric) surface features, but which also questions values;

- an attentive reading of the literary specificities and certain particularities (traces of orality, presence of the source languages, etc.).

Integrating cultural elements in activities: reflection on the meaning of the "appellations", on the notion of inheritance, on the importance of walking and creation of a filiation circle.

Ideas allowing students to browse the anthology as they please and share their favourites.

Sample questionnaires to check reading comprehension.

References to discover other literary texts and further reflection.

THE AUTHORS OF THE PROJECT:

Olivier Dezutter is a professor in the department of pedagogy of the Faculty of Education of the Université de Sherbrooke. As a specialist in French didactics, he conducts research on the different facets of reading and writing in a variety of contexts.

Naomi Fontaine, from the Innu community of Uashat, is a writer and teacher of French. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in literature at Université Laval.

Jean-François Létourneau is currently a teacher of French at Cégep de Sherbrooke. He taught several years in First Nations communities. As a specialist in First Nations literature, he has written a master's thesis and a doctoral thesis (Université de Sherbrooke) on the subject. His essay, *Le territoire dans les veines,* was published by Mémoire d'encrier (Montreal, 2017).

Where to get the anthology and the guide?

The **anthology** is on sale in bookstores ($14.95): Dezutter, O., Fontaine, N. et Létourneau, J.-F. (dir.). (2017). *Tracer un chemin/Meshkanatsheu. Écrits des Premiers Peuples.* Wendake, Canada: Éditions Hannenorak.

The **pedagogical guide** is available in digital format. It can be obtained by contacting the Tshakapesh Institute Documentation Centre at 418 968-4424 or 1-800-391-4424 (toll-free), or by e-mail:

 maika.jerome@tshakapesh.ca

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ETAP MANITU

TEACHING THROUGH ARTS METHOD
WITH AN INNU CULTURAL DIMENSION

L'HISTOIRE À TRAVERS LA CULTURE INNUE PAR LE MESSAGE
Les élèves du 3e cycle du primaire de Shipiss Michel-Mckenzie
de l'école Tshishteshinu de Mani-utenam

The Etap Manitu program offers customized courses. This program proposes a method of teaching through the arts, based on Innu culture. Production Manitu has teamed up with, as a resource person, Samantha R. Duchemin, who is responsible for teaching through arts. This association provides teachers with ongoing training in Innu culture and the arts teaching method. Moreover, with her expertise, Ms. Duchemin can integrate, through videos, the Innu cultural dimension to the courses already offered. It provides support to teachers by conforming to the orientations of the Quebec curriculum.

Teaching through arts method

The teaching through arts method suggests a different perspective. It can also contribute to fostering perseverance and academic success. Two characteristics, specific to all art forms, are particularly strong in this approach: arousing curiosity and encouraging dialogues between students as their project progresses. Subsequently, more than one hundred artistic projects were created in partnership with teachers.

The proposed method enables students to establish links between their daily life and their school-based learning. It focuses on the many challenges young people face. The creation proposals are a privileged gateway to the general areas of training, cross-curricular competencies and other disciplines. Education through arts can thus contribute to structuring students' identity and enriching their world vision.

Authors : **Eddy Malenfant**, General Director, Production Manitu and **Sandra Duchemin**, Teaching through arts Resource Person

THE PROCESS

The teacher first chooses one or two objectives in a core subject and an artistic discipline, in visual arts or music.

Then the teacher is put in contact with the artist. The artist builds a lesson plan that meets the teacher's expectations while respecting the Quebec training program requirements. Later, a meeting takes place between the artist and the teacher. At this meeting, the schedule of activities is carefully established.

Each class consists of three one-hour sessions in class with students (three consecutive weeks of one session per week).

The magic then takes place and the material appears from a fresh perspective!

And it continues!

Since this association in 2016, courses conducted in class with the students of the Innu schools of Mani-utenam and Ekuanitshit, at école Jean-du-Nord in Sept-Îles, école Marie-Immaculée and école du Boisé. The program is now sponsored and supported by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur du Québec. It provides training to Innu artists so that the culture, language and transmission of Innu knowledge can be spread throughout all schools in Quebec. Etap Manitu is also working on an *e-Learning* version.

COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES OFFERED

Production Manitu inc. proposes, among other tools, the complete video recording, with editing, of the classroom training to not only allow the diffusion of the teaching method by the arts between schools, but also to ensure the transfer to new teachers.

For more information on ETAP MANITU:

Samantha R. Duchemin

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www.etapmanitu.com

CONTACT PERSON

Samantha R. Duchemin, is the contact person for teaching through arts. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) from Université du Québec à Montréal and a teaching certificate in visual and media arts.

Madame Duchemin has produced and conducted sessions in classrooms in over 60 elementary and secondary schools (Kindergarten to Grade 11), as well as in private institutions: institutes, colleges, Montessori schools, on behalf of the Royal Conservatory of Music of Canada as part of its Learning through The Arts® program.
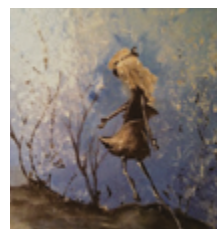
LEARNING TO SPEAK:
HOW TO HELP MY CHILD?

The language stimulation guide *Apprendre à parler, comment aider mon enfant?* (Translation: Learning to speak, how to help my child?) was developed by the team from the CPE Premier Pas, a daycare centre with 138 child care spaces located in three facilities in La Tuque and Trois-Rivières and dedicated primarily to First Nations children in Quebec.

It is the result of several years of experience of Mrs. Myriam Tremblay, Speech Therapist at CPE Premiers Pas. She has worked with the educators and the children attending the CPE who present language challenges.

This guide was designed for parents of preschoolers (0–5 years old), but indirectly, it can influence the social network of parents concerned and those involved in the development of children. It will also help educators and be better equipped to update intervention plans for children with language difficulties. The guide is divided into five sections including various themes.

Video capsules are also offered to illustrate these language stimulation techniques. The complete guide as well as the video capsules are available on the CPE Premier Pas website at: http://www.cpepremierpas.com/, under the tab Learn to Speak. http://www.cpepremierpas.com/, under the *Apprendre à parler* tab.

Authors : **Christiane Morin**, General Director, CPE Premier Pas and PAPACUN, La Tuque
and **Myriam Tremblay**, Speech Therapist, Owner of Orthophonie de la Capitale

SECTION 1 :
LANGUAGE, WHAT DOES IT INCLUDE?

VOCALIZATIONS AND BABBLING

What is it?

Babies communicate and interact with us from the first months of life.

They go through the following steps:

1. Crying
2. Screaming
3. Facial expressions (ex: pouts, smiles);
4. Vocalizations (ex. aaaa! Oooo!);
5. Gestures (eg "Bye bye");
6 Babbling (eg "Mamama", "gagagui").

SECTION 2 : LANGUAGE ACCORDING TO AGE

AT 3 YEARS OLD

Language comprehension

The child:

- Can give the family name and gender.
- Understands the questions, "Who, with whom, with what, how many, and why (simple)?"
- Understands "Big/Small, Before/After".
- Knows the basic colours.
- Understands concrete double instructions (Ex: "Take your shoes and put them in your box").
- Understands spatial notions "up/down, in, on, under" without visual clues.

Expression

The child:

- Says at least 300 words.
- Makes sentences of 3–4 words with function words (Ex: "The baby eats a compote").
- Conjugates most verbs (Ex: "The wolf is going to eat the girl", "The dog likes the bones").
- Knows nursery rhymes.
- Is generally understood, even by an unfamiliar interlocutor.
- Can pronounce the sounds k, g, l and begins to pronounce f, v, s, z.
- Can maintain a short conversation.

SECTION 3 : OTITIS AND LANGUAGE

THE IMPACT OF EAR INFECTIONS ON LANGUAGE

Children suffering from otitis, cannot hear as well.

Several ear infections in the same year lead to a prolonged decrease in their hearing.

This prolonged hearing loss can lead to delayed language development.

It is for this reason that it is very important to treat ear infections. We want to prevent them from causing speech delay.

SECTION 4 : HOW TO HELP
MY CHILD TO SPEAK?

PUT YOURSELF AT THE HEIGHT OF THE CHILD

What does mean?

- When you are talking to our child, bend down to be at the same level as him.

Why do it?

- Doing it this way makes contact with the child easier.
- It will be easier for the child to be attentive to what is said to him.
- The child will focus more on our face, our mouth and the way we pronounce the words.

In the child's shoes

Imagine yourself:

- Talking to a giant to whom you reach knee level…
- It will be difficult for the child to make contact and stay focused on what he tells you.

SECTION 5 : IN EVERYDAY LIFE

WHILE GETTING DRESSED

We dress and undress our child several times in a day! We get dressed in the morning, we get dressed to play outside, we undress when we arrive from the daycare, we undress again before bath time, we get dressed after bath time…

Why not take advantage of these moments to stimulate the language of our child!

For example, clothing is a good time to teach our child:

Names : Naming the clothes we put on or take off.
For example, socks, pants, coat, mittens, tuques, sandals…
(Ex: "I put on your SOCK, we take off the MITTENS").

Actions : Writing and describing the actions we do.
For example, pushing, pulling, lifting, taking off, putting on, looking…
(Ex: "We PUSH to put on the mitten", we LOOK for the other sock").

Parts of the body : Naming the parts of the body.
The basics (Ex: arms, legs, belly) … but also the most complex.
(Ex: wrists, ankles, shoulders, calves).
(Ex: "You put your FINGERS in the holes").

Adjectives : Adding adjectives.
For example, colours, big/small, soft, clean/dirty, hot/cold…
(Ex: "Your BLUE sweater", "Your pants are DIRTY").

INNU LANGUAGE APPS AND WEB-BASED TOOLS *

Minority or endangered languages often suffer from a lack of resources, or from disparity or incoherence of those that are created. We present here a series of digital resources to teach and to maintain the Innu language. These resources have the advantage of being integrated with each other, for the sake of coherence and complementarity. By working with partners involved in the documentation and teaching of Innu, we have designed and developed various modules of online resources, linked to each other, but often unknown to teachers or learners. Our goal is to provide an overview of these resources, designed to create a rich and coherent learning environment for Innu language and culture.

The Innu language is part of the large family of Algonquian languages extending from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains and more specifically, part of the continuum of Cree-Naskapi-Innu languages. In 2016, Innu was spoken by more than 11,000 people in Quebec (86%) and in Labrador (14%)[1]. To locate Innu, visit the **Algonquian Linguistic Atlas** (www.atlas-ling.ca). There are 21 topics of conversation in over 15 languages, about 50 speakers, and over 20,000 audio files, recorded between 2005 and 2017. Each of the eleven Innu communities and their dialects are represented. Based on this atlas, we also created an Innu conversation manual with CDs, and an Innu conversation web application for second-language acquisition and awareness of dialectal differences[2].

ALGONQUIAN LINGUISTIC ATLAS
WWW.ATLAS-LING.CA

One of our most popular online tools is the **Pan-Innu Dictionary** (dictionnaire.innu-aimun.ca). The result of an important team effort (Alliance de recherche universités-communautés (ARUC), directed by Marguerite MacKenzie, in collaboration with many partners, including the Tshakapesh Institute in Quebec and Mamu Tshishkuta-mashutau in Labrador), this dictionary was published online in 2011 and is continuously updated. It is a trilingual dictionary: Innu-English-French and contains over 27,000 entries.

1 http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016022/98-200-x2016022-fra.cfm

2 Innu conversation app. for iOS, Blackberry and Android. Published in December 2014.

Authors : **Marie-Odile Junker**, Carleton University and **Yvette Mollen**, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

TRILINGUAL PAN-INNU DICTIONARY
DICTIONNAIRE.INNU-AIMUN.CA

The dictionary contains grammatical information. By following links, one can start from a verb and find its conjugation pattern, or explanatory pages in an online grammar, either to its grammatical subcategory or to its type of radical.

Conjugaison app (verbe.innu-aimun.ca) is user-friendly and interactive. The pronunciation of conjugated model verbs is provided using audio files recorded in the different dialects. This promotes a standardized spelling, which is still being revised. There are over 5000 audio files in the conjugation app (recorded by Mollen and St-onge from the Tshakapesh Institute.) The work is still ongoing. This application is integrated with the online dictionary, grammar and interactive games.

CONJUGATION APP FOR INNU VERBS
VERBE.INNU-AIMUN.CA

The interactive games and online lessons (jeux.tshakapesh.ca) were first created for an audience whose mother tongue is Innu. Among other things, they provide for the acquisition and improvement of Innu literacy, vocabulary development, mastery of standardized spelling and discovery of Innu grammar. However, some modules are now also designed and used for the acquisition of Innu as a second language. The interactive lessons and exercises are available in the three dialects of Quebec (East, Central, West) and are also currently adapted for two dialects in Labrador (with an English interface). The application makes it possible to create customized courses and manage student progress.

The **oral stories database** responds to the need to preserve and transmit a traditionally oral culture without the use of written material (histoires.tshakapesh.ca). This database has the following advantages: oral stories are categorized and can be browsed by category - storyteller, theme, genre, target audience (children, adults). For each story, there is a short summary written in Innu and translated into French and English, information about the dialect, the storyteller, his or her community, and the year it was recorded. It also indicates who did what in the audio or video file, how this story can be used for teaching what themes are presented, what genres are featured (according to the Innu categories: legend, life story, discussion, etc.) and finally, the level or age group at which it is most suitable to present each story. There is also a short trilingual biography for each storyteller, found in a database of storytellers. The audio and video files are available for free download. There are three interface languages available: Innu, French and English.

Other online tools developed in recent years include:

> The online catalogue of cultural and educational material: to show what is available in Innu (books, CDs, etc.). It is accessible via a categorized and searchable database, with online ordering and inventory management (administered by the Tshakapesh Institute). As with oral stories, for each product the level, the type, and the possible uses for teaching are indicated. The interface is in Innu and in French (catalogue.tshakapesh.ca).

> Grammar pages: to accompany the dictionary and support teachers.

> The terminology forum: to create new words and support translators and interpreters (terminologie.atlas-ling.ca).

PART 2

SUPPORT PRACTICES

LINGUISTIC FACTORS IN ALGONQUIAN LANGUAGES

Influencing the Learning of French or English

Hélène Bodson, Speech-Language Therapist

Clinique interdisciplinaire pour la communication SENC

Context

For most children having an Indigenous language as their mother tongue, schooling in Canada will take place in the second language (French or English). As with any second-language learning, many language-specific factors may influence this learning. Since this second language is the language of instruction at school, the child must first learn that language in order to be able to acquire knowledge of the other subjects taught in this language.

An Algonquian language, namely Innu, will be used to present the possible challenges in the learning of French, or English, and of reading and writing. In addition, adaptations and activities will be suggested to facilitate the learning outcomes for children.

Sounds of languages (phonetics and phonology)

Words in languages are composed of units commonly called "sounds" (phonemes). These phonemes are consonants, vowels and semi-consonants. They are themselves composed of features that allow them to be described and differentiated–the "nasal" feature, for example, refers to the passage of air through the nose of the "m-n-gn" consonants. Each language has a determined set of phonemes which uses a limited range of features. This determined set varies from one language to another (and from one dialect to another). Thus, the French "u", as in "rue" (street), does not exist in English and an anglophone may confuse the "u" with a sound he knows, the "oo"; he may not hear or express the difference between "roue" (wheel) and "rue".

Each language determines which features distinguish phonemes: these are called distinctive features. The features that are not distinctive give rise to "allophones", or phonetic (acoustic) variations of the phonemes. In Quebec French, for example, the addition of an "s" after a "t" in certain contexts is not distinctive: we can pronounce "tsu" or "tu" for "tu" (you) without affecting the meaning of the word. Thus, the "oo" and the "u" are phonemes in French, while "ts" and "t" are allophones of the phoneme "t" (Martin, 1996).

