



87th ACFAS Congress | Symposium 618

Third Indigenous Languages Symposium Program

Sustaining the transmission and teaching of Indigenous languages: Preparing the next generation

Wednesday, May 29 and Thursday, May 30, 2019

Coorganizers:

Jimena Terraza, Ph.D.

Program Coordinator and Professor,
Kiuna Institution

Marco Bacon

Director
**Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC)**

Partners :

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Centre interuniversitaire d'études et de recherches autochtones – UQO

UNESCO Chair in the Transmission of First Peoples' Culture to foster Well-Being and Empowerment – UQAC

Celebrations around the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages lend much-needed visibility to the importance of preserving Indigenous languages around the world, the majority of which are in a vulnerable state. As the survival and vitality of these languages depends on them being transmitted and taught, preparing the next generation of caretakers, keepers, teachers and transmitters is a major challenge. Currently, Indigenous languages are learned and studied in diverse contexts (community and educational; as a first or a second language) and by a wide range of students (Indigenous and non-Indigenous adults or children, with different levels of literacy), hence the need for appropriately trained resources. The third edition of the symposium on Indigenous languages aims to foster constructive dialogue on this fundamental issue.

Note: simultaneous translation (English-French; French-English) offered for the duration of the symposium.



UQAC

**Centre des Premières Nations
Nikanite**
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

Québec



Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture.



Commission
canadienne
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et de recherches autochtones



UQAC

**Chaire UNESCO en transmission
culturelle chez les Premiers peuples
comme dynamique de mieux-être
et d'empowerment**
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi



Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture.



Chaire UNESCO en transmission culturelle
chez les Premiers peuples comme dynamique
de mieux-être et d'empowerment,
Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, Canada

Symposium program

Wednesday, May 29 | Day 1

Morning: 8:45 am – 12 noon

Building: *UQO A.-Taché*, Room: *Grande salle*

8:45 **Opening ceremony and remarks**

9:15 **Keynote address**

Jordan Lachler (Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute, University of Alberta)

10:15 Break

10:35 **International Year of Indigenous Languages, and Reconciliation at CCUNESCO**

Katharine Turvey (Canadian Commission for UNESCO)

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCUNESCO) will briefly present the context surrounding the adoption of the International Year of Indigenous Languages, the related action plans and normative framework, and how these are linked to implementation of the UN's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. CCUNESCO is committed to promoting this international year as one of its reconciliation priorities and will briefly outline the initiatives and other activities that are being – and will be – undertaken by its networks and partners throughout 2019.

10:55 **Development and scope of needs-based programs in connection with the transmission and teaching of Indigenous languages at the Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite (UQAC)**

Sophie Riverin (Université du Québec à Chicoutimi – UQAC)

For the past few years, the Centre des Premières Nations Nikanite (CPNN) at UQAC has offered three different Indigenous language programs that address three distinct objectives in techno-linguistics, Indigenous language transmission, and Indigenous language learning intervention. These programs start in cohorts most of the time and can be offered to different First Nations, depending on the requests received and the availability of teaching resources. The CPNN collaborates as needed with various Indigenous organizations (e.g. the Tshakapesh Institute) to promote and offer programs suited to the reality of staff in schools and other settings that require specialized resources for teaching Indigenous languages. This

presentation will introduce these various programs as well as the specific features of the Indigenous languages programs developed by the CPNN.

11:15

The experience of teaching Indigenous languages at Kiuna

Jimena Terraza (Kiuna Institution), Claudie Ottawa (Kiuna Institution), Kayla Vollant (Kiuna Institution), Fanny Niquay (Kiuna Institution)

Since fall 2018, a First Nations Arts, Literature and Communication program with an Indigenous language option has been offered at Kiuna, a post-secondary educational institution created by and for Indigenous people but open to everyone. The languages program is a two-year college-diploma (DEC) course in which students can choose the first-language stream (L1) or second-language (L2) one.

