

WKSITNUOW WEJKWAPNIAQEWA – MI'KMAQ: A VOICE FROM THE PEOPLE OF THE DAWN

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ABSTRACT. Mi'kmaq is a First Nations language spoken in Atlantic Canada and the north-eastern United States – and like most surviving indigenous languages in North America, it is at risk. The small community of Wagmatcook, Cape Breton, determined to see Mi'kmaq return from the brink of extinction, has implemented 2 initiatives that are changing the fate of their language. In the first initiative teachers, day care workers and community members completed a Certificate in Aboriginal Literacy Education. The participants in this program upgraded their skills in reading, writing and speaking Mi'kmaq. As a follow-up initiative, many of these same participants completed a series of workshops to develop books written in Mi'kmaq targeted for pre-K to grade 3. Because Mi'kmaq is an oral culture and language, there are not many texts available for teachers to use in the “Mi'kmaq as the language of instruction” classrooms. To help overcome this shortage, a group of graduates from the literacy program worked with a language consultant to write a series of children's books. These books are age and reading level specific and thematic.¹

WKSITNUOW WEJKWAPNIAQEWA – MI'KMAQ : UNE VOIX DU PEUPLE DE L'AURORE

RÉSUMÉ. Le mi'kmaq est une langue des Premières nations parlée dans le Canada atlantique et le nord-est des États-Unis – et comme la plupart des langues autochtones qui ont subsisté en Amérique du Nord, elle est menacée de disparaître. La petite collectivité de Wagmatcook, au Cap-Breton, déterminée à voir le mi'kmaq échapper au gouffre de l'extinction, a mis en oeuvre deux projets qui changent la destinée de leur langue. Dans le premier projet, les enseignants, les travailleurs des centres de jour et les membres de la collectivité ont suivi un cours menant à un certificat à apprendre le mi'kmaq. Les participants à ce programme ont développé leurs aptitudes à lire, à écrire et à parler la langue. Comme projet de suivi, bon nombre de ces mêmes participants ont pris part à une série des ateliers où ils ont conçu livres en mi'kmaq destinés aux enfants de la maternelle à la troisième année. Le mi'kmaq constituant une culture et une langue orales, les enseignants ne disposent pas de beaucoup de textes pour les cours dont le mi'kmaq est la langue d'enseignement. Afin d'aider à combler cette lacune, un groupe de diplômés du programme a travaillé avec un conseiller linguistique à la rédaction d'une série de livres pour enfants. Ces livres thématiques sont adaptés à des groupes d'âges et à des capacités de lecture précis.

WKSITNUOW WEJKWAPNIAQEWA – MI'KMAQ

Mi'kmaw na Lnu'iktli'sutimuew wula Nkmitkinaq aqq ma'w oqnatneke'l pastmkewa'ki – aqq kutey iktikl tli'suti'l wula eymu'k wsitqamu, naqmase'k si'ka'sin. Etek utan teluisik Wagmatcook, Unama'ki, ta'n melkukthk Mi'kmaw apajapen keskmna'q apji keska'sinuk, ewe'wkl tapu'kl ikanawtikekl ta'n pilua'taq ta'n ketu tlishka'sik tli'sutimuew. Nujikina'mua'tijik, apje'ji'juane'k lukewinu'k aqq ikthkik utankewaq kaqi kisa'latipni'k "Certificate-muaqik" wukjit ta'n ekitjemkewey kina'masuti.

Wula ta'n nekmow kisikinu'tmasultijik me nike' naji ta'kija'tijik, naji ta'wi'kikitijik aqq naji tawi mi'kmaw'sultijik. 'Wula kisa'taqiti'titek, eykik ta'n ap kisa'tu'tip mawlukitimkewe'l wukjit eltunew, asukomte'siska'ql wi'katiknji'jl Mi'kmmawiktuk wukjit – apje'ji'juanu'k "Kindergarten" mi'soqo si'steweyo'ltite'wk.