Voicing is another phoneme-defining feature. It is characterized by the vibration of the vocal cords during the production of a sound. In all languages, all vowels are voiced, that is, the vocal chords vibrate during their production.

For their part, consonants can be voiced or muted (unvoiced). In some languages, such as French and English, voicing is a distinctive feature, that is, two sounds will be considered different even if their only particularity is voicing. Thus, "p" and "b" are two distinct phonemes if their only difference is voicing.

In Algonquian languages, however, consonant voicing takes place contextually (that is, sounds that precede and follow a consonant will determine whether the consonant will be unvoiced or voiced). The voicing feature is therefore not distinctive (Burgess 2009, Drapeau 1979, MacKenzie 1980). Using a voiced consonant or an unvoiced consonant will not change the meaning of a word. For example, "hare" in Innu, can be pronounced "*wabush*" or "*wapush*".

A child whose mother tongue is an Algonquian language will therefore implicitly learn that voicing is not a distinctive feature. He could therefore have difficulty understanding that this contrast is important in French and in English. He might not hear or articulate this contrast properly. This "phonological deafness" is likely to become widespread in all sounds that do not exist in one's mother tongue.

Difficulties or confusion are possible as soon as the mother tongue considers that two sounds are allophones, while these sounds are distinctive in the second language, and vice versa. When comparing the consonants of French and English with those of Algonquian languages in relation to voicing, the following pairs of consonants are likely to be assigned orally and in writing: p-b, t-d, k-g, f-v, s-z, ch-j, ch-dj (unvoiced-voiced consonants).

Finally, the sounds "n" and "l" are used alternately, especially between certain Innu dialects, which can hinder the acquisition of these sounds in the language of instruction.

Given the limited possibilities of human physiology (tongue, throat, etc.), the more vowels there are in one language, the more articulated or acoustically similar they will be. Their differences, however small, must then be respected to maintain the distinction between the vowels. On the other hand, the fewer vowels there are in a language, the more distant they will be from each other and the more variability in production will be tolerated: each vowel will have more allophones. A vowel phoneme in an Algonquian language therefore overlaps several vowels in French and in English (Burgess 2009, Crystal 2003, Drapeau 1979, MacKenzie 1980, Martin 1996).

For example, in Innu:

Vowels (phonemes)	Allophones
ou (boue)	ou (boue), o (beau), e (je)
é (été)	é (été), è (elle)
e (je)	e (je), a (patte), â (pâte), i (ici)
a (patte)	a (patte), â (pâte), æ (apple), o (beau), ô (corps).

Given this overlap, both oral and written confusion are likely. The French vowels "o" and "ou", "é" and "è" are particularly affected (Bodson, 2013).

In order to assist Indigenous students in their learning, such as in reading and writing, an explicit teaching of sounds and their distinctive characteristics may be offered in workshops with a focus on phonological awareness. Students may be sensitized to vocal cord vibration (e.g.: by holding their hand on their throat to compare sounds "sss" and "zzz"). Memory aids (gestures, keywords, etc.) can help students distinguish these sounds. Persistent difficulties in the auditory perception of the voicing contrast (or other sounds) may justify an audiology assessment.

Each language determines which features distinguish phonemes: these are called distinctive features.

Some sounds have become interchangeable in local variants of French or English; this is the case of "ou" and "o" among the Innus. In such cases, compensatory strategies should be considered for learning word spelling–including learning by analogy.

The meaning of words (semantics)

Each word has one or more meanings. The meaning of a word in one language may include several words in another language. Thus, in French, one says "aimer", whereas in English there is a distinction between "to like" and "to love". In Innu, the word "tetapuakan" includes the words "chair", "bench", but also several other sorts of seats. While the Innu term is used for almost everything you can sit on (including the log around the campfire), the words in French and English are not interchangeable.

Overlaps and divisions of language words can be explored in class using illustrations and Venn diagrams. In addition to enriching students' vocabulary, such classification activities will develop their lexical awareness.

The grammar (morphosyntax)

In Algonquian languages, the verb is the central element of the sentence (Drapeau, 2014). Indeed, the majority of words are verbs (including colours and days of the week). Algonquian languages are polysynthetic, which means that it is possible to construct words (including verbs) so complex that their translation would correspond to an entire sentence. Adjectives are presented as affixes, that is to say, words that must necessarily be attached to the words they describe (in English, the "in" in "indecision" is an affix example) In Algonquian language, since adjectives "stick" to the words they describe, it is not surprising to find a hundred words to name the snow. It is possible, in addition to the existing lexicon, to create words at will!

While the privileged word order in French and English is subject-verb-object, this order is not necessarily the same in Algonquian languages since the object-verb form is just as frequent–especially when telling the time.

While the grammatical genre is important in French (both for people

and objects) and in English (for people), it does not exist in Algonquian languages. However, the animate/inanimate distinction is central to it, going as far as to influence the conjugations used according to whether the subject is animated or not. The modes, the verb tenses of Algonquian languages and their uses do not correspond in a linear fashion to those found in French and English–for example, there is no verb tense in French or in English intended to relate one's dreams.

The absence of grammatical gender in Algonquian languages has a direct impact on the learning of French or English, especially for the acquisition of personal pronouns. Indeed, the distinction "he-she" can be difficult for the learners. On the one hand, because it does not exist in Algonquian languages and, on the other hand, because adults who speak French or English around them, and who have the same mother tongue, do not necessarily make the distinction in their model.

The student will also learn that, although there are two "we" (inclusive, "all of us", and the exclusive we, "us only") in Algonquian languages, there is only one in French or English, to which must be added some words if one wants to be more precise.

Finally, in a narrative in Algonquian language, the order of introduction of characters, and their roles in relation to others, will determine the pronoun used to refer to them. In "My father's brother ate the cake", the brother and my father will each have their pronouns (3rd and 4th person) that will clearly refer to one or the other. Since both pronouns clarify the relationship of dependence (here, between the dog and the father), the repetition of the antecedent is not required to clarify who it is during narration. Since these two pronouns are translated as "he" into French or English, it will be necessary to explicitly teach the student whose mother tongue is Algonquian that the antecedent of pronouns must be repeated in a speech or narrative.
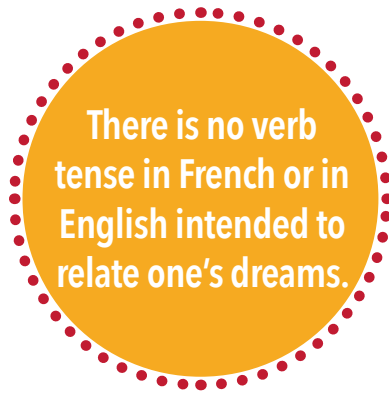
Given the limited possibilities of human physiology (tongue, throat, etc.), the more vowels there are in one language, the more articulated or acoustically similar they will be. Their differences, however small, must then be respected to maintain the distinction between the vowels. On the other hand, the fewer vowels there are in a language, the more distant they will be from each other and the more variability in production will be tolerated: each vowel will have more allophones. A vowel phoneme in an Algonquian language therefore overlaps several vowels in French and in English.

Conclusion

We provided a brief overview of some of the linguistic difficulties that an Algonquian language speaker may encounter in learning English or French. Other factors, such as the cultural rules of social interaction or the quality and quantity of language models, influence the acquisition of mother tongue and second language. In order to support students in their schooling, a reflection on language is required from preschool. Language awareness activities and explicit teaching can help children (and adults!) not only to become aware of the differences and similarities of languages, but also to develop their metalinguistic skills in order to overcome difficulties. ■

There is no verb tense in French or in English intended to relate one's dreams.

A child whose mother tongue is an Algonquian language will therefore implicitly learn that voicing is not a distinctive feature. He could therefore have difficulty understanding that this contrast is important in French and in English. He might not hear or articulate this contrast properly.

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CUSTOMIZED AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SUPPORT MEASURES FOR INDIGENOUS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS:

The Case of Work Methodology Workshops

Roxanne Labrecque, Student and Learning Assistant
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Context

Recognizing the key role of education in improving the quality of life and low rates of post-secondary graduation among First Peoples (CFC-FCÉE, 2014, Joncas, 2013; Ticci Sarmiento, 2017), the Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite (CPNN) has a mandate to enable more Indigenous students to pursue higher education and support their academic perseverance and success.

To do this, the CPNN–a place of reception, supervision and consultation–establishes personalized support measures culturally adapted to the needs of students[1].

> **Work methodology workshops are for all CPNN students.**

Although each student has specific needs in relation to his or her academic career, the CPNN has identified, over the years, in Indigenous students showing cultural, personal, family and academic difficulties. Adapting to student reality is often more difficult for those who have left their communities to pursue university studies in urban areas (Ticci Sarmiento, 2017). In many cases, the language of instruction–French– is not their mother tongue (Blackburn, Gauthier and Bacon, 2015, Ticci Sarmiento, 2017), so this forces them to engage more effort to meet university requirements in terms of language, which is at the heart of learning. Added to this difficulty is the fact that the university favours the development of knowledge through reading and writing, whereas in the case of Indigenous people, knowledge is transferred orally, from a cultural transmission perspective (Boucher, 2005). In terms of post-secondary education, many students are admitted to program on adult bases (age 21)–they do not hold a college diploma. However, this avenue often requires them to make greater efforts to meet the requirements, particularly those older students who have not been to school in recent years and who, for the most part, have difficulty using information and communication technologies (ICTs) for learning purposes. Finally, adapting to the university reality is more difficult for people with additional problems such as learning disabilities, anxiety disorders, lack of self-confidence, etc. (Joncas, 2013). For these reasons, additional adaptation measures are needed to help students progress through their program.

The purpose of this article is to present an example of personalized, culturally appropriate support provided by the CPNN to Indigenous students to support their academic perseverance and success: the case of work methodology workshops.

Work methodology workshops

Participants' involvement

Work methodology workshops are for all CPNN students, although most participants are enrolled in a teaching program (certificate or bachelor's degree). The two-hour workshops are offered once a week, in groups or individually, depending on the needs (face-to-face or distance learning). By registering for the workshops, the students complete a contract committing them to attend every meeting and participate actively since, among other things, they determine most of the content. They are invited to define, in writing, their expectations for the workshops, to discover their strengths and difficulties in formulating learning objectives to which they will refer throughout the process to regulate their approach. They must also talk about their academic background and about themselves (interests, mother tongue, home community, family, etc.). This process makes it possible not only to establish a profile of each student and take it into account when planning the workshops, but also to make a diagnostic assessment of their writing skills (reference to the French language workshops if needed). Traces of their actions allow students to

It is possible to highlight some observations among CPNN students who participated in the work methodology workshops, particularly in terms of perseverance and academic success.

self-regulate through feedback from the teaching assistant and their peers and to check if the goals are being met.

Content

The content of the workshops is developed throughout a semester according to the needs of the students and the work that they must do as part of their courses. In the first workshop, students present their lesson plans to plan the work to be done during the semester (long, medium and short term). Each week, they report on their progress in their work process. In addition, to support teamwork, discussions on collaborative work are conducted: the distribution of roles and tasks among members. By developing their collaborative skills, students learn to deal with conflicts that may arise during teamwork.

Since French is not the mother tongue of the majority of CPNN students, some work instructions can be misunderstood, especially since some abstract concepts do not have equivalent words in Indigenous languages. The methodology workshops then make it possible to develop cognitive and metacognitive strategies aimed at better understanding certain concepts studied. Strategic teaching (Tardif, 1992), including the use of modelling, guided practice and independent practice in problem solving, is used to enable them to "learn to learn" in all learning situations.

The methods

Since the Indigenous identity question is fundamental (Blackburn, Gauthier, & Bacon, 2015), students need to be acknowledged for their culture and their individuality.

We let them express themselves freely, *reveal themselves,* so that they can relate to their learning and have a feeling of power on their academic path. Students are also invited to speak with their family and community about possible reinvestments of their professional skills developed during their university studies. To respect the oral culture, the sharing

circles formula is transposed to that of the workshops, so that students can discuss their problems or share their initiatives. This procedure allows students to realize that they are not the only ones coping with difficulties and that they can, by interacting with others, discuss ways to overcome them. In fact, pedagogical assistant acts as an accompanist and mediator.

Some observations and development prospects

It is possible to highlight some observations among CPNN students who participated in the work methodology workshops, particularly in terms of perseverance and academic success. First, there is greater commitment and investment, especially through their weekly presence and active participation in the mentoring sessions. Not asking them to do additional tasks and to work instead on the assignments they need to do as part of their courses could contribute to these observations.

The fact that students can *reveal themselves*, to express themselves about what they experience, both at university and in their daily lives, seems to favour their participation rate in workshops. In addition, students who have used this help service, from their first year of study, have had successes (better results, involvement for research projects, etc.). They also appear to have developed greater autonomy in performing their work, as well as greater confidence in their ability to succeed. Moreover, students who had some difficulties in terms of the French language, improved their skills in reading (reading scientific texts) and writing (strategies for writing a summary of text, a research report, etc.). Finally, some students show a desire to pass on their knowledge to the members of their community, so it can benefit from it, which increases their motivation to succeed.

The methodology workshops also present challenges. The first would be the fact that the participating students do not always come from the same program. The elements to work therefore vary according to the work to be done. Consequently, strategic teaching formulas are to be favoured, such as to suggest working "in islands" according to the types of work to be performed. Also, more and more students want to participate in the workshops by asking for a more personalized support according to their program of studies. To overcome this difficulty, it would be interesting to offer workshops that would bring together students from the same program. Lastly, since students' time constraints do not always allow them to benefit from every support workshop offered at the CPNN, some of them would benefit from more personalized supervision.

Thus, in light of this experience, the CPNN wishes to create a short, one-semester program, offering an upgrade to students who wish to undertake university studies, but who have difficulties in terms of the French language, the use of ICTs, and the work methodology. Admission to a training program at Université du Québec à Chicoutimi would be conditional on the success of this short program for students for whom an upgrade is required. This would promote retention and prevent academic failures, which are often harmful to some people's self-esteem and health (exhaustion, anxiety disorders, etc.). This program would be created according to a collaborative approach to involve, not only the teachers, the teaching assistants and other partners, but also, and above all, the students themselves who are the first actors of their success! ■

Since the Indigenous identity question is fundamental (Blackburn, Gauthier, & Bacon, 2015), students need to be acknowledged for their culture and their individuality. We let them express themselves freely, reveal themselves, so that they can relate to their learning and have a feeling of power on their academic path. Students are also invited to speak with their family and community about possible reinvestments of their professional skills developed during their university studies. To respect the oral culture, the sharing circles formula is transposed to that of the workshops, so that students can discuss their problems or share their initiatives.

NOTES

1   The CPNN currently has 338 Indigenous students active registered in the 2017-2018 semester, 212 of whom are enrolled in a program at Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, and 84 who are enrolled in one of the Centre d'études universitaires de l'est de la Côte-Nord programs.

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Students who have used this help service have had successes.

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REPORT ON SCHOOL PERSEVERANCE

The **SCHOOL PERSEVERANCE SCHOLARSHIPS** were created to acknowledge the efforts, enthusiasm, and perseverance of First Peoples students. They reward the efforts of Secondary 4 and 5 students from the public-school system.

With the creation of the **SCHOOL PERSEVERANCE SCHOLARSHIPS**, the Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite of UQAC and its partners, the RBA Foundation, the Jasmin Roy Foundation, Path of the Thousand Dreams (Puamun Meshkenu) and Desjardins, wish to acknowledge and support the students of First Peoples as they embark on the final stage leading to their high school graduation.