L1 Innu and Atikamekw and L2 Atikamekw and Abenaki are the courses currently offered. Claudie Ottawa and Jimena Terraza combine their respective expertise and experience to co-teach both the L1 and L2 Atikamekw language courses. Claudie Ottawa is a native Atikamekw speaker who is studying for a Master's in linguistics. Jimena Terraza is a linguist specializing in Algonquian languages with experience in teaching an L2 course. The co-teaching format has enabled us to address the lack of specialized human resources for teaching Indigenous languages.

In this presentation, we will describe the co-teaching experience as well as the learning experience of a student, Kayla Vollant, who is currently enrolled in the L1 Innu stream of the Arts, Literature and Communication program. Kayla will share her vision of the Kiuna experience and discuss the importance of involving younger generations in the transmission of Indigenous languages.

Break for lunch: 12 noon – 1:30 pm

Afternoon: 1:30 – 4:30 pm

Building: *UQO A.-Taché*, Room: *Grande salle*

1:30

Teaching Innu at the Université de Montréal: taking stock and looking forward

Gabriella Lodi (Université de Montréal – UdeM), Yvette Mollen (UdeM)

In recent years, course offerings in Indigenous languages have become essential at the Université de Montréal. Accordingly, after discussing with two representatives from the *Native Montreal* organization, which offers language courses, the university's Languages centre created four

communication-based Innu courses. The first course began in 2017, and, since then, Innu courses have been offered using the same teaching methods employed for the 12 other foreign languages that are taught. The experience acquired in this context has definitely contributed to the tremendous success achieved so far. For many years, the centre's teachers have been studying and experimenting with new strategies to address the specific needs of learners who are facing particular linguistic phenomena or who are studying one of the "less commonly taught languages" with all that that implies. However, despite the experience already acquired by our institution, Yvette Mollen, who was hired as a lecturer, had to make a considerable effort to offset a lack of appropriate teaching material or relevant studies in this field. With its Innu courses, UdeM unquestionably has the potential to help protect and even promote Quebec's Indigenous languages, but how can the work initiated by Yvette Mollen be adequately supported and pursued?

2:10

Training Indigenous teachers in their respective mother tongues: the Atikamekw experience via a mini-program with the UQTR

Nicole Petiquay (Council of the Atikamekw Nation), Nicole Audy (Council of the Atikamekw Nation – tribal council), Sylvie Ouellet (Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières – UQTR)

Around the year 2000, Atikamekw communities were facing a shortage of teaching personnel in primary schools. Despite the establishment of a bilingual French-Atikamekw teaching program in 1992, the communities needed Atikamekw teachers who were not only trained in education but also in the Atikamekw language. An Atikamekw cohort was therefore formed at UQTR and in September 2004 began working towards a Bachelor's degree in pre-school and primary education. Apart from adapting certain courses and using a level-based curriculum, the uniqueness of this experience lies in the establishment of a mini-program in Atikamekw and the offering of a course on the foundations of teaching the Algonquian language as a first language (Atikamekw in this case) to cohort students in fall 2007. The course was also offered to other Atikamekw teachers with positions in winter 2011 and again in fall 2018. It is currently being given to Atikamekw teachers in three communities.

This presentation aims to describe the context, rationale and content of the mini-program, as well as implementation steps, difficulties encountered, results achieved and future prospects.

2:50

Break

3:10 **Teaching the Innu language in Tshakapesh Institute's member schools**
Jérémie Ambroise (Tshakapesh Institute)

Although no accurate data exist on the current situation, there is no doubt that the decline in the number of Innu speakers is a reality. This is particularly true in the case of the younger generation because intergenerational transmission is being interrupted in communities that are located close to mostly Francophone urban centres. Nevertheless, the situation of the Innu language is not unique, as shown by the fact that UNESCO declared 2019 to be the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

It is in this context that the Tshakapesh Institute adopted the mission of developing a language development plan, one component of which is to remedy the shortage of new language teachers and transmitters. In this presentation, we will share the difficulties we encounter in seeking new human resources (experts, teachers, translators etc.), and especially with respect to the continuing education of Innu language teachers. Since the Tshakapesh Institute is a regional organization that operates in seven different Innu communities in a territory that extends from the Upper North Shore of Quebec to the Lower North Shore and as far as the boundaries of Quebec's Far North, providing continuous training is not a simple task. To close, we will look at some potential solutions.