Muta Mi'kmawey ta'n telo'thmk aqq ta'n teli'shmk nisunasik klusuaqniktuk weja'tekemk sa'q. Mu pukelknuk ewikasik ta'n kisi weketunes "Mi'kmaw ewe'mk ta'n telikina'mashmk." Wukjit apoqnmamtn wula ta'n etlnuta'q, wula ta'n kisikina'masultijik maw likuti'tipnn ta'n nuji apoqnmuelitl wukjit ta'n teli wi'kimik mijua'ji'jueye'l wi'katiknn.

Wula wi'katiknn tetpaqtekl wukjit ta'n teltaskmajwen aqq wukjit keknu'tmasin keknu'e'k.

The People of the Dawn are from the Mi'kmaq Nation² in eastern Canada and the northeastern United States. Like most First Nations people in this area of the world, the Mi'kmaq had lived off the fertile land and rich sea since time out of memory. And like many east coast nations, they had early contact with European settlers and traders – with early threat to culture and language. Despite centuries of contact, the Mi'kmaw way of life survived well into the twentieth century. With all but 3 First Nations languages at risk across Canada, the Mi'kmaq have begun to ask: what can we do to keep our language and culture from disappearing into the dawn mist?

The authors of this article have both been directly involved in finding some answers to that question. Josephine Peck is the coordinator of the Certificate in Aboriginal Literacy Education at Wagmatcook Board of Education, in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Donna-Lee Smith is the coordinator of the Certificate in Aboriginal Literacy Education, Office of First Nations and Inuit Education, at McGill University. Brian Arbuthnot, a senior educational advisor to the Wagmatcook First Nation, was also kind enough to agree to be interviewed for this article and provided valuable background information. Arbuthnot has been working with the people of Wagmatcook since the mid-eighties on many educational issues, one of which is language retention.

CONTEXT: Wagmatcook is one of only 9 Mi'kmaq communities on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, a small community of 550 people sitting on the edge of the waters of the Bras d'Or Lakes. The Mi'kmaq language is severely threatened; there are few fluent speakers in Canada and most are over 60. Perhaps the most important reason for this language loss was the policy of centralization conducted by earlier Canadian federal and provincial governments. From the 1930s through to the 50s the Mi'kmaq people were moved from rural communities into central locations – disrupting families and the traditional life – even though these ways of life had somehow managed to survive the legacy of the Residential Schools.

The Residential School system was set up in the early 1900s to combat what the Canadian government decided was an 'Indian problem.' Its weapon of choice was assimilation: First Nations children were forced to attend Residential Schools which were for the most part run by churches. Children as young as 4 or 5 were taken from families across the country; parents were told that if they did not 'allow' their children to attend these schools, they themselves would be sent to jail. For the assimilation to take hold, eradication of the Native language and culture was paramount. The children were told that their mother tongue was gibberish – or worse that it was the language of the devil – and they were punished if they spoke it. Often when the children returned to their communities their fluency in their mother tongue had disappeared – and they could no longer speak to or understand their unilingual family members. This lack of communication led to a rift in the passing on of First Nations' ways of life (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998; Child, 1998; Johnston, 1998).

The Residential School system ran for decades and its legacy will be felt by generations to come. Aside from the physical abuse for speaking their language, many of the children were also emotionally and sexually abused. Some of the religious groups that ran the schools are now in the courts being sued by their former charges. But apologies and money will not undo the impact of the attempted assimilation of languages and cultures. Of the 53 Native languages that were once spoken across Canada, only 3 are not extinct or at risk: Inuktitut, Cree, and Ojibwa. The fact that these languages exist today is in large part due to numbers and isolation from the dominant southern, English-speaking culture.