Once again, this year, we received many applications from young candidates whose journeys are all more than inspiring. We are touched to witness the perseverance and involvement of these students, and to see the support afforded by the different actors of the education community around them, teachers and professionals, as well as parents.

In the following pages, we wish to recognize and support these young people who continue to progress and evolve despite the challenges, and we would like to highlight their exemplary tenacity.

Congratulations to the honourees, but also to all those who applied and, above all, may you all persevere along the path of academic success!

The Evaluation Committee
School Perseverance Scholarships for First Peoples

THE EIGHT SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ARE:

DÉLYA GAMELIN-RAINVILLE, ABENAKI NATION (RBA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP)

JULIE-ANNE DOMINIQUE, INNU NATION (JASMIN ROY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP)

DESTINY KATSITSATEKANONIAHKWA LAZORE-WHITEBEAN, MOHAWK NATION (JASMIN ROY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP)

ROSE-AIMÉE PAPATIE, ALGONQUIN NATION (DESJARDINS SCHOLARSHIP)

MAUDE PARENT, HURON-WENDAT NATION (RBA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP)

TREVOR COOPER, CREE NATION (JASMIN ROY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP)

CÉLINE TUKALAK, INUIT NATION (PUAMUN MESHKENU SCHOLARSHIP)

TRAVIS FLAMAND PETIQUAY, ATIKAMEK NATION (RBA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP)

RESILIENCE - RESOURCEFULNESS - DETERMINATION

"Délya must count on herself only, both for her financial and general needs. She puts the same efforts into her school work. Délya is a model of resourcefulness and perseverance. She is involved in many community projects as she is involved in the school environment… She is a source of motivation and inspiration for those of her own age as for the adults who work with her."

Kim O'Bomsawin, Specialized Educator

"I was failing, and I had to invest a lot of time and efforts to pass Secondary 2. I am now in Secondary 4 and I must put in constant efforts to succeed."

Délya Gamelin-Rainville

DÉLYA GAMELIN-RAINVILLE, ABENAKI NATION, COLLÈGE NOTRE-DAME-DE-L'ASSOMPTION

WILLINGNESS - DETERMINATION

JULIE-ANNE DOMINIQUE, INNU NATION, ÉCOLE KASSINU MAMU

"Julie-Anne never gives up. Despite her difficulties in languages, she continues to study and do all of her work. She was the only one to participate to Expo-Sciences. Julie-Anne is one of the few students who want to be involved in everything. She is always present on field trips and is a young transmitter. We can always count on her."

Stéphanie Noël, Teacher

"As I suffer from dysphasia, I have difficulty in French and English. To help me, I met a school psychologist and a remedial teacher. My teachers and the school's specialized educators have helped me a lot to overcome my difficulties."

Julie-Anne Dominique

RESOURCEFULNESS - WILLINGNESS - PERSEVERANCE

DESTINY KATSITSATEKANONIAHKWA LAZORE-WHITEBEAN,

MOHAWK NATION, HOWARD S. BILLINGS HIGH SCHOOL

"On my first day of high school, I had a cultural shock: I was the only Indigenous student. I realized that I didn't know French as much as did the other students and I had to work very hard to understand the basics. I learned French through book reading and online apps such as Duolingo. In addition, the day before my first day of school, I found out that my mother was seriously ill. So, I had to take things one at a time."

Destiny Katsitsatekanoniahkwa Lazore-Whitebean

"I watched this determined young woman work hard, attend tutoring sessions and ask for additional sessions if necessary. She never gave up and, in doing so, she realized that practice and perseverance enabled her to go beyond her own limits."

P. Apostolakos, Teacher

MODEL - RESILIENCE - PERSEVERANCE

"Rose-Aimée is, in my opinion, a model of perseverance. Despite having moved many times this year, school has always remained a priority for her. I believe that her determination and possibly her cultural involvement are factors that have allowed her to get through all these changes. She works hard and is proud to be Algonquin."

Alexandra Audet, School Worker

ROSE-AIMÉE PAPATIE, ALGONQUIN NATION, ÉCOLE POLYVALENTE LE CARREFOUR
Accompanied by Marie-Pierre Nolet

"Every time I moved, I had to change schools and environments. It was difficult to continually adapt to a new environment. For family reasons, I had to miss classes often, but I always went to remedial sessions to make up for it. I could have dropped out of school, but I didn't."

Rose-Aimée Papatie

MAUDE PARENT, HURON-WENDAT NATION

PERSEVERANCE - DETERMINATION - WILLINGNESS

"Despite episodes of anxiety and stress due to illness and subsequent academic delays, I persisted and take the necessary steps to be successful in school. I can count on the support of the medical, school and family environment to support me in my journey."

Maude Parent

BALANCE - PERSEVERANCE - WILLINGNESS

TREVOR COOPER, CREE NATION, JOHN RENNIE HIGH SCHOOL

"Trevor is a Secondary 5 student who has successfully reconciled the requirements of the elite hockey league and the accelerated program. Trevor is one of our most dedicated students and his hard work in class and on the ice is paying off and will benefit him later."

Michael Warren While, Deputy Director

"It took me a while to adapt to urban life and my new, larger school. I worked hard to prove that I could succeed both in school and in hockey; the help of my parents, teachers and friends was very important to me. My studies have always been my priority, but I had to find the balance between hockey and my studies. When I failed, I studied more and hired a tutor to help me."

Trevor Cooper

DREAMS - RESOURCEFULNESS

"She is an exceptional student, always persisting and present in class. She aims to achieve her dream of becoming a doctor. She took part in the Grand défi Pierre Lavoie and to several fundraising events–for the realization of educational projects–and extracurricular activities."

Jean-Omer Kamkang

"I have difficulties in reading and vocabulary, but I do everything I can to improve myself: I ask questions to my teachers, I do research on Internet, in dictionaries or in books."

Céline Tukalak

CÉLINE TUKALAK, INUIT NATION, IGUARSIVIK SCHOOL

OPTIMISM - WILLINGNESS

TRAVIS FLAMAND PETIQUAY, ATIKAMEKW NATION, ACADÉMIE LES ESTACADES

"Travis works very hard to constantly improve his school results. Despite being reserved by nature, he keeps a smile on his face and makes constant efforts to progress in school, sports or social environments. His behaviour is irreproachable and concretely shows a desire to improve despite the difficulties encountered in the past."

Pierre De Jean, Teacher and Football Coach

"I met a remedial teacher to get help. He gave me tips and tricks to study better and to learn more about certain concepts."

Travis Flamand Petiquay

PETAPAN PROJECT

AT QUATRE-VENTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

NEW PRACTICES TO SUPPORT THE SUCCESS OF FIRST PEOPLES STUDENTS IN URBAN AREAS

At École des Quatre-Vents, of the Rives-du-Saguenay School Board, a team of teachers, professionals and practitioners, with the support of a committed principal, is developing practices to support the success of Indigenous students by promoting cultural sharing.

Facilities and services have been implemented to enhance their languages and cultures. The goal is to provide students and their parents with a healthy, stimulating, welcoming and gratifying living environment, in addition to being culturally safe. In addition to the work done in class, the first year of the project (2017-2018) has been marked by many accomplishments: language and culture workshops (Innu and Atikamekw) offered by the Saguenay Native Friendship Centre (CAAS), in collaboration with the Atikamekw Nation Council and the Tshakapesh Institute, a cultural week with the installation of a Shaputuan (Tshakapesh Institute), a play performed at the daycare centre with the collaboration of a mother and finally, the participation of parents in several activities, including the Governing Board.

To support and analyze practices in development, a team of research professors from the University of Quebec in Chicoutimi, in collaboration with the Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite (CPNN), was involved to support teachers and practitioners and document the project (ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur [MEES], Fondation de l'Université du Québec à Chicoutimi [FUQAC]). Work continues in 2018-2019 with all partners (MEES, Rives-du-Saguenay School Board, CPNN, CAAS, Tshakapesh Institute, CNA). More detailed descriptions and findings of practices developed to support the success of Indigenous students will soon be available to share this experience with other communities.

Claudette Awashish, Director, Native Friendship Centre of Saguenay

Christine Couture, Professor and Director of Doctorate in Education, Department of Education, UQAC

Marco Bacon, Director, Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite, UQAC

Marc Girard, Director, école primaire des Quatre-Vents, Commission scolaire des Rives-du-Saguenay

Catherine Gagné, intérim Director of Services éducatifs jeunes, Commission scolaire des Rives-du-Saguenay

The RBA Foundation was created in 2008 with the will to become socially involved with communities and to support causes dedicated to the wellbeing of First Nations. Its mission is to contribute to the wellbeing of First Nations.

The RBA Foundation is a proud partner of the School Perseverance for First Peoples Scholarship Funds 2017-2018.

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PART 3

COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

MAMU ATUSSETAU (WORKING TOGETHER)

Provincial Strategy for Urban Indigenous Families: An Initiative of the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec

Amélie Lainé, Education Advisor
Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec

Mamu Atussetau is the mobilization strategy chosen by the Mouvement des Centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec[1] to support the development and improvement of services offered to Indigenous families living in or passing through cities in Quebec. This strategy focuses on enriching the collaboration within the Mouvement, on the support of friendship centres by the Regroupement des Centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) and developing spaces for meeting, consultation, and co-construction. It is therefore a strategy to mobilize and strengthen our collective capacities by pooling our strengths, our experiences and our innovation initiatives. With Mamu Atussetau, we are led to transform our ways of working together as a movement so that the culturally relevant and reassuring services that are offered in each of the friendship centres are in harmony with the collective vision that we share.

The Mouvement des Centres d'amitié autochtones

With more than 60 years of history in Canada, the Mouvement des Centres d'amitié autochtones is the largest urban Indigenous service infrastructure in Quebec and Canada. It includes 118 Native friendship centres and seven provincial/territorial associations.

All Native friendship centres have an open house approach, that is, all Indigenous people are welcomed and provided with service regardless of status, nation or place of residence.

There are 11 Native Friendship centres affiliated with the RCAAQ in the province of Quebec. They serve the cities of Chibougamau, Val-d'Or, Senneterre, La Tuque, Trois-Rivieres, Montreal, Joliette, Sept-Iles, Quebec, Maniwaki and Roberval.

The RCAAQ, created in 1976 for and by urban Indigenous people who wanted to establish a provincial association, is a non-profit organization that promotes the rights and interests of Indigenous citizens of cities in Quebec while supporting the Native friendship centre development. It reaches urban Indigenous people by providing them with relevant services that contribute to harmony and reconciliation between peoples, but also by creating dialogue or exchange areas that value Indigenous culture and social interaction modes.

Because of its unifying mission, the RCAAQ offers an overall understanding of the issues and challenges faced by Indigenous people who must deal with urban reality. As a result, we are implementing innovative and proactive provincial strategies to more effectively meet the needs of Indigenous people in cities. The RCAAQ also supports the Native friendship centres of Quebec through advice, support and technical resources. It also serves as a provincial structure for consultation, coordination and representation in which the values and common aspirations of the Centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec can be formulated and activated.

The RCAAQ and the friendship centres work in collaboration with various partners, according to the expertise of each one, so that Indigenous people dealing with urban reality can have access to quality services answering their needs. The centres offer integrated and interconnected urban services distributed with a culturally relevant and safe holistic approach. They are living environments where service delivery focuses on empowering individuals and improving their quality of life.

In aggregate terms, in addition to constituting real crossroads of front-line services, the Centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec are places favourable to the emergence of actions of cultural revalorization, affirmation of identity and citizen mobilization among the urban Native population.

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Provincial summary

In 2014–2015, the RCAAQ conducted a provincial project (Ninan Project which is the first phase of Mamu Atussetau) to identify the early childhood issues facing Indigenous families in cities. To do this, we completed a provincial tour of the friendship centres and met with over 110 Indigenous parents and various local partners.

This data collection has clearly demonstrated that Indigenous families have limited access to the various services offered in their city. The great majority of partners reported that Indigenous families living in their city are often large, single-parent, low-income families with low levels of education, etc. The intergenerational impacts of the federal government's acculturation policies and the resulting socio-economic disadvantages continue to affect Indigenous families and children today. Many families suffer from psychosocial problems that are often aggravated by precarious social and material conditions that further weaken children's living conditions.

However, it has been widely demonstrated that, in early childhood, the participation of Indigenous children in culturally relevant programs contributes to narrowing the health and education gap with other children (Ball, 2012; McIvor, 2009). In-depth knowledge of needs and the creation of specific services for urban Indigenous families are therefore fundamental issues challenging the Centre d'amitié autochtones Movement.

The elements of the situation challenging us

Existing data is usually old, inaccurate or incomplete. Although we have access to some fragmentary data on the needs of parents and the environment of Indigenous families in cities, there is no evidence to provide a complete picture.

> *"Children growing up in a non-Indigenous environment and their families may feel a cleavage between the transmission of Indigenous culture and the cohabitation of both cultures, which may have an impact on the child's identity development; some counsellors note the feeling of helplessness felt by parents in this situation."* (RCAAQ, 2015)

Low Use of Early Childhood and Family Services

The Quebec network services are offered to the urban Indigenous population. However, few Indigenous people use them: language barrier, transportation, unsuitable services, discrimination, waiting list, etc. It is recognized that urban Indigenous people, despite their obvious needs, make little use of the services available to them in the community where they live and in which they often feel victims of racism and exclusion. This leads to a loss of self-confidence and in one's abilities. As mentioned by one interviewee:

> "Finding a daycare centre for my daughter was difficult because of her last name." (RCAAQ, 2015)

Partnership to varying degrees in the territories of the Native Friendship Centres

The Native friendship centres aspire to form partnerships or formalize collaborations with early childhood and family services and Quebec organizations. However, the quantity and quality of partnerships vary from one city to another for various reasons. Indigenous reality is little known, and the specific needs of Indigenous families are often ignored. There are few formal partnerships. Indeed,

> "The shock of Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizational cultures sometimes makes partnership work more difficult." (RCAAQ, 2015)

The services

There are few culturally safe programs, services or tools for early childhood and urban Indigenous families.

"The partners know that it is important to adapt their services so that they'd better correspond to Indigenous families, but they do not always know how to do it." (RCAAQ, 2015)

Indigenous people are in a complex situation that generally manifests itself in a lack of accessibility and continuum of services, particularly between those provided in communities and those offered by the province. As a result, Indigenous families do not receive all the services they need, and their particularities are not sufficiently considered when it comes to provision of services.

Mamu Atussetau (Working Together)

The ability to reach vulnerable families, who are not served by the Quebec service network, is one of the strengths of the friendship centres. These are places of belonging for Indigenous families who must deal with the urban reality and it is often to these places that they turn to for welcoming services, support, assistance and accompaniment services. Indigenous people need these services to, among other things, fulfill their role as primary educators for their children. Considering the situation, the Mouvement des Centres d'amitié autochtones has sensed the need to provide urban Indigenous children and families in Quebec with services that are planned, coordinated and respectful of Indigenous culture.

For more than a year now, the Mamu Atussetau major strategy has been deployed in the cities where the Native friendship centres are located, thanks to the coordinated work of the centres and the RCAAQ. With the primary goal of providing quality urban services for Indigenous people, the Mamu Atussetau strategy not only allows sharing of good practices among actors, but also encourages the creation of culturally relevant work tools.

This collaborative work makes it possible, among other things, to plan the training of the counsellors in the centres using videoconferencing and to implement a community of practice to develop an interactive and continuous reflection process. This training offers the opportunity to integrate the values of the profession of counsellor and to deepen knowledge and skills related to it. In addition, it allows participants to benefit from the experiences and expertise of

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other centres for the development and enrichment of their services. Harmonized work plans with common indicators have also been developed so that all centres can collect identical data on the families who attend their services. Finally, an intervention guide with early childhood and family components is developed to address educational intervention with Indigenous families, family involvement, and transition to school environments. The Mamu Atussetau strategy therefore offers the Mouvement des Centres d'amitié autochtones the opportunity to enrich and consolidate its outreach approach to Indigenous families.