3:50 **The issue of succession for transmitting and teaching Indigenous languages in community organizations – the case of the Saguenay Native Friendship Centre**

Josie-Ann Bonneau (Centre d'amitié autochtone du Saguenay), Yann-Abel Chachai (Centre d'amitié autochtone du Saguenay), Tshiueten Canapé (Centre d'amitié autochtone du Saguenay)

In order to address the needs of its members as well as to both promote and preserve Indigenous languages, the Centre d'amitié autochtone du Saguenay (Saguenay Native Friendship Centre) developed a language transmission project called Upau/Opoho. Through various activities, both playful and formal, the Innu and Atikamekw languages are taught to many people in an urban setting – to both children and adults and to both native and non-native speakers. Specifically, language camps for 4-to-12-year-olds are organized, and school courses are given, as well as evening courses for both adult native- and non-native speakers.

After more than two years of operation, many positive results can be identified. However, the shortage in new language teachers and transmitters is worrisome because it represents a constant challenge and

impacts how we work. How can we as a community organization ensure new resources are adequately trained and equipped to transmit Indigenous languages in urban settings? What strategies are in place and what limitations do we face? These questions, together with suggestions for possible improvement, will be covered in our presentation.

Evening: 5 pm – 7 pm

Building: *UQO A.-Taché*, Room: *Grande salle*

Networking cocktail – a light snack and refreshments will be served.

Spaces limited, please register if you wish to attend : info.nikanite@uqac.ca

Thursday, May 30 | Day 2

Morning: 8:30 am – 12:10 pm

Building: *UQO A.-Taché*, Room: *Grande salle*

9:00 **What is the role of teaching Indigenous languages translation In Quebec?**

René Lemieux (Université de Sherbrooke – UdeS)

My proposition is less the culmination of research on Indigenous languages translation than the expression of a wish to collaborate in the collective reflection needed on the role of teaching Indigenous languages translation in Quebec. The 'official' translation community shows little interest in Indigenous languages (for example, OTTIAQ, the professional association of translators, terminologists and interpreters in Quebec, does not include any Indigenous language in its directory of the languages translated by its members in Quebec). Will the federal government's Bill on Indigenous languages, submitted in winter 2019, change the playing field for the translation of Indigenous languages? Will it be a step forward or a step back in the broader perspective of revitalizing Indigenous languages? What are the possible impacts, both positive and negative, of this Bill on the situation of Indigenous languages? I would like to discuss what steps universities could take to facilitate the teaching of Indigenous languages translation in Quebec.

9:40 **Results of the 2016 Census: Indigenous languages and the role of acquiring an Indigenous language as a second language**

Sylvie Godin (Statistics Canada), Jean-François Lepage (Statistics Canada)

This presentation will use data from the 2016 Census, as well as from previous census cycles, to analyse the characteristics of members of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples who use an Indigenous language as a first or second language.

We will first present key facts concerning the first language, the language spoken at home, and knowledge of Indigenous languages in general, which will reveal the number of non-first-language speakers.

In fact, a recent Statistics Canada publication on the long-term survival of Indigenous languages in Canada underscored the importance of second-language learners. We will also present the dynamics of learning an Indigenous language as a second language. Despite certain limitations concerning available data, it is apparent that people are more likely to speak an Indigenous language if they live in a geographic region where

there is a concentration of speakers. Children are also more likely to speak an Indigenous language when this practice is positively encouraged by their parents.

10:20 Break

10:40 **Siawiminuignewa'tu'g 'Gtli'sutiminu**

Marsha Vicaire, Listuguj Curriculum Development Manager

The Curriculum Development Unit of the Listuguj Education, Training and Employment (LETE) directorate oversees the creation of both print and non-print instructional Mi'gmaq resources, as well as the delivery of Mi'gmaq Language programs within Listuguj, QC. The connection of local knowledge holders, Elders, and community members is integral to the successful teaching and learning experiences within the language programs. Currently, LETE offers various language programs that services different language learners, including adult and early Mi'gmaq Immersion, as well as supporting first-language speakers. This presentation will highlight these language programs, as well as future language initiatives planned for our community.