More recent government policies have also had an influence on the language. One such influence stems from the impact of Bill C31. Passed by the Canadian government, this bill returned status to First Nations women who had married non-Native men and who had been forced to live off reserve. (In Canada when a Native woman married a non-Native man, she and her children lost their status as band members; the reverse was not true for Native men who married non-Native women.) After the bill passed, many of the women who had previously lost their status, but now had it restored,

returned with their families to live on the reserves. The government had imposed the original ruling as part of its assimilation process. And to a certain degree, this process was successful: influence of the dominant English language and the lack of fluent Mi'kmaq speakers in an extended family was detrimental to the children's fluency in the language.³

Modern-day Mi'kmaq has also been affected by the impact of forced migration. Over the last number of decades many Mi'kmaq families have been compelled to move to the eastern United States for economic reasons, leaving fewer people in Nova Scotia to speak the language and to pass on the Mi'kmaq ways of being. In the Mi'kmaq communities of Nova Scotia the Mi'kmaq language has almost disappeared as social discourse and when a fluent Elder dies, her or his intimate knowledge of the language disappears too. Fewer and fewer children enter kindergarten fluent in Mi'kmaq; the language is more a subject of the classroom than the talk of daily life. Most of the children speak what is affectionately – or not so affectionately – called Mi'klish. Given this history, the fact that Mi'kmaq exists in any form is testament to the will and strength of the Mi'kmaq people.

Josephine Peck, a perfectly bilingual Elder in Wagmatcook, is deeply concerned about the diminished use of Mi'kmaq as the community language. She and Brian Arbuthnot decided that one way to buy some time was to offer a literacy program. They had heard of the success McGill University had with the Certificate in Aboriginal Literacy Education, offered through the Office of First Nations and Inuit Education (OFNIE). They contracted to have the program delivered in Wagmatcook in 2002-3. (A brief description of the courses and instructors appears in the Appendix.)

The Certificate Program

Originally, this certificate was co-designed by the Cree School Board (Quebec) and OFNIE in 1993 to help elementary teachers who were teaching in Cree. The 9 Cree communities of the James Bay region in Quebec had initiated a "Cree as the Language of Instruction Program" (CLIP) and wanted their instructors to be university certified. The first cohort of the certificate consisted of teachers or teachers in training; all the participants were required to be band members and have some fluency in oral Cree. The delivery was community based and given on a part-time basis, on weeknights and over weekends. Each course had 50 hours of contact time, with the delivery divided into 2 sessions of 25 hours each.

The first delivery of the certificate in Cree began in 1994 and 4 years later it boasted 52 graduates who flew down from the north to walk across the stage at McGill University in cap and gown. The next delivery, 1999-2002, was open to all community members and consisted of parents, administrators, daycare workers and teachers. This cohort held their graduation ceremony

in the north with a remarkable difference: while the McGill University graduation had been entirely in English, this graduation in the north was entirely in Cree. The third cohort – again open to the community – began in the winter term of 2003.

There has also been a delivery of the certificate in Mohawk. This delivery took place in 2002-3 in Kahnawake, a Mohawk community on the south shore of Montreal. There were 25 students who ranged in age from 18-52; they were selected through an interview process to evaluate their oral language skills and their commitment to a full-time, year-long program. The 10 courses were still 50 hours each, but delivered 9:00-3:00 in a classroom 5 days a week. These students also spent time as teachers' aids in the Mohawk immersion school; some of them have subsequently enrolled in the McGill University Bachelor of Education / Teaching Certificate. All the courses were taught by 2 Elders who possess strong language and cultural skills, along with extensive teaching experience. The courses were delivered in a dedicated space in Kahnawake where students were encouraged to speak only Mohawk.

The desire to run a Mi'kmaw literacy program had been a dream of Brian Arbuthnot and Josephine Peck for years and they knew that a dedicated space for the program would be a good beginning for the dream to become reality. Arbuthnot spearheaded the building of the Wagmatcook Cultural Centre and successfully applied to the government for funding to deliver the program. The classes took place in the Cultural Centre next to the classrooms where pre-kindergarten through grade 2 are taught; this is where Mi'kmaq is encouraged as the language of instruction and as the language of social discourse. Most of the signs in the Cultural Centre are bilingual – featuring Mi'kmaq first.

When Josephine Peck began school at age 7, she spoke only Mi'kmaq. When her grandchildren started school, they spoke more English than Mi'kmaq. Peck says that the children of the Mi'kmaq Nation, whether they speak the language or not, are Mi'kmaq in their souls, that they express themselves – even if they are speaking English – through a Mi'kmaw world view. But when the language is spoken only in the home, when the language is not heard outside in the streets or playground, what happens to fluency?