We believe that if children are familiar with their culture and develop a strong sense of community, they will be better able to achieve success during their school years and become secure as adults. Having roots in one's culture of origin is essential to connect with the dominant Quebec society in a healthy and balanced way. In urban areas, friendship centres are often the only place where Indigenous families can reconnect with their culture. This situation further reinforces our provincial strategy to support the development of a continuum of quality services for Indigenous families. ■

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SECONDARY SCHOOL AND POST-SECONDARY RETENTION AMONG INDIGENOUS STUDENTS:

More Favourable Conditions in the Essipit Community?

Alexandra Mansour, Social Worker

Danielle Maltais, Full Professor, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

Mathieu Cook, Professor, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

The portrait of school attendance in Indigenous areas often highlights its negative aspects. For example, in 2001, in Canada, 48% of Indigenous adults had not completed high school, while the rate was 31% for all Canadian (National Council of Welfare, 1998; 2007). Similarly, we note that the graduation rate of young people from various First Nations communities in Quebec is lower than the Quebec average (Lévesque & Polèse, 2015). Thus, in 2011, 37.7% of Indigenous students had not graduated from high school, compared to 21.6% for the entire Quebec population (Statistics Canada, 2011). Moreover, the Quebec government is concerned that "in 2008–2009, out of every 100 [First Nations] students who have left general education, only 14 had obtained a diploma or qualification [and that] the annual drop-out rate was close to 92%" (ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013, p.17). In addition, according to the National Council of Welfare, there are several "push factors" that would encourage these students to drop out of school–such as the exclusion and racism experienced in non-Indigenous educational institutions. School drop-out rates of First Nations students would also result from pull factors–such as financial need and the attractiveness of employment.

Few studies in Quebec, however, focus on persevering or "returning" Indigenous students (Joncas, 2013), despite a trend towards higher enrollment rates (Lévesque & Polèse, 2015). Moreover, according to Joncas, "the educational success of First Nations people, which were disastrous, is improving at all levels of education" (p. 2). Again, although many advances and initiatives are being implemented within First Nations communities, the dimensions related to school perseverance in this part of the population remain poorly documented (Perron & Côté, 2015).

However, the picture of student retention seems rather encouraging in the Essipit Innu community. This Indigenous reservation, located along the St. Lawrence River and 155 kilometres from the City of Saguenay, is enclaved by the Municipality of Les Escoumins. In 2011, there were 247 individuals, 26% of whom were 25 years of age or younger (Statistics Canada, 2012). In 2016, only 10.1% of the population aged 15 or older was not in paid employment or looking for a job (Statistics Canada, 2018).

The community offers various services to its members and owns several businesses. However, there is no primary or secondary school. The youths of Essipit must therefore pursue their studies in the surrounding municipalities of Les Escoumins or Les Bergeronnes.

According to data provided by the Band Council, the 47 young people in this community, aged 12 and 29, attended, in 2015, either a secondary school, a vocational training centre, a CEGEP or a university. The authorities in place claim that the last cases of school drop-out date back eight or nine years.

In order to better understand the reality of Essipit's youth, a qualitative descriptive study was conducted, in the fall of 2016 and winter of 2017, to answer the following research question: *What are the personal, family, school and social reasons and factors that promote school perseverance among Indigenous youth in the Essipit community?*

Methodology

Nine youths over the age of 13, including eight women and one man, participated in a semi-structured interview (Royer, Baribeau, & Duchesne, 2009). All the young people were interviewed in French since it is their language of use, both school and at home. Among them, four respondents were in secondary school at the time of data collection, two were attending a CEGEP and three were enrolled in a Quebec university.

Three different interview guides were used depending on the level of education of each respondent (secondary, college or university). The interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes and the interviewer made every effort to rephrase the questions to the respondents when necessary. The majority of the interviews were conducted at the participants' homes to make them feel more comfortable. The material collected was then subjected to a thematic analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2012).

Results

Reasons for perseverance

Analysis of the respondents' comments revealed elements that encouraged them to pursue their studies. These reasons for perseverance can be grouped into four broad categories: 1) employability, 2) acquiring new knowledge and graduation, 3) practising sports and 4) influence of significant people.

First of all, employability remains the main reason encouraging respondents to remain in school. They continue their education to find jobs that will please them, which will meet their personal and professional expectations, and will offer them optimal salary and working conditions, while intellectually stimulating them. As such, they have the desire to be competitive in the labour market, which is often recognized as one of the reasons for school perseverance (Dubet, 1994; Timmons, 2009). Obtaining a job that meets their aspirations seems to encourage respondents to complete their current studies, or even to pursue them at the college or university level.

Moreover, many of the respondents like to acquire new knowledge that will serve them in the long term, that is, for the duration of their academic and professional career. For them, this is a goal in itself: obtaining the diploma for which they study and accessing higher levels of education. This perspective is therefore a source of motivation.

> **This is a goal in itself: obtaining the diploma for which they study and accessing higher levels of education.**

Sports also play an important role in school perseverance for many of them. Indeed, being physically fit contributes to the success of their studies. Moreover, practising a team sport, within a sport-studies program or during extracurricular activities, motivated one of the respondents to pursue higher education. In this regard, Action Réussite (2013) considers that sport-study programs allow young people to persevere in their school careers, increase their motivation, create a sense of belonging and positively change their perception of school.

Finally, the presence of significant people allowed respondents to feel supported, encouraged and led them to pursue their education. For example, these people are teachers who, through their attitudes, their way of teaching and their availability, have played a significant role in the educational path of these young people. In other situations, professionals from the Essipit community offered them valuable advice and unconditional support. Parents and friends, with their attentive presence and continuous encouragement, have also been identified as sources of inspiration. These individuals have played a role of "resilience tutors", which means that they have adopted positive behaviours towards youths, such as encouragement, listening and help. They therefore contributed to their development (Anaut, 2006) by encouraging them to excel in their studies.

Protective factors

In addition to these reasons for remaining in school, various protective factors were identified in respondents' comments, whether they were personal, family, school or social protection factors. On the personal level, respondents consider that certain traits of their personality, lifestyle and personal values contribute to their ambition to obtain a qualifying degree. For example, having good social skills, good self-esteem, being able to assert oneself, and good physical health encourages them to continue their studies. In addition, not having paid employment while studying, having values related to academic success and perseverance, not consuming alcohol or drugs, and finally positive self-image as students are also among the personal protective factors observed by the respondents.

With respect to family protection factors, Essipit Indigenous youths believe that adequate cohesion and proper management of disagreements or conflicts within their families facilitate their continued education. Parents' commitment to their children's academic success is concretely translated into homework help, moral support, encouragement, healthy communication, establishing a routine and defining and respecting disciplinary rules. All these elements are factors that influence school retention and success.

As for academic protection factors, a positive experience of transitions between different levels of education, assistance received during acts of bullying, as well as support from school staff for the completion of the work were highlighted by the responders. Mechanisms for consultation between schools and professionals in the Essipit community, the offer of extracurricular activities and the presence of teachers with whom it is possible to develop positive and meaningful relationships are also among the protective factors mentioned by the students interviewed.

Finally, for the social protection factors, the youths stress the importance of quality relations maintained with the members of their entourage, particularly with friends attentive and available in case of need.

The positive perception that Indigenous students have of the social support they have received and the attendance of peers who wish to continue their education until they obtain a qualifying diploma are also elements that seem to positively influence their success and perseverance. At the Essipit community level, academic success is highly valued, and students have access to financial assistance to pursue their studies. This is a significant element, which may explain the high rate of perseverance among these young people.

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Conclusion

As this study shows, it is possible to address the issue of school dropout in a positive way, particularly by exploring, in communities with more encouraging levels of success, the factors fostering perseverance and reducing the desire to drop out of school. The comments made by the nine participants revealed many reasons and protective factors that foster perseverance at various levels of education, from secondary school to university.

Although this study is useful in reflecting on the conditions for success of First Nations students, the possibility of generalizing the results to all First Nations communities is rather limited. First, Essipit youths attend primary schools managed by the Quebec education system near their community, which can help reduce the cultural shock that they often experience when they leave their community to pursue high school, college or university studies (Lévesque & Polèse, 2015). Furthermore, the sample, because of its relatively small and homogeneous composition,

is not demographically representative. It should also be noted that these young people's mother tongue is French and not an Indigenous language, whereas for other First Nations youths, French is a second language. Finally, Essipit's socio-economic context is rather favourable, compared to that of other more disadvantaged communities.

It is important to continue research on the protective factors relating to academic success and retention among First Nations students, as each community has its own realities and challenges to address. Conducting in-depth studies in many of these communities would provide a more accurate picture of the different protective factors that promote academic perseverance and success. ■

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THE KICTERIMITISOWIN COMMITTEE:

Action Research to Support High School Retention[1]

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This text is dedicated to the memory of France Robertson, for having marked the Indigenous movement in Quebec.

Context

In a context of increasing urbanization and mobility among Indigenous people in Quebec, a growing number of Indigenous children attend Quebec public schools in urban areas (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2013). With a lower graduation rate, without the support needed to succeed, and struggling with difficulties that are neither identified nor addressed, many Indigenous students drop out of school, especially in upper secondary level (Statistics Canada, 2015).

There is a difficult educational pathway for First Nations people who have moved out of communities to settle in urban areas. Research shows that several factors influence academic perseverance and achievement of urban First Nations students: the lack of appreciation of Indigenous language and culture, the gap between urban and community schools, variable and unequal involvement of parents in the progress and academic success of their children, as well as the lack of qualified Indigenous staff (Blanchet-Cohen and Lainé, 2015). All of these factors pose significant challenges to the motivation, attendance, and retention of Indigenous students in school.

In Joliette, a city that is home to a growing number of Atikamekw people, educational success of young people is of particular concern. According to the Lanaudière Native Friendship Centre (Centre d'amitié autochtone de Lanaudière – CAAL), few young people complete their high-school diploma before the age of 18, with the majority experiencing repetitions in their schooling.

Schools often do not understand the needs of Indigenous students, who are oriented towards immigrant services, such as francization, and there are few services specifically designed for them. Yet, many writings attest to the importance of valuing culture for learning (Battiste, 2013, Crooks, Burleigh, Snowshoe, Lapp, Hughes and Sisco, 2015).

Faced with this situation, the CAAL, with the support of Concordia University and under the auspices of the DIALOG network, established an action-research project to support a continuous process of actions and reflections, engaging secondary school students as actors generating solutions for their success[1]. Below, we present the approach and activities of the Kicterimitisowin Committee (which means "pride" in the Atikamekw language), an experience that helps to highlight key elements of support for school perseverance among urban First Nations students.

Action research as a lever of change

The CAAL, like other Native Friendship Centres throughout Quebec, offers a program of support for education and plays an important role of liaison between youth, school and the family in urban areas (Blanchet-Cohen and Lainé, 2015). The objectives of the research partnership were to define, experiment and promote innovative initiatives to encourage the retention of First Nations youth. The methodology advocated for action research focused on collective reflection and the identification of actions with young participants that could contribute to improving their academic situation and their commitment in general. Thus, the activities organized within the framework of research are solutions considered by Indigenous youths to answer the problem of school disengagement which they experience.

Three elements characterize the approach used by the team:

1. **Taking into account the current and historical context in which young people are involved**

   We approached the project from an ecosystem point of view, that is to say by considering all the factors that influence the educational path of Indigenous students with, in the background, the historical aspects of the reality of Indigenous people in Quebec.

   Among these historical realities are the intergenerational impacts of residential schools where, for decades, education was used for cultural assimilation (Simpson, 2014). Thus, the development of Atikamekw students is influenced by their family reality, their school environment, the links they establish with the community and, more broadly, by the policies and programs that are intended for them.

   The ecosystem perspective also emphasizes that the strength of the links between these different spheres is critical in establishing quality support for targeted youth (Ma Rhea, 2015).

2. **Involving young people in research and activities**

   As a starting point, we wanted to involve young people in identifying challenges and solutions. Action research has been favoured as a method of stimulating the active participation of Indigenous students in defining problems and solving them as actors in their own learning and as stakeholders in their development.

   Our goal was to create a context of openness where young people would feel comfortable expressing their ideas and engaging in a process of change that directly affects them. Action research is also consistent with the rights-based approach, dissociating itself from deficit approaches that have dominated past practices and that place Indigenous people both as victims and passive recipients of services.

3. **The contribution of community mobilizationfor a school-family harmonization**

   First of all, the project focused on conducting activities inside and outside the school walls. This choice stems from the observation that the greater the incoherence and lack of communication between the family and school spheres, the more difficult the transition between home and school will be for the young ones and the more detrimental it will be to their academic success (Cherubini, 2014). This is also consistent with the ecosystem perspective, since First Nations students exist and navigate in a complex network of relationships and systems. This determines the significant contribution of the community environment in strengthening the links between First Nations families and the school. First Nations community-based organizations provide for outreach to families who may otherwise feel disengaged from the school with which they have no connection or even a hostile relationship (Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones, 2016).

Highlights of the Kicterimitisowin Committee

We present here elements that invite in-depth reflection to understand the stakes of school retention amongst Indigenous urban youth. These elements emerged from the activities and discussions held with some twenty Atikamekw young people aged 13 to 17, and with the school professionals who took part in the project from September 2016 to August 2017.

The importance of reinforcing identity pride to increase well-being at school

Of all the project's scope, it is the identity aspect that emerges most vividly from the discussions and activities we organized. For the majority of young people, the Kicterimitisowin Committee made it possible to express their cultural identity or to learn more about it. Thus, the transmission of Atikamekw culture was at the centre of the activities planned by the young participants.

Addressing culture and identity pride necessarily raises questions about what it means to be Atikamekw today. Apart from the normal phenomenon of seeking meaning and identity, which is common to the development of all adolescents, young Atikamekws in Joliette must navigate between the traditional elements of an ancestral culture and more contemporary elements of First Nations identity, which they themselves contribute to building. As a generation inscribed in modernity, they are both carriers and creators of culture. Having a space at school to allow cultural negotiation and to develop the modern expression of indigenousness seems essential to create an inclusive context, a prerequisite for school retention.

Without a culturally safe space at school, an essential element of inclusion is missing to make it a truly enjoyable learning environment.

Providing culturally safe spaces at school and in the city

The Kicterimitisowin Committee activities took place inside and outside the school, allowing to consider young people in a holistic approach, not limited to academic training only. At school, most of the activities chosen by the youths were aimed at promoting Atikamekw culture, reflecting the need for identity recognition and enhancement of young people by the school. Outside of school, youth gathered for longer activities, including community suppers at the CAAL, a one-day workshop on leadership and exploration of various modes of expression, or a weekend on the territory of the Manawan Reserve and another at the Camp Mariste.

In response to discrimination, isolation and shyness, these young people propose the creation of spaces within the school where it would be possible to gather and promote opportunities for discussion and intercultural encounter. Without a culturally safe space at school, an essential element of inclusion is missing to make it a truly enjoyable learning environment. Thus, the promotion of culture has

its place as a vector of retention and academic motivation, as it acts in an underlying way to reinforce young people's perception of both themselves (learning about their culture) and their environment (the school as a welcoming place, open on their culture).