11: 20 ***Teueikaniss* – a radio commentary showcasing Innu language and culture**

Nadine Boucher (Université Laval)

In this presentation, Nadine Boucher will present *Teueikaniss*, the radio commentary that she launched on CKRL (89.1 FM) in Quebec City in 2018. *Teueikaniss* (“little drum” in the Innu language) allows Ms. Boucher to share her discoveries on Innu language and culture.

Teueikaniss is a collective endeavour based on collaboration with people from different Innu communities in Quebec. Indeed, Innu community members help Ms. Boucher to create each of her shows. For example, female Innu poets send her recordings of their poems in Innu which are then broadcast and translated over the air. Innu language specialists also help her to explain the meaning of different words.

Teueikaniss therefore helps to share more of the Innu language and culture with non-Indigenous people, while also contributing to initiate harmonious relations between members of Innu communities and non-Indigenous people in Quebec.

Break for lunch: 12:10 – 1:30 pm

Afternoon: 1:30 – 4:30 pm

Building: *UQO A.-Taché*, Room: *Grande salle*

1:30 **The role of integrated online resources in promoting the Atikamekw language**

Véronique Chachai (Council of the Atikamekw Nation of Opitciwan), Marie-Odile Junker (Carleton University), Nicole Petiquay (Council of the Atikamekw Nation), Cécile Planchon (University of Ottawa)

The Atikamekw language is one of the few Indigenous languages in Canada that is still commonly spoken by its first-language speakers. Although actively transmitted to the younger generations, Atikamekw has not escaped the generalized shortage of teaching resources, especially digital, that has affected almost all Indigenous languages. In order to train the new generation of teachers or simple speakers who can provide the intergenerational transmission essential to the survival of the Atikamekw language, we are working together to create electronic resources that address two major needs identified by the communities themselves. The first objective of our collaborative *particip-action* approach is to address this lack of educational material by designing unified and integrated resources that will be entirely accessible online. Since 2013, we have been working on a multimedia dictionary, both unilingual and Atikamekw-French bilingual (<https://dictionnaire.atikamekw.atlas-ling.ca/>), supported by grammar lessons, a verb conjugation app, audiobooks and a terminological forum. The second objective of our approach is to involve speakers as much as possible from different communities, especially young people, by having them participate in this project (to the extent that they can) in order to ensure a constant interplay of documenting, preserving, enriching and transmitting the Atikamekw language.

2:10 **Pedagogy and information technology: online exercises to support the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages**

Marie-Odile Junker (Carleton University), Claire Owen (Carleton University), Yvette Mollen (UdeM), Mimie Neacappo (Cree Nation of Chisasibi)

How can information technology be used to support the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages? Since 2006, we have used a collaborative *particip-action* approach with our partners to develop online exercises for both Cree languages (lessons.eastcree.atlas-ling.ca) and Innu (lessons.innu.atlas-ling.ca). To date, these tools have been designed to

improve the literacy of first-language (L1) speakers: adults who can speak their Indigenous language and know how to read in French/English, but who do not know standard Innu spelling or Cree syllabics. Since 2018, major new developments have emerged, such as: reprogramming the digital platform so that it can be accessed on all mobile devices; designing exercises for second-language (L2) learners; creating educational guides; progressively adding other Indigenous languages, namely, Atikamekw, Nishnaabemwin and Blackfoot; integrating with the online dictionaries of these languages (dictionnaires.atlas-ling.ca).

In addition, since its beginnings, this project has provided work and training to Indigenous educators/speakers.

We will describe the following specific aspects of our current work:

- history of the tool and methodology
- recent and current developments
- demonstration of online exercises
- pedagogical uses and implications
- challenges and successes

2:50

Debrief café – Discussion

Sükran Tipi (Université Laval)

This activity will aim to summarize important themes discussed, and allow for participants to share their reflections as we close the symposium.

3:30

Closing ceremony and remarks