Josephine Peck, as the Wagmatcook coordinator of McGill University's literacy program, is determined to return Mi'kmaq to fluency. As coordinator, Peck not only taught several of the courses but also attended all the other courses, set up workshops, hired teachers, and co-developed and vetted course outlines. Most importantly, she acted as a resource person in her office in the Cultural Centre.

Mi'kmaq – like Cree, Mohawk and other oral-based languages – is thousands of years old, rich in meaning and complicated in structure. It is a verb-based language – not like English which is noun-based – making the language difficult for English speakers to learn. Because the language was never written down until the mid 1800s, the literature base that other languages, for example, English, French, and Chinese, rely on does not exist. And now communities, families, teachers and students are struggling to keep Mi'kmaq alive not just through maintaining oral fluency, but through reading and writing as well. The Centre of Excellence which was established in 1996 in Eskasoni⁴ has produced much fine curricula for the teaching of Mi'kmaq; but these materials combined with those produced through the literacy certificate would probably fill only a shelf in a city library.

The children coming into pre-kindergarten begin their schooling in Mi'kmaq and transfer into English in grade 3; Mi'kmaq is then taken as a subject through to grade 12. As with most schools that teach the reading and writing of an oral-based language, there is a serious lack of material for use in the classroom. The teachers struggle to find Mi'kmaq-based material that will allow them to teach the required curriculum; many of them spend an inordinate amount of time planning and developing their lessons. One of the goals of the literacy program was to create materials for the teachers to use with their students. Ultimately, the program helped ease the teachers' load in terms of curriculum development and further developed their confidence as speakers, readers, writers, and teachers in Mi'kmaq.

The certificate in Mi'kmaq literacy in Wagmatcook was delivered on a part-time basis over 2 years. The 23 participants were teachers, daycare workers, administrators and homemakers. And again to be eligible, the students had to be band members and have some oral fluency in Mi'kmaq. The courses were delivered in the evenings and on some weekends to accommodate work schedules.

The 10 courses were taught entirely in Mi'kmaq. The first 4 developed basic literacy skills, focusing on vocabulary, spelling, and grammar. The next courses further developed literacy skills through creative writing, language arts and cultural skills. Although many assignments throughout the program focused on creating material for the classroom, the last course specifically targeted curriculum development.

The participants enjoyed their two years in the Certificate in Aboriginal Literacy Education, benefiting greatly from their highly accomplished teachers, and from each other. But, as in any delivery of any program, there are elements that work beautifully and elements that need changing. In order to hear about what worked and what did not, Donna Lee Smith and Josephine Peck conducted a series of interviews with the participants, the children in

the Mi'kmaw language school, their parents and grandparents, and Elders. The intent of the research was to discover whether the program had achieved its goals: to upgrade the oral, reading, and writing skills of the participants, and to create materials for the Mi'kmaw language classrooms.⁵

All participants told the researchers that the program gave them more confidence in speaking and reading and writing Mi'kmaq. The teachers and daycare workers were pleased because they felt more confident as teachers and they had more material to use in the language classrooms. The homemakers felt more competent about helping their children with Mi'kmaw homework. Many commented that they feel more capable speaking with Elders.

All of the parents of the elementary children being taught in Mi'kmaq stated that it is important to teach young children Mi'kmaq in order to keep the language alive. Many agreed that learning another language can never hinder a child. They were pleased that their children were learning so much; some even admitted that their children know more Mi'kmaq than they themselves do. Some points for consideration came to light when the parents were asked if they thought going to school in Mi'kmaq would help or hinder their child's future. More than half the parents think that their children's future will be hindered by being taught in Mi'kmaq. Almost all the Mi'kmaq teachers voiced the same concern. The non-Native teachers all believed that the Mi'kmaw elementary program will hinder the students from achieving success in higher education.