Prospects for the future

Through the implementation of school and out-of-school activities, the CAAL was able to support young people by creating the necessary bridges between two primordial spheres of their development, that is, between school and community. The Kicterimitisowin project points to some winning elements to support the school perseverance of Indigenous urban youth. Here are a few:

Providing a voice to young people

The participatory approach in which young people are seen as actors in their own development is a winning approach since, considering their strengths and interests, it fosters motivation. The participants in action research play the role of experts of the issues concerning them. When it comes to young people, it is important to create areas of freedom so that they can make their voices heard and discover their strengths. One of the successes of the Kicterimitisowin project has been to offer such an area to young people, shedding light on promising avenues supporting Indigenous school perseverance, particularly highlighting the direct link between cultural enhancement in school and school retention. The process has allowed students to become aware of their potential as agents of change, it has also highlighted a major obstacle to perseverance, namely the lack of self-esteem and self-confidence. Recognizing this obstacle, we encouraged programming that promotes the development of self-esteem and self-confidence to build motivation upstream.

As part of this project, we have opted for a format focusing on one-time activities that can overcome this barrier and provide youths with a sense of rapid accomplishment that lasts over time.

Providing a place to culture

It is well known that the threefold mission of Quebec schools (to qualify, socialize and educate) is to create a living environment that is inclusive and open to diversity. Cultural enhancement appears to be an essential aspect for the creation of a climate of inclusion that could better promote the development of a sense of belonging of Indigenous youth within their learning spaces. A young person explains: "[Being proud of our culture] allows us to move along in our school progress, it allows me to improve myself in what I do in class". A school professional notes: "[…]

yes, there is a question of pride that develops more and more and if we are able … if they feel that they are listened to, heard and seen a little more, well I think they will have a desire to get involved a little more".

Strengthening the youth support network

The winning conditions for educational success stem not so much from a list of factors, but from the coherence of these factors and their convergence within strategies that are also developed jointly by all the parties involved (Lévesque, Polèse, de Juriew, Labrano, Turcotte and Chiasson, 2015, 204). Thus, the utility and reach of the Kicterimitisowin Committee have been manifested in the creation of collaborative links between two important spheres of youth development, the school sphere and the community sphere. The committee provided a context in which school and community actors could share, collaborate and even co-construct and adapt teaching to youth. Consultation and development of links, between the school and the wider community, have helped to strengthen the support networks that surround young people, adding coherence to their lives.

Towards a systemic transformation

This challenge has begun in Joliette and must continue. These collaborative relationships need to be renewed, but their effects will not be immediate or obvious to put into practice. Indeed, undoing the consequences of assimilative policies implemented in the past, in a perspective of reconstruction, cannot be done overnight. Mobilization, multiplication of sharing opportunities and the creation of relationships between the various actors surrounding young people are promising avenues for effectively supporting the perseverance of urban First Nations students. Thus, the central role of urban Indigenous community organizations, such as the Native Friendship Centres, would benefit to being exploited and developed, in collaboration with educational authorities, towards institutionalizing collaboration, in the best interests of young people and in a spirit of reconciliation. ◼

> **"Being proud of our culture allows us to move along in our school progress."**

NOTES

1   This article is a summary of the conference presentation and the report The Kicterimitisowin Committee to Support School Retention of Indigenous Youth in Joliette (2017).

2   This project was made possible thanks to a grant from DIALOG – *The research and knowledge network for Indigenous Peoples and the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec.*

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A POSITIVE MODELLING APPROACH IN WORKSHOPS TO FOSTER PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT FROM PRESCHOOL ONWARDS

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Since parental involvement is a key factor in school success and perseverance, its presence is essential in preschool.

This article presents an approach, piloted through parenting workshops, to inspire early childhood practitioners and to continue the discussion of parental involvement in our communities. The first step to stimulate this participation is obviously to meet the parents to better intervene with them.

Background

Several studies show that the involvement of parents in their child's school journey promotes not only his or her academic success, but also his or her sense of well-being, diligence, motivation and aspirations, while having a positive impact on the parents themselves and on the teachers (Larivée, 2012 ; Larivée, 2010 ; Deslandes, 2006 ; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2004 ; ministère de l'Éducation, 2005, 2004 ; Epstein, 2001 ; Saint-Laurent, Royer, Hébert, & Tardif, 1994).

Family literacy, for its part, aims to adequately raise parents' awareness to highlight their skills. According to the literature review on family literacy, these authors identify environmental and cultural factors as important to consider. The choice of material, among other things, must take account of the cultural capital of families.

From January 2016 to April 2017, during family literacy workshops aimed at promoting parental involvement, we noticed that parents were able to intervene more easily with their child after attending the workshops. A first workshop was held in Pakua Shipu, and, to verify the winning combination of images and interventions, the same workshop was resumed at Kanatamat School in the Matimekush/Lac-John community with the same success: an 85% collaboration rate from parents and involvement of all participants in the workshop. Then, in 2017, as part of the Uipat Tutetau/Agir Tôt activities, a reading workshop was offered to Innu parents in the Pakua Shipu community using video clips from Avenir d'enfants[1]. The parents' positive response during this workshop allowed us to see

the power of an image when we offered this type of workshop to parents accompanied by their child. Chances are that seeing Innu parents reading in a video capsule at the beginning of the workshop, but also hearing the light tone and the humorous interventions, may have contributed to the interest and to the involvement of parents.

During the summer of 2017, it was decided to produce five new capsules, featuring Innu parents and dealing with various topics relating to parental involvement. The need to develop this original intervention approach through new workshops (see Table 1) became apparent. Since the presentation made on the subject during the 3rd edition of the Convention on Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples[2] in October 2017, the teaching guide including the description of the workshops has been refined and, gradually, we proposed a positive modelling approach to further involve the parents of our communities and to facilitate the work of early childhood workers.

This approach is defined as follows:

> **The positive modelling approach** *aims to propose an intervention to model a desirable behaviour by focusing on the power of an image, a positive vision making possible the action desired by these individuals put into context during a concrete activity.*[3]

Following the principles issued by Beauregard et al. (2011) in the review of scientific literature on family and community literacy, which highlighted, among other things, the importance of developing a parent's sense of competence, we believe that parents of at-risk students need positive interventions and support following the reflection initiated by the video images, hence the design of parenting workshops related to video capsules. They need to project themselves, to visualize

themselves in action in order to be challenged (ministère de l'Éducation, 2004 and 2005).

Objectives of the parental involvement workshops

The goal of the Uipat Tutetau/Agir Tôt Parenting Workshops is to **encourage the parents to get involve so that they feel confident and competent in their parenting role**.

Three specific objectives emerge in the workshops:

- **Discuss**, from the proposed images, on themes and concrete ways to experience them.

- **Reflect** on the images, themes and their importance.

- **Experience** a concrete and positive activity with their child, linked to the images conveyed and to each of the themes.

Themes selected for the workshops

Among the first themes selected, we drew on our observations of the environment and the comments of teachers in our communities. The five major recurring themes for helping the child attending school were related to breakfast, sleep, physical activity, the impact of technology, and the purpose of education. If parents support their child on these areas, we should see an improvement in success, especially for at-risk students.

Here is a table presenting the five parenting workshops that we propose in this guide, the short film and their objectives:

Title of the workshop	Short film	Objective of the workshop
Au clair de la lune… SOS dodo les enfants!	UNIU PISHIM Le soleil devant	Discuss and reflect on ways to improve children's sleep as the family's. Experience a positive activity at school, during the evening with the children.
Je craque pour toi, mon coco!	PETAPAN Le petit jour	Discuss and reflect with the parents about the awakening of their household. Experience having breakfast at school with the children.
T'es pas *game*!	KA METUENANUT La joute	Discuss and reflect on way to foster physical participation of children. Experience a fun physical activity at school, with the children.
Rallye-toi à moi!	NETE ISHPIMIT Le sommet	Discuss and reflect on the future of children, the purpose of school and the support they can provide to children in fulfilling their dreams. Have a positive experience with your children as part of an outdoor group activity.
3,2,1… virage virtuel	ASHU KA UAUITSHIUET En appui	Discuss and think about the different constructive ways to use technology and social media in children's daily lives. Experience an activity with technology at school.

Parental involvement workshop development in three phases

The parenting workshops must be simple to motivate the parents to participate. Three phases are required to stimulate parental involvement: identification with peers, parents in action, and modelling and integration of desired behaviours.

1) Stimulation of peer identification

The idea is to offer a meaningful image for First Nations and the desired involvement of parents with their child. Thus, the short video capsules serve as a simulation for the parental involvement workshops. They are important for achieving the desired participation and are therefore presented at the beginning of the workshops.

The images of Innu parents are supported by a text, read in Innu language, proposing a model of intervention and a reflection related to the theme. Since audio is in the Innu language, subtitling in French enables other parents and francophones from other nations to understand the message conveyed. Everyone must feel included and understood.

Is it possible to think that a video capsule would be used to model a desirable behaviour in an individual? According to Deslandes and Bertrand (2004), in some individuals, the visualization of behaviour perceived in a peer can lead to inner reflection and probably change. Seeing other parents of the same culture and generation act enhances the incentive to do the same thing. Because it is often different for individuals experiencing difficulties, or having experienced difficulties related to school or parental support (Deslandes & Royer, 1994), it is important that the parent can, not only "visualize" himself or herself in action, to propose a concrete activity during the workshop, and thus, to develop his or her competence as a parent, but also to have a positive experience as part of his or her role as a parent (Gervais, 1995).

2) Parents in action

The suggested activities on the workshop sheet can be simple. However, they must allow parents to have with their child a positive experience related to the theme–which they may not do at home. In doing so, parents will build self-confidence, which will allow them to become more involved as soon as they are home.

In order to engage them, we offer two to three activities per workshop. The parents watch a short film suggesting concrete actions: already, the fact of discussing it, of thinking about it, of seeing and hearing it, sets them in action. Then, they are offered a concrete activity to do with their child, related to the theme.

In our literacy workshop, for example, we first could see images of parents of different ages (fathers, mothers, grandparents, etc.) reading outside, in the park or at home, in other words, in various contexts. Then, books (mainly children's books) were placed on tables and, after viewing the video, the parents were invited to get up and participate in the proposed reading. At the Pakuashipi Literacy Workshop, a father, still dressed in his snowsuit and apparently wanting to leave early, took the time to undress and read a book to his three-year-old daughter. He then confessed to having loved reading a story to his child, which he rarely did at home, believing that she was too young.

3) Modelling and integration of desired behaviours

The activity always ends with a discussion, around a snack. This feedback on the activity allows parents to share resources and strategies and to be open to new opportunities to integrate the concepts underlying the intervention (Larivée, 2012). Peer modelling is then encouraged. The moment is also opportune, for example, to offer readings or listen to the parents who think they have a problem, etc.

On at least two occasions during the proposed workshops, parents came to tell us that they had noticed a problem with their child and they were seeking a solution. In one case, the child lacked motivation for reading, while in the other case the child had difficulty reading. Since the discussion was open at the end of the workshop, participants were able to express that they had experienced similar situations and had consulted their child's teacher, who has been of great help in giving them tips for reading.

At the end of the workshop, it is important to take the time to thank the participants and take a picture as a souvenir. This allows parents present to highlight their participation and contribution to the well-being of their child.

To conclude

A parent experiencing problems will certainly not want to be dictated a course of action to adopt with his or her child. In a positive modelling approach spirit, the intervention begins as soon as the workshop is promoted to parents.

Generally, the parents involved will come to all activities; however, it must always be kept in mind that the parents to be reached are the ones who are experiencing difficulties. From this perspective, the tone and title of the workshop should not include a prescription or judgment that would cause the parent of an at-risk student to flee. On the contrary, the workshops should make parents want to attend. The images and the model proposed are just as important, hence the concern to offer quality workshops to parents in the communities. Parental workshops are being implemented in the seven communities served by the Tshakapesh Institute. Let's hope they inspire a lot of parents and practitioners for years to come.

To act early with children, it is necessary to continue to work with parents. It is necessary to propose concrete actions in the communities, because, as the old saying goes: prevention is better than cure! ■

Material accessible

The video capsules and PDF files of these workshops are available on the Tshakapesh Institute website under the *Parental Involvement* tab at the following address: www.tshakapesh.ca. Each capsule lasts between two and four minutes.

NOTES

1   Video capsules produced on the Uashat Mak Mani-Utenam community as part of the Avenir d'enfants Project, in collaboration with the FNQLHSSC, Avenir d'enfants, INNU TAKUAIKAN UASHAT MAK MANI-UTENAM, Uauitshitun santé et services sociaux and the AUASSIS early childhood Centre, published in January 2017. Online at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uKhoq0iDRk

2   Workshop to present the video capsules for parental involvement Convention on Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples, in October 10-12, 2017–Hilton Québec.

3   Definition that I propose as an educational consultant (Éducaro inc.) as part of my role as Agir Tôt counselor for the parents of communities served by the Tshakapesh Institute.

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AN ACTION RESEARCH TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS WORKING IN INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTS
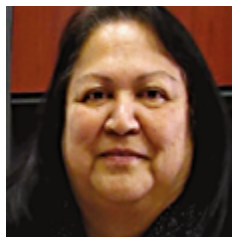
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Julie Mowatt, Academic Advisor - École Migwan
Marguerite Mowatt, Retired Teacher

Introduction and Background

In April 2017, a book fair was organized in an elementary school in Abitibi-Témiscamingue as part of an action research entitled *Soutenir le développement professionnel d'enseignantes du primaire pour améliorer les pratiques d'enseignement et d'évaluation de la lecture et de l'écriture en contexte autochtone, à l'ère des technologies de l'information et de la communication (TIC)[1]*. The event–a huge success!–has generated such enthusiasm for reading in the school that it will be renewed in October 2018. In this article, we present the background and the problematic at the origin of the action research and we identify the conditions of its successful implementation, focusing on the methodological framework supporting this project.

Let us first mention that the adventure began in 2012, when Professor Yvonne da Silveira, from Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT), obtained a grant from the Fonds de recherche québécois sur la société et la culture (FRQSC) to conduct an action research in two Indigenous communities (Da Silveira, Maheux, Blaser, Paul, Marca Vadan, & Dumas, 2015; Blaser, Maheux, Kistabish, & da Silveira, 2016), one of which is Pikogan, near Amos. Four women from the community, education professionals, participated in this first action research: Julie Mowatt, Pedagogical Advisor, Marguerite Mowatt, a retired teacher, and two teachers from the school. Focusing on writing, Ms. da Silveira's action research made it possible to experiment different models of accompaniment for teachers in the implementation of new writing practices in the classroom. In the end, the project revealed new training needs clearly expressed by school teachers, thus arousing interest in conducting a second action research, this time in the community of Pikogan only, and in collaboration with a renewed Research Team, under the responsibility of Christiane Blaser, Université de Sherbrooke. Focusing on the professional development of teachers in reading, writing and reading and writing assessment, the

second project[2] aims, on the one hand, to offer customized training sessions to the ten or so teachers of école Migwan and, on the other hand, to equip all classrooms–from Kindergarten to Grade 6–with "literature corners", pleasantly furnished spaces filled with numerous books and stationery material available for the school's 110 or so students.

The development of literacy - the ability to use writing (reading and writing) to be at ease in contemporary society - is at the heart of action research since, in a literate society, writing is the mainstay of learning in all school subjects and is also a determining factor in the pursuit of education. Even though, over the past 40 years, Indigenous educational success and perseverance have improved, the number of First Nations people living in Quebec who have no certificate, diploma or degree still stands at 46.3% compared to 24.8% among non-Indigenous population (MELS, 2009). This means that it is important to act in this environment, especially in elementary school.

The second project offers customized training sessions to the ten or so teachers of école Migwan.

The course of the action research

To understand how the project unfolds and possibly draw inspiration from it in another context, it is important to describe the three instances that constitute the methodological framework of the action research: the Extended Collective, the Select Committee, and the Research Team. Borrowed from the "clinique du travail[3]" (Clôt, 1999), this structure makes it possible to maintain a close collaboration between the practice environment and the researchers. Below, we present the composition of each of these committees, their respective mandates and the main achievements made in each instance.

- **The Extended Collective** brings together the school's teaching staff (a dozen individuals) and members of the Research Team. In all, this group is composed of about twenty people. It meets once a year, just before the beginning of the school year, towards the end of August. Since the action

research began in the spring of 2016, the Extended Collective has met twice so far (August 2016 and August 2017)[4]. The extended group's mandate is to discuss the training needs for the coming year with the main actors, namely the school's teachers, in the action research framework, i.e. teaching and the evaluation of reading and writing. It is during the Extended Collective's first meeting that it was decided that the first year of activities of action research would be devoted to reading, and one of the ways suggested to promote it and stimulate students' taste for reading was to organize a book fair at school.

- **The Select Committee** comprises five to seven people: the pedagogical advisor, two of the school's teachers, the head of research, one or two other members of the Research Team, chosen according to the training needs expressed, and a research assistant. Within this committee, it is decided when and how to respond to the needs expressed in the Extended Collective, and that is where the means are deployed to achieve it. The Select Committee is also the group where the part of the research budget, reserved for the purchase of equipment and furniture for literature corners, is administered[5]. It meets about once a month during the school year, and even more if needed. Meetings are held most of the time after the last class period, from 3:40 p.m. to approximately 4:45 p.m.

During the 2016–2017 school year, the Select Committee organized two training sessions on reading. The first, in October 2016, aimed to give teachers the choice of literary works for preschool and elementary school; the second, in April 2017, was to train teachers in animating and teaching of reading/appreciation again in preschool and elementary school. Note that this second training also targeted the parents of students in the community since a workshop was offered to them in the evening - to which a dozen parents participated. The book fair, organized by members of the Select Committee and a subgroup of school teachers, was held in the école Migwan gymnasium on April 28, 2017 (Blaser & Lépine, 2017). It was the driving force and culmination of the first year of the action research. During the 2017–2018 school year, training activities continued, focusing this time on reading assessment and writing. It should be noted that teachers from another local Indigenous school joined the teachers from école Migwan for the last courses, this after the school principal heard about the April 2017 Book Fair. This school should also be participating in the next book fair.

- **The Research Team** meets approximately every two months; it is the group that ensures the course of the action

research from a scientific point of view. The team is composed of seven members: five researchers, the pedagogical advisor and one Elder from the Pikogan community. The role of this team is to ensure that research data are collected regularly to document the action research process and to analyze the effects of training and other activities on the professional development of teachers, with a view to re-injecting some of these data into collective reflection. Thus, until now, two discussion circles and two series of interviews provide the main research data. In this context, the discussion circles offer a space for teachers to talk about the impact of action research in their classroom, both on their teaching and didactic practices, and also on students. In this project, the focus in on the professional development of teachers and that we are not trying to measure the direct effects of action research on students.

During the discussion circles, however, teachers talk about what they observe in their classrooms. The Research Team, based on Guskey's (2002) model, believes that by seeing changes in their students' behaviour, teachers will be even more motivated to continue their efforts to improve or even change their teaching practices, which should enhance the positive effect on students. It should be noted that the discussion circles last about an hour, are held by videoconference and are recorded.

Semi-structured interviews, another data collection tool, were conducted with the teachers in March 2017 and June 2017, before and after the book fair. The first series of interviews aimed first at getting to know the teachers better professionally. How do they conceive evaluation, teaching and literacy development (reading and writing)? What is their relationship to writing? What writing teaching practices do they favour? What uses do they make of technology in their teaching?

The second series of interviews focused on the first impacts of the book fair, as observed by the teachers in the classrooms, as well as the effects of the two training sessions offered during 2016–2017.

According to the teachers, the students really appreciate the spaces they use regularly. Located in the classroom or, in one case, near to and visible from the classroom, the literature corners are all different and nicely organized.

Some results

While we are in the second year of action research activities, we can confirm that this project is bearing fruit. Data from the interviews and discussion circles, although still in process, already reveal that teachers reinvest in their classroom, to varying degrees, what they learn during the training. Above all, each classroom now has its own literature corner equipped with many books (it still needs to be equipped with stationery material useful for writing situations, to be done in the coming months). According to the teachers, the students really appreciate the spaces they use regularly. Located in the classroom or, in one case, near to and visible from the classroom, the literature corners are all different and nicely organized. It was the teachers who, considering the needs, age and tastes of their students, chose the furniture and accessories for their space.

The project has made it possible to renovate existing facilities or created new ones. In all cases, these areas provide a variety of seating and storage space for books (shelves, boxes, bookcases, display racks, etc.) purchased from local businesses or custom-made by a person from the community. Nothing complicated or sophisticated, but the invitation to read is clear, thanks to the variety of books, some of which were chosen by the students themselves during the first book fair (Blaser & Lépine, 2017). In this regard, it is interesting to report the teachers' surprise at the selection of some students who chose books far beyond their level of reading skills, but who nevertheless read them. Finally, it should be noted that the renewal of the books in each classroom is ensured, during the year, by the teachers who still have an equipment budget and, above all, by the second book fair scheduled for October 2018. On this occasion, each student will again be able to choose two books, one for the classroom and the other for home. Although the action research ends in 2019, steps are underway to ensure the sustainability of the book fair beyond the grant period.

In Conclusion

The action research presented in this article confirms the importance of bringing books as close as possible to students in order to develop the pleasure of reading - a pleasure so essential to the development of reading skills. It is also a fine example of collaboration between an Indigenous school community and the educational research community.

So what are the factors that contribute to the success of this project? First, the action research is based on the bonds of trust that have developed over the last six years between, on the one hand, the management and staff members of école Pikogan and, on the other hand, the researchers. It should be noted that in the first project, four people from the school participated in the action research, including the pedagogical adviso*r*[6], which made it possible to establish a strong partnership and ensure continuity between the two projects. Then, this project was conceived from the beginning in consultation with the school and based on the needs expressed by the school environment. Feeling challenged, the teachers who did not participate in the first project all agreed to participate in the second action research, and they devote themselves to it with great constancy and interest. Finally, the complementarity within the Research Team - school environment, university environment; cultural origin; scientific expertise - also contributes to the success of this project. ■

Each classroom now has its own literature corner equipped with many books.
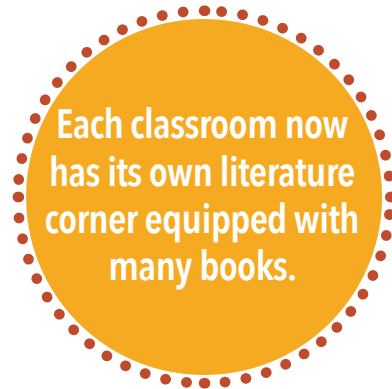
NOTES

1   "Supporting the Professional Development of Elementary School Teachers to Improve the Teaching and Assessment of Reading and Writing in an Indigenous context, in the Era of Information and Communication Technologies–ICT (free translation)

2   Also funded by the FRQSC, to which we are very grateful, the new team is composed of the following people: Christiane Blaser, Martin Lépine, Isabelle Nizet and Frédéric Saussez, Professors at Université de Sherbrooke; Yvonne da Silveira and Glorya Pellerin, Professors at Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue; Denis Simard, Professor at Université Laval; and Jan-Sébastien Dion, Research Professional.

3   Work clinic (free translation)

4   Some of the members of the Research Team attend the meeting via videoconference.

5   45,000 $ of the 175,000 $ allocated by the FRQSC for the action research.

6   The role of pedagogical advisor is particularly important since it is this person who, locally, motivates the group and orchestrates many tasks related to action research, such as organizing training sessions and meetings, planning data collection activities and more.

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF INUIT YOUTH AND COMMUNITY-DRIVEN INFORMAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS TO LIFE-LONG LEARNING AND PERSEVERANCE[1]

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Quality Inuit youth and community-driven informal educational programs are a crucial part of life-long learning (even though not part of the formal system of education as is), making available educational opportunities deeply grounded in Inuit ways. The process of *inunnguiniq* – the making of a human being, is foundational to life learning. Culturally anchored programs essentially recreate the kind of "informal, intergenerational and situated learning characteristic of traditional knowledge transmission" (Tulloch et al., 2012, p. 1) that was supported naturally, within and among families, in Inuit cultural practice (Karetak, Tester & Tagalik, 2017; Tagalik, 2012b). This project explores the contributions of Inuit youth and community-driven informal education to life-long learning and its implications for youth perseverance. The project is deeply grounded in what Inuit have always known to be true or Inuit Qaujima-jatuqangit (IQ). It also builds on previous work by the Canadian Council of Learning (2009) on perseverance as understood and defined in collaboration with Inuit.

Three Inuit Youth and Community-Driven Informal Educational Programs

The three programs we describe are situated in Arviat, the southernmost community of continental Nunavut, located on the western Hudson Bay coast in the Kivalliq administrative Region. Arviat, the second largest community in Nunavut, has great strength in Inuit culture and language. Our description of its programs emerged from an analysis

of seven interviews of the directors of these programs, and three interviews of youth, selected from a total of twenty-four interviews conducted between 2013 and 2017.

Arviat Film Society (AFS)

The Arviat Film Society (AFS) has been up and running prior to 2010, but at that point turned to youth, given the identified need by the community to provide training and support to young Arviarmiut and have them tell their own stories through film. One key goal of the society is to run a community TV station (channel 19). Youth participants are trained in video production and in recording events or stories of interest to them and their community. The program offers youth a safe space to "*tell their stories… and to define their own sense of identity, from their own perspectives, rather than have other people do it [for them]*." AFS was created "*to empower young people to be able to tell their stories more*" (Bell, Interview). AFS "*is a vehicle for the things that they (youth) want to be doing; they lead the projects*" while the adults are there "*to make sure the youth have everything they need*" (Bell & Billard, informal conversation), taking on the role as facilitators and mentors. AFS is an excellent example of "*how you're using your spaces and places that your communities have, your environment and resources, to really drive what young people want to do*" (Bell, Interview). Most important, AFS is committed to "*facilitating [and making visible] opportunities*" while responding to community needs. The program is not about "*creating opportunities*" per se, but rather about *making opportunities visible*, and thereby facilitating and mediating youths' involvement in these opportunities (Figure 1). It has led to the involvement of youth in many participatory research projects that came to town such as the *Nanisiniq* Project. Youth "*use their skills and apply those to support other projects coming in.*" The program is accessible to adolescents and young adults in the community and operates with a cohort of well-trained older youth who can provide mentorship to new members, in a sibling-type relationship of sharing and teaching as promoted in *inunnguiniq*. The society meets weekly in the evenings and involves from 5 up to 25 participants per evening.

Young Hunters Program (YHP)

The Arviat Wellness Centre (AWC; now Aqqiumavvik Society) was conducting research around food security and particularly the use of country food. The data pointed to a concern that children (6-12 year olds), consume little country food, leaving them with a significantly deficient diet. In addition, the community wanted youth to become familiar again with traditional hunting practices. In response, the AWC designed a program to engage youth in the hunting of small game with the expectation that families would eat what was harvested. Going out on the land is important to youth and community well-being, as the director of the program

> **Some challenges remain to make programs like these pertinent.**

notes, "*the land will renew you and rejuvenate you, and you'll be able to start to think clearly and work through whatever problem you are going through*" (Baker, Interview). The Young Hunters Program was established in 2013 for youth ranging in age from 8 to 20 (Figure 2). The eight-week program was designed by community elders and skilled young adults who act as instructors in the program. It consists of "*class time*" -- "*sitting down with elders who teach values through storytelling, drawing, or by showing them how to do certain things like setting a fox trap.*" During shop time, they learn "*how to make different tools*" like "*a slingshot, an ulu, or an ice jigger*", and then there are land trips, "*so they are taking what they've learned from the elders, the tools that they've made, and go on the land and actually hunt for different animals*" (Baker, Interview).

The content of the program is adjusted to the age group: the younger children will hunt small animals and go on the land for daytrips, while older students will sometimes stay on the land several nights and hunt larger animals. All participants are taught the same cultural values and expectations. The goal is to "*train these young people in the values of what it means to be a hunter and provider for your community.*" The director said, "*let's get those kids out there, to learn how to use slingshots or whatever to harvest and bring country food into the home.*"

The program has been successful in "*keep[ing] the traditions alive*" (Tattuinee, Interview) such as making and practising with the slingshot "*used for ptarmigans*" (Tattuinee, Interview), and learning about the environment. As mentioned by a participant "*when we were mapping, an elder was with us, naming all the land names and teaching us which rivers not to cross, which way not to go… he taught us lots on the land*" (Tattuinee, Interview). Making traditional tools implies bringing experts to the program to guide the building of a qamutik (Figure 2), or the making of an ulu, "*they teach the youth how to properly make tools.*" Through these activities, language is also kept "*alive*" even though in some cases "*kids know more Inuktitut then us!*" (Tattuinee, Interview). While the program led to some improved level of food security, the more important outcome is the development of "*the inner person*" of youth over time, cultural renewal, and learning to contribute to the common good. In the program

evaluation, indicators of positive cultural identity, happiness and sense of purpose were most highly articulated. Their responses to the evaluation clearly show strong improvements in mental health for the child. *"Those are the things that build the inner person, that enable somebody to become a good person, living a good life, who's able to contribute to improving the common good"* (Tagalik, Interview). These cultural values continue to drive the program while food security has become a secondary outcome.

Youth Environmental Monitoring Program (YEMP)

The Youth Environmental Monitoring Program was developed in response to community concerns about climate change, food security, and the health of the land and wildlife. In 2012, the Arviat Wellness Centre, through surveys, identified a need to understand climate changes evident in the community and to prepare for impacts of those changes, especially in relation to food security. Monitoring local wildlife populations would ensure a sustainable harvesting culture. AWC was also interested to taking advantage of warming and lengthening seasons to consider growing food locally. Additional concerns were about the health or potential contamination of wildlife. In 2014, the Arviat Wellness Centre (AWC) collaborated with ARCTIConnexion (a not-for-profit organization committed to indigenous youth empowerment and capacity building), to develop activities along these lines. It led to the environmental monitoring program which involved youth becoming trained by partner researchers and then assuming duties for collecting data with respect to climate change. For example, under guidance by ARCTIConnexion, *"the collecting and looking at fish samples"* helped to monitor water quality, impacts on creeks and streams, and changes to the health of fish. In collaboration with the Young Hunters Program and elders, youth also participated in traditional hunting practices and then analysis of the health of their prey. Preliminary data analysis suggests that animals are in good health while, however, some fish do show elevated levels of mercury.

Since climate change has altered local temperatures and the growing season, AWC was interested in studying the viability of growing vegetables locally. The building of a local research greenhouse took place in 2014 (Figure 3). It allowed youth to test various types of soil and fertilizer, monitor plant growth, and ultimately share crops with the community. A pilot-project on hydroponic plant gardens was added enabling some families to grow year-round. The centrally located greenhouse meant *"everybody walking by would kind of want to see it, and they were so amazed that it was so green and everything was growing so well, and when we told them this is soil from Arviat, they're kind of amazed"* (Lindell, Interview). In the project, *"everybody was learning as we go"*. It was like *"learning during our projects, our home-grown research projects, rather than outsiders' research projects"* (Lindell, Interview). The project also allowed youth to engage with elders finding out about edible local plants, such as the wild eatable blueberry "aqpik" or ripe swamp blackberries, crowberry, and Labrador tea. Youth worked with southern researchers to measure

The programs are about *inunnguiniq* (becoming capable), grounded in a strength-based approach, and guided by recognition that strengths *"have sustained Inuit through the many challenges to their cultural beliefs brought through contact, colonization and policies of forced relocation and assimilation"* (Tagalik, Interview; Tagalik, 2012a).

growth rates and report back to elders about the availability of plants. Youth also received training for and researched water quality (chemical and microbial conditions) and quantity (water flow and levels) in the nearby traditional water sources still frequently used by local residents. Other projects entailed the study of permafrost and the quality of ice.