A few parents mentioned not having enough information about the Mi'kmaw language program when it first started; they had wanted information about how they could help. Some of them felt they did not know how to help their children with their homework because they did not know how to read and write in Mi'kmaq. They also expressed wanting to have their children taught in both Mi'kmaq and English to make sure they are up to the standards set by the Board of Education. These issues have been addressed in a recommendation report submitted to the Wagmatcook Board of Education and the Chief and Council.

The grandparents unanimously support the Mi'kmaw language program; hearing their grandchildren speak Mi'kmaq brings them joy and gives them hope for the future of the culture and language. When the children were asked if they liked learning in Mi'kmaq, all of the 28 students said yes, except one child who stated, 'No, I don't understand all the time.' They said it was fun to learn numbers and to cook, play and sing in Mi'kmaq.

The Elders in Wagmatcook were very positive about the effect of the program on the survival of Mi'kmaq in the community. One stated that this program was a first step in making good things happen with language and that it is good for the survival of the language and for understanding the

culture. Another responded that the children need the language in order to understand the culture better. The Elders see pride in the youth who are learning Mi'kmaq and in those who speak it well.

Overall the Certificate in Aboriginal Literacy Education succeeded in improving the participants' oral, reading and writing skills in Mi'kmaq. Most of the course assignments were geared towards creating curriculum material for use in the language classroom. The teachers who participated in the program have been able to make immediate use of this material. All the participants feel more confident in their command of Mi'kmaq and are proud of their accomplishment. In October, 2003, the community of Wagmatcook held a gala graduation in the Cultural Centre for the 23 graduates. The 300 guests feasted on salmon and turkey and listened to graduation speeches delivered in Mi'kmaq, the language of the People of the Dawn.

The need for materials: Creating Mi'kmaw childrens' books

While Josephine and Donna Lee were excited about the certificate and the results of increased confidence in the participants' use of Mi'kmaq, they were also aware of the need for more such initiatives to increase the use of Mi'kmaq as a social language. The Certificate developed a lot of material, but Josephine recognized a need for a range of attractive, enjoyable books for the students. The available Mi'kmaw books had to compete with the English books on the shelf and were often myths or translations of English books; they lacked the vibrant colours and age-appropriate text of the English publications.

In the winter of 2004, Josephine set out to correct the lack of books that were enjoyable and relevant for the children. She proposed that a select group of teachers and authorities in the language would write a series of children's books. She had the elementary teachers compile a list of grade-appropriate sight words and another list of words that the children could understand when being read to. She hired consultants to assess what the children needed to know at what age: i.e. getting dressed, going to school, making friends, etc. And she hired Donna Lee to run a series of workshops to guide the authors in writing books that had "good" stories.

Donna Lee has been teaching Children's Literature at McGill University for the past 4 years in which the students' main assignment is the creation of a children's book: text and illustrations. Many of these creations are works of art with delightful text. Josephine's group is well on its way to also producing engaging, educational books. Many of the illustrations are photographs of community people; many of the names used are those of the students; all of the books reflect the Mi'kmaw culture and customs. A first run of about 45 books will be ready for the winter term; the rest will be produced as they are completed. The use of these books in the classroom may help

keep Mi'kmaq alive for the next generation of children; that is the hope of all of those who have been involved in this project.

The loss of Mi'kmaq – or any language – did not happen over night – as those perpetrators of assimilation so long ago discovered. But when a language is on the endangered list, pulling it back from extinction is a much tougher win than the battle to kill it. The Certificate in Aboriginal Literacy Education and the development of books have strengthened the Mi'kmaq language – and will continue to support the language of the People of the Dawn.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this article was presented by Josephine Peck and Donna-Lee Smith at the 10th Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference in Baraboo, Wisconsin, June 25-28, 2003.
2. Mi'kmaq is normally used as the noun, naming the people and the language; Mi'kmaw is used as an adjective.
3. The information in this and the following paragraph comes in part from an interview conducted by Donna-Lee Smith with Brian Arbuthnot, summer 2003.
4. Eskasoni, a community in Cape Breton of