Overall, the program was about teaching youth to *"become a keen observer and able to report back what you observe… trying to make meaning of what you're seeing, monitoring, collecting the data, and being able to analyze it over a period of time"* (Tagalik, Interview). That way, informed collective decisions can be made about the environment, while youth could develop the confidence needed *"to take the next step forward down their own path"* given their involvement in the program (Tagalik, Interview).

Discussion

Moving Towards an IQ (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit) Grounded Understanding of Perseverance and Life-Long Learning

These three Inuit governed informal educational programs build on the premise *"pay attention to what young people can accomplish when you give them a chance"* (Bell, Interview). The programs are about facilitating their involvement in local opportunities and having them *"move with opportunities"* as Inuit always did (Bell, Interview). The programs are about *inunnguiniq* (becoming capable)*,* grounded in a strength-based approach, and guided by recognition that strengths *"have sustained Inuit through the many challenges to their cultural beliefs brought through contact, colonization and policies of forced relocation and assimilation"* (Tagalik, Interview; Tagalik, 2012a). Building on strengths implies the need to *"revitalize"* practices by *"train[ing] young people in the values*

of what it means to be a hunter and provider for your community", as in the YHP (Tagalik, Interview), or have them *"become keen observers of climate change"* and their land, as encouraged in YHP and YEMP. It is about a focus on "a child's path" which is culturally set, so the child moves among learning opportunities, *"leading a child from birth to adulthood by showing and teaching them to be a better person in their everyday lives: to have good relationships with others and good attitudes in every situation"* (Karetak et al., 2017, p. 69). It entails the development of *inuusiq* (knowledge of life and living) and *isuma* (wisdom), resulting in the becoming of *innumarik* (a human being or able person who can act with wisdom).

At the same time, some challenges remain to make programs like these pertinent. Leaders are needed in the communities who can take on the task to share with others and devote time to the training of youth. These leaders and carriers of IQ (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit) are able to support and guide youth, but youth participation and commitment are also needed. Long-term financial support is needed as well as infrastructure and spaces adapted to the needs of the programs. Continued renewal and recruitment efforts have to be pursued as well to ensure the success and longevity of these programs over time.

Conclusion

Inuit youth find themselves *"stuck between two cultures, two times, two worlds, two languages, and torn in both directions"* (Billard, Interview). The programs we reviewed were driven by a holistic vision of education where *"anything and everything is interrelated"* (Karetak, informal conversation), including Inuit and Western ways of knowing. It is learning that emerges from family, community, land, and school, collaboratively working as a system, offering opportunities to youth so they *"can meet the goals they set for themselves"* (Tagalik, Interview). Hence, we tried to capture how Inuit ways of being and becoming should drive life-long learning and why a serious commitment to pass on language, culture and lived experiences leads to the *"making a human being who will be able to help others with a good heart"* (Karetak et al., 2017, p. 112). ◼

NOTES

1   Research project, *A Collaborative Research Project with Inuit Youth, Families and their Communities about Informal Educational Practices, Community Driven Science Research and Life-Long Learning with Important Implications for Inuit Education and Perseverance*, Programme de recherche sur la persévérance et la réussite scolaires, FRQSC 2016-2020.

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PART 4

SPECIAL REPORTS

THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM IN

PROTECTION AND EXPLOITATION OF WILDLIFE TERRITORIES– FIRST NATIONS COMPONENT:

When Structures Adapt to Culture to Offer a Customized Training

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Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

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In this report, we are proud to present an innovative project developed with a desire to serve the interests of First Nations in consideration of their cultural and territorial concerns. The vocational training program is called, *Protection et exploitation de territoires fauniques (PETF), within which a First Nations component has been developed in response to the needs of the Innu Nation.* Unique in Quebec, this initiative now provides Indigenous students with an opportunity to experience training that is firmly grounded in their territory and culture. Offered at the Centre régional d'éducation des adultes (CRÉA) of Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, in collaboration with the Centre de formation professionnelle (CFP) du Fjord, this 1320-hour program leads to the issuance of a diploma recognized by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES). In summer 2018, 15 students from five Innu communities received their diploma of vocational studies (DEP code 5179) issued by the Commission scolaire des Rives-du-Saguenay (CSRS). This large-scale project is the result of a sustained collaboration involving many organizations, all united in the same cause: to take into consideration Indigenous issues related to the training of workers in wildlife areas. In all respects, it is an example of innovation leading to tangible accomplishments.

The report, punctuated with the Innu culture's typical humour, gathered around the table collaborators inspired by an obvious complicity which should be presented here. Involved since the very beginning, Dominic Simard, an international and First Nations development officer of the CSRS, helped to organize this meeting. The presence of the CFP du Fjord Director, Gilbert Paiement, and Denis Dionne, Director of Uashat mak Mani-Utenam's CRÉA, testified to the involvement of the management staff of the two educational institutions concerned. We were also honoured by the presence of Hermel Bégin, Member of the Mashteuiatsh community and Liaison Officer at the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission (FNHRDCQ). As an expert in Indigenous content, he coordinated the CRÉA's vocational training for the first cohort of Innu students who experienced the adventure in 2017–2018. Two teachers involved in the project, Marc-André Racine and Caroline Huot, were able to share their field experience with students whose representative, Jonathan Moreau-Tremblay, enrich the meeting with his testimony. The participants also wanted to recognize the contribution of Julie Rock who, according to them, is at the origin of the project. Former Director of CRÉA and originating from Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, Julie Rock is said to have set

the first guidelines for the project and facilitated the participation of key players in its implementation. The contribution of the Tshakapesh Institute and its instructors, such as Alfred Mackenzie, Denis Vollant, Évelyne Saint-Onge and Kathleen André, to name a few, was also highlighted. The expertise, the sensitivity, but above all the generosity of the involved actors are guarantees of the success of this project, which contributes to the Innu nation's self-affirmation. The following paragraphs present, through the comments of the participants who took part in the report, a background of the project, the objectives and specificities of the PETF Training Program–First Nations Component as well as its future perspectives.

FROM IDEATION TO CREATION

When we invited the participants to explain the reasons that inspired the project, Dominic Simard took the time to situate its emergence context:

> Previously, a few Innu students would follow a similar training in one of the six centres offering it in Quebec, more specifically in La Baie, Saguenay. We noticed that, to complete the program, they had to leave their families behind and uproot themselves from their land, which does not correspond at all to their values or the Indigenous education model. This rang a bell; training such as this in their environment could be beneficial for communities.

At the basis of the PETF Program–First Nations Component is an extension of the Nutshimiu Atusseun Project, which was created in the '90s. Meaning in Innu language "working in the forest", this program aimed to develop the traditional knowledge and skills learned and practised on the ancestral Nitassinan territory. Established by Société de développement économique Uashat mak Mani-Utenam (SDEUM), this project had received financial support from Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC).

With the aim of providing Innu students with up-to-date training adapted to the labour market in wildlife areas, the mission and values of the Nutshimiu Atusseun project have been incorporated into the Program of Vocational Studies. "There was an obvious complementarity between the two projects; we therefore had the idea of combining them" (Julie Rock).

AN ALL-OUT MOBILIZATION

According to Dominic Simard, the contribution of Uashat mak Mani-Utenam's CREA Director Julie Rock from September 2015 to June 2017 was instrumental in developing the program: "She contributed to her ideation, ensured a transfer of values and guided us in the construction of a training reflecting the Innu nation". Even today, Ms. Rock remains committed to the project: "I have always sought to defend the interests of First Nations by ensuring that the services put in place correspond to our realities. This strategic position in program direction allowed me to do so". Now Director of Services sociaux Atikamekw Onikam de La Tuque, this manager who specializes in help relations, shares her thoughts with us: now, we are setting up our own services, within our communities, which correspond much better to who we are. It demands great adaptability from all our partners."

In the fall of 2015, the arrival of Hermel Bégin, who will become the coordinator of the PETF Program–First Nations Component at Uashat mak Mani-Utenam's CRÉA, helped to make the project a reality by "providing the bond of trust with the communities (Dominic Simard). For Hermel Bégin, such a project is an opportunity for nations to gain more autonomy in education: "We must inhabit our territory if we want it to be protected." In order to assess the needs and interests of the community, Dominic Simard and Hermel Bégin first submitted the idea of the PETF Program–First Nations Component to the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission (FNHRDCQ) before undertaking a tour of the Innu communities of Côte-Nord, which allowed them to validate the relevance of offering such training. From there, collaborators from various Indigenous and government organizations were called upon to create a focus group to develop the program. The partnership between CFP du Fjord and CRÉA was enhanced by the addition of many contributors. Thus, the MEES, Emploi-Québec, the Société de développement économique de Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, the Société du Plan Nord (Governement du Quebec, 2015), Innu Takuaikan Uashat Mak Mani-Utenam (ITUM), the Centre de service urbain of Sept-Îles and the First Nations local commissions of Essipit, of Pessamit, of Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, of Ekuanitshit and Unamen Shipu, and the Service aux entreprises (SAE) of CSRS have all been involved as financial partners. « We focused on job creation, which ensured the financial support of the Plan Nord and of Emploi Québec » (Hermel Bégin). Nearly $900,000 was needed to start the project.

A PROGRAM REFLECTING INNU CULTURE

The PETF Program–First Nations Component presents common teaching sequences and skills with a traditional value. On the 48 weeks totaling 1320 hours of training, of which 120 spent on internships, "30% of the Program's content is dedicated to Innu Nation cultural and territorial practices" (Denis Dionne). The Indigenous component is then integrated into the training, according to an andragogical approach based on needs which give priority to the learning mode through sharing. In order to reflect the main skills of Innu culture, the contents are designed according to five dimensions of traditional value: cuisine, crafts, tales and legends, traditional medicine and spirituality. Like the holistic model of lifelong learning for First Nations (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007), these cultural landmarks allow students to develop transferable generational skills. "For us, the caribou opens the door of the ancestors. We make a

total use of it" (Julie Rock). For Denis Dionne, current Director of CRÉA, "it gives them the taste to learn more about their culture." According to the wheel of medicine perspective, a symbol common to all First Peoples of America, the curriculum is designed in a circular manner, consistent with the cycle of seasons. In that respect, the contents are adjusted to the ancestral territorial practices of the Innus. "Migratory bird hunting happens in the spring, so that's when we teach it" (Julie Rock).

Throughout the training, the presence of master trainers, often elders, comes to strengthen intergenerational links: "They come to provide us traditional know-how and give full meaning to the Indigenous component" (Marc-André Racine, Teacher). The program includes courses in animal biology, forest ecology, wildlife management, transportation (canoeing, all-terrain vehicle [ATV], snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, dog sledding), including the various traditional hunting and fishing techniques. Customer service, personal assistance, patrolling, investigation, survival in the forest, health and safety, but also the laws and regulations related to the protection and exploitation of wildlife are also part of the skills to develop. To do this, four outings of two weeks in territory punctuate the course at the rate of one per season[1]. In all these respects, this experience allows us to "share and nurture Innu pride of identity" (Denis Dionne). "The Indigenous vocation of the program is not yet officially recognized; we are working on this," said Gilbert Paiement, Director of the CFP du Fjord. Defending the legitimacy of such a program, Denis Dionne questions: "If there are sport-education programs everywhere, why can't there be community-based cultural learning programs built on Indigenous traditions?"

"Life does not lie in the molecules, but in the bonds that unite them" (Linus Pauling).

PRACTICE NARRATIVES OF PERSEVERANCE IN SUCCESSES

At the beginning, the partners had received the authorizations from the MEES to offer the training to 13 subsidized students based on requisites (having completed Secondary 2). However, more than 45 applications for admission were sent to the CRÉA from all Innu communities. The coordination team had to make a rigorous selection that led to the start of a first cohort of 16 students in September 2017. The participants were 19 and 59 years old, with an average age of 33 years of age. "Only one student had to withdraw from the project, allowing us to issue diplomas

to 15 Innu students," explained Denis Dionne. The graduation ceremony was filled with emotion and pride. For teacher Marc-André Racine who has experienced it, it is important to know how to adapt to students: "The contact with the students showed me that you can learn with laughter, which is typical here."   The following comments by Jonathan Moreau-Tremblay, a graduate of the first cohort, report on what was learned during the training:

> I wanted to get closer to my origins, to know the territory, to learn my language. […] What I remember is the pride and support that emerge from this experience. We were like a family! […] I also discovered my leadership. Today, I work for AMIK[2] with good conditions and I can also transmit what I learned.

At the end of the program, employment prospects are high. They include positions of wildlife protection assistant, warden, park warden, hunting and fishing guide, outfitting manager and adventure tourism positions. Denis Dionne told us the emotion experienced during the graduation ceremony: "It was very touching to see the pride in their eyes." With a strong sense of belonging within his cohort, Jonathan Morin-Tremblay said before returning to his professional obligations: "If I could do the program again, I would start over tomorrow." During the last edition of the Convention on Perseverance and Academic Achievement for First Peoples (2017), Denis Dionne experienced what he described as the peak of his thirty-year career in education, when a woman got up in the audience to thank the initiative to create this program. She claimed that this training had saved her son's life, as he had found the motivation to get his life back on track.

FROM REAPPROPRIATION TO INTERNATIONS CELEBRATION

As an enrichment, the Innu students had the opportunity to experience a professional immersion internship at Haidas Gwaii (formerly the Queen Charlotte Islands), located in British Columbia. And so, in June 2018, the first cohort of the PETF–First Nations Component flew to Western Canada to meet with the Haida Nation to discuss their respective practices regarding protection and exploitation of wildlife territories. The three internship sites visited (Haida Gwaii Museum, Gwaii Haanas National Park, Haida Style Expeditions) have enabled students to develop their professional, cultural, social and personal skills. Planned at the end of the course, this unique experience, supported by programs facilitating mobility and encouraging school perseverance (Éducation internationale et Les offices jeunesse internationaux du Québec, LOJIQ), fostered a consolidation of learning and an openness to other cultural realities. "The Haidas introduced us to a way of managing the territory which spans a thousand years[3]" (Dominic Simard). According to him, this knowledge

would benefit from being known by local communities. Innu students were also introduced to other models of Indigenous tourism integration and practice their hunting, fishing and forest survival skills. During an interview, Geneviève Fradette, Coordinator of student mobility at LOJIQ, explained that the contact with First Nations has led the organization to "reinvent itself and approach student mobility in a different way, in order to allow Indigenous students to achieve success while respecting their learning style and values." She explained that the primary mission of LOJIQ is "to support the dreams of young people aged 18 to 35, through mobility projects"; she believes that the experience played a "transformative and potential-revealing role" for Innu students. According to her, "to go out and meet others, is to go out and meet oneself."

PERSPECTIVES AND OUTREACH

Building on its success, the PETF - First Nations Component now makes it possible for Innu students to develop the skills required to enter the job market in the areas of environment and wildlife. Recognized by the MEES, it is a real lever of perseverance and academic success that fits strategically in the economic and tourism context of the norther Quebec region (gouvernement du Québec, 2015). The mobilization of a wide variety of Indigenous and government organizations, all involved in the common interest of serving First Nations, has helped to lay the initial foundations needed to create a structure that is fundamentally adapted to culture. From 2018 to 2021, this innovative project will receive support from MEES. In addition to the PETF - First Nations Component, a certificate of professional studies (AEP) for hunting and fishing guides totaling 720 hours of training was also implemented at the CRÉA in 2017[4]. Concomitance, defined here as the possibility of completing a general education at the same time as professional training, as well as the recognition of prior learning, are among the strategies that allow these training courses to be better adapted to the needs of First Nations. Other indigenous communities have also expressed interest in developing similar models. Considered a model of excellence in Indigenous education, the PETF - First Nations Component was featured in a report that will soon be posted on the National Center for Collaborative Indigenous Education (NCCIE) website[5].

By integrating the Innu Nation's language, values and traditional practices, the project presented here is an eloquent example of cultural and territorial re-appropriation through education. In this respect, this initiative is in line with the objectives of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) and aligns with the Declaration of Human Rights among First Nations (ONU, 2008). The report ended on the shared aspiration to see other similar initiatives emerge so that the First Peoples of America can regain autonomy of their modes of transmission of knowledge and know-how. ■

NOTES

1   The curriculum is the same as that offered at La Tuque under the DEP program code 5179 PETF, except for the addition of content related to Innu culture.

2   The Agence Mamu Innu Kaikussseth (AMIK) supports the Innu communities in the sustainable development of the fishing industry on Côte-Nord.

3   Government of Canada & Council of the Haida Nation (2008).

4   The AEP is a 720-hour program with the prerequisite of completing Secondary 3.

5   NCCIE link: https://www.nccie.ca/. Affiliated to First Nations University (Regina, Saskatchewan), the NCCIE's mission is to foster, support and represent collaboration, innovation and excellence in Indigenous education at the national level.

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REFLECTIONS ON THE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL TRAJECTORIES OF KIUNA GRADUATES:

When the Feeling of Belonging and Pride of One's Identity Propel Towards Fulfillment

Patricia-Anne Blanchet, Reporter, Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

In collaboration with **Nathalie Carter**, Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

This report examines an initiative whose influence is already enlightening the sphere of Indigenous education in Quebec. Recognized as a place of revalorization and of revitalization of First Nations languages and cultures, Kiuna Institution is the first centre for college education to offer training programs designed by and for First Nations. The success of the graduates testifies to the positive impact of the approach implanted in this institution, which is distinguished by its humanism. On February 22nd and 23rd, 2018 were held the *Days of Reflection on the Academic and Social Trajectories of Kiuna Graduates* in which many students and graduates of the Institution participated.

These days were an opportunity to mobilize and promote Kiuna graduates, in addition to allowing, according to the associate director of the institution, Prudence Hannis, "the various actors of the college, university, government, private and community sectors to get to know the Indigenous student population better". All the staff and teachers were delighted to see their former students again; the closeness was evident and the pride shared, which created the atmosphere of reunion emerging from their

authentic exchanges. This article is a report of interviews conducted on this occasion with the Associate Director of the Institute, two teachers and five graduates.

THE KIUNA INSTITUTION

Located in Odanak, in the Centre-du-Québec, the Kiuna Institution provides an opportunity for students from the various nations of Quebec to benefit from training that respects the history and cultural heritage of the First Nations and leads them to become Indigenous citizens better able to lead social change. To allow greater access, all programs are offered in both French and English[1]. According to Hannis, "Training meets the needs expressed by communities and reflects the reality of the market". She states that "[s]ince its opening in 2011, 92 First Nations (FN) students have graduated from Kiuna and [that] almost 96% of college diploma (DEC) holders have pursued university studies in Quebec or elsewhere, namely at the University of Ottawa".

INDIGENOUS STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Associate Director, Prudence Hannis, and history teacher, Medérick Sioui, provide a picture of Kiuna students:

> The largest number of our students are Innu and Atikamekw, but each year is different. The majority is now francophone whereas it was once anglophone. In the attestations d'études collégiales (AEC), we mainly welcome an adult clientele from the labour market. At the beginning, pre-university students were mostly dropouts returning to school, then the word spread around, and now we have many high-school students. (Prudence Hannis)

> We work with young adults and at this age, it's easier to deviate from one's course. Depending on the community they come from, the adaptation can be intense when arriving at Kiuna. (Médérick Sioui)

Médérick Sioui,
History Teacher

ORIENTATIONS ADAPTED TO INDIGENOUS REALITIES

At the Kiuna Institution, several means are implemented to welcome each student, to make him or her proud of his or her culture and to promote perseverance and academic success. For Prudence Hannis, "the human aspect is essential. Beyond the student is an individual who has realities, baggage, who has a project. We must get to this person, and it takes time to establish a lasting link. In order to adjust to the Indigenous learning style, Médérick Sioui mentions that teachers do a lot of oral feedback: 'Here, discussions are more important than the written comments. Peer and teacher mentoring as well as flexible study sessions are other strategies to support students in a tailored manner. Other conditions contribute to aligning the educational project with the Indigenous realities:

> The small size of the premises, the small number of students, between five and 20 students [per group], the looping, that is to say the teachers who teach continuously for two sessions, are factors that help us to get to know our students, their strengths and weaknesses. This allows us to offer individualized support, an advantage that young people appreciate greatly. (Prudence Hannis)

Prudence Hannis,
Associate Director

Médérick Sioui says that 'students have often experienced failures elsewhere and [in Kiuna] they are experiencing success. As an example, before arriving in Kiuna, Mashteuiatsh graduate Pamela Duciaume attended another CEGEP where she felt 'unhappy and misunderstood'. This passage describes her experience in Kiuna.

> It was my *Kokom* who told me about Kiuna. I did my research and I enrolled. My boyfriend also signed up with other friends. Once at Kiuna, we felt included from the beginning. Friendships were easy, people were sensitive to our needs and we had help with adaptation. We also had a follow-up for language, work planning and catching-up. The teachers were accessible, and I had the help of psychologists, which made a difference. I also had a small job as a facilitator, to support myself. It was different from the other CEGEP I attended.

According to teacher and visual artist Hannah Claus, "The teacher-student ratio is ideal". As a teacher in the English section of the college, she is involved in the deployment of her students, who discover more about their culture through art:

> Although consistent with departmental requirements, the curriculum is created from an Indigenous perspective. All texts and works shared in my courses are produced and created by Indigenous people. Students discover content that reflects their life experiences. They can learn the broader meaning of being Indigenous on Turtle Island.

For Hannah Claus, "Art is a privileged means of expression to address Indigenous identity and cultural issues. At the end of the course, students are better able to express their ideas." As part of her courses, she presents artists who humorously address the question of the Indian stereotype, which challenges students and encourages them to express themselves.

Hannah Claus,
Teacher and Visual Artist

TO EACH CHALLENGE, A SOLUTION

The Kiuna Institution has an intervention team composed of a psychologist, a psychosocial worker, a pedagogical worker and a street worker, which makes it possible to identify the problems experienced by students and prevent dropout. "The psychosocial support is as important here as the teaching team," says the Director, who believes that students learn strategies at Kiuna that will serve them for the rest of their lives.

Among the challenges faced by students, anxiety caused by remoteness seems to be the most important. Most students are away from their families, some even from their children. Many are returning to families each weekend. However, although returning to the community often and travelling for long hours makes it sometimes difficult to refocus when returning to Kiuna, all students agree that family support is essential to their success. For some, remoteness also brings a change of scenery: "they miss the boreal forest, the river" (Médérick Sioui).

In addition, managing performance stress is also a concern for which Kiuna actors are mobilized. In these respects, Prudence Hannis emphasizes that "psychosocial support is provided by enhanced services based on findings and funding". She adds that consumption problems were more prevalent in the past and are better managed now.

The problem of learning French as a second language is also reduced by customized services for them: "Our young people are doing well on the standardized French examination, the Ministry congratulated us for our work" (Prudence Hannis).

Finally, measures are implemented to facilitate work-study-family reconciliation: "We support the family environment. I allow parents to bring their children on pedagogical days. It creates a microcommunity" (Prudence Hannis).

Jimmy-Angel Bossum

KIUNA :
A REAL HOME FOR STUDENTS

The Kiuna Institution is for many students a place where one feels at home away from home, "home away from home" as expressed by Odanak's Chief, Rick O'Bomsawin, during his opening speech of the *Days of Reflection on Academic and Social Trajectories of Kiuna Graduates*. To describe this feeling, Prudence Hannis maintains that "Kiuna is much more than a school, it is a family. Indigenous students are not a minority as in other college settings. For some, feeling one among many others does a lot of good. Soon, they develop a strong sense of belonging. Medérik Sioui reports on the benefits to students:

Proximity to staff is beneficial in that it creates a sense of cultural safety. The 'Kiuna family' environment is a great success factor for students. There is a direct impact on their esteem, a reappropriation of their traditions, compared to school programs that have obscured a large part of history.

A passage in the interview with graduate Jimmy-Angel Bossum, Innu from Mashteuiatsh of Cree descent, adds to this feeling of inclusion: 'We were so well supervised by teachers, they understood the remoteness we felt. We also created links in the residences and kept in touch." Another student mentions that she wants to "take off her shoes when entering Kiuna" (Gabrielle Vachon-Laurent, Innu, Unamen Shipu). Prudence Hannis adds that' [t] he students already in Kiuna welcome the new ones and integrate them quickly into the group". All these factors contribute to the social cohesion that is the hallmark of this institution.

WHEN THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT BECOMES A FAMILY STORY

For some students, studying in Kiuna becomes a family experience. This is the case for Louis-Xavier and Lisa-Maude Aubin-Bérubé, Maliseet brother and sister from Cacouna. Louis-Xavier graduated in two Kiuna programs: Humanities, FN profile (2015) and Administrative Work for FNs and Inuit (2016). Finding, in Kiuna, an educational environment matching his values, compared to a more difficult experience in another CEGEP, he invited his sister Lisa-Maude to join him. That's what she did:

> I finished high school and my brother told me to come. I trusted him, and I did not regret my choice. I discovered new passions. […]. Having this diploma is a great pride for my brother and me. Our grandmother came, and she saw our pictures on the wall. She was very moved because she and my grandfather encouraged us a lot to pursue our studies.

Lisa-Maude, for her part, obtained a diploma in Humanities, FN profile, in 2017. Particularly moved by the elders' intergenerational traditional teachings, she explained that the presence of her brother urged her to enrol in Kiuna and she added that this passage awakened, in her, the desire to find her roots.

Louis-Xavier et Lisa-Maude Aubin-Bérubé

VECTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Danysa Régis-Labbé

According to Médérick Sioui, "[M]any students arrive not knowing much about their culture. In Kiuna, a historico-cultural pride is revived by examples of resistance promoting proactivity". He uses the metaphor "standing straight as a pole" to portray the confidence that students acquire when as they leave to pursue their studies. Louis-Xavier Aubin-Bérubé testifies as follows: "When you know your story, you better understand where you come from, who you are; it gives you great power to act. We have influence over our brothers and sisters, our cousins, our parents, the influence is great." "I had become Indigenous," adds graduate Danysa Régis-Labbé (Innue, Pessamit) who plans to work as a community worker. In this regard, everyone we met agreed that Kiuna graduates are becoming ambassadors of their culture and vectors of change for their nation. The following paragraph presents Prudence Hannis' thoughts on this question.

> Kiuna leads the students to reclaim their culture, perennially, to keep it active thereafter. Many of the graduates are actively involved in promoting their culture. They become role models for their families. Many are also involved in helping their people, finding solutions to some problems experienced in their community. The programs lead to great careers. The potential of young people is fascinating. They take initiatives. This is our greatest reward.

Marie-Christine Petiquay

In 2017, Marie-Christine Petiquay, an Atikamekw from Manawan, obtained a DEC in Social Sciences– FN profile. Her testimony reflects the positive impact of her time in Kiuna:

> I arrived in Kiuna with the ambition of becoming a high-school history teacher. I wanted to tell the true story of our people. Kiuna made me want to do more. Through my training, I was made aware of many issues. That's why I'm currently doing a bachelor's degree in Political Science. I want to help change things concretely.

She emphasizes the importance of having been exposed to models of activism for the rights of FNs and for the environment, such as Natasha Kanapé Fontaine (Innu poetess) or Ellen Gabriel (spokesperson for the Oka crisis). "They made me want to be like them," she says before adding: "Kiuna enables us to (re) discover, teach us who we are and who we would like to be. It helped me to gain confidence in myself. To express the impact of the training, Jimmy-Angel Bossum evoked the following metaphor: "Kiuna is a spark plug and a fire that continues to burn afterwards. Kiuna allowed me to consolidate my belonging to this pivotal age where you seek your difference; the fact of learning one's story, gives the taste to get involved socially".

Pamela Duciaume

LIVING THE TRANSITION FROM COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY

After Kiuna, "students have to face a world that does not take into account Indigenous realities," says Médérick Sioui. On this transition, Prudence Hannis adds:

> We prepare young people, make them aware of their career choices and make projects in collaboration with universities. At the end of their studies, they must choose for themselves. The transition to university can be difficult for some students, who will not find the closeness that Kiuna offers. For others, it is going well, thanks to the trust they have acquired here.

Graduates Danysa Régis-Labbé and Pamela Duciaume both claim that, in Kiuna, they took their place and became very involved, while in university, large groups seemed intimidating. Pamela Duciaume describes the transition she experienced:

> This depersonalization does not promote motivation. You arrive from a warm and caring place where everyone knows you. At university, there are so many people, teachers can not offer us a personalized follow-up. I found myself alone in an apartment, in a new city, a new program. For me, adjusting to this new reality was a shock that disappeared with time. I developed links with other Indigenous people. Now, I feel in the right place.

For Danysa Régis-Labbé, the transition to university also entailed some challenges:

> I was very successful at Kiuna, which gave me confidence. My choice of university program was still difficult. I am now in the third year of my bachelor's degree in preschool and elementary education. I'm not above average like in Kiuna, but it's going well. I even think of doing a master's degree in educational management. Nevertheless, at university, I tend to isolate myself from the group. I sit behind and ask fewer questions. The dynamic is very different than in Kiuna.

She, along with Jimmy-Angel Bossum, believes that it was easier to integrate with groups at Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC), particularly because of the Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite, which provides access to personalized resources and a place where students can gather.

CONCLUSION AND DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

During these days of reflection, potential solutions, recommendations and strategic directions to develop a common understanding of the issues facing FN students pursuing post-secondary education were identified. According to the five graduates interviewed, the keys to a better integration of Indigenous students in universities lie in the access to targeted services and personalized support measures, particularly about language, additional cultural and territorial outings, by inviting elders and Indigenous experts, by participating in activities (social, sporting, cultural) and in the availability of resource staff, ideally Indigenous and concerned about their well-being. Humour would also be an essential ingredient in working with Indigenous students.

Finally, the people we met were able to target a few practices to be developed, especially the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, which could be improved by a greater presence of elders. Access to the territory is also an issue on which the Kiuna team is working. Given the popularity of all services offered to students, Prudence Hannis believes that resources can be further enhanced to ensure better access for all: "We have waiting lists everywhere." To date, 295 students have journeyed in Kiuna.

In just eight years, progress has been significant and hopeful for future generations. "It is these young people who will bring our project to completion" (Prudence Hannis).

The testimonials presented in this report have highlighted the impact of the educational project developed at the Kiuna Institution on the personal and academic trajectories of students who complete a program. Beyond the benefits of self-reaffirmation and cultural reappropriation, the quality of the relational fabric unfolding in Kiuna is the result of the investment of a team united in a commitment to provide an inclusive educational environment sensitive to Indigenous realities. The transition to university remains a challenge for graduates. The indigenization process and cultural safety practices underway in some universities are the way to develop to facilitate the integration of Indigenous students: "Universities want to offer welcoming and supportive measures to FN" (Prudence Hannis). In all respects, the Kiuna Institution is proving to be an example to follow from which actors present at the Days of Reflexion can now draw inspiration. ■

NOTE

1   The Kiuna Institution offers a customized DEC Springboard Program to complete high school, three pre-university programs (in the humanities, arts and literature, and media communication) and three college-level certificates (AEC in special education, accounting, and administrative work).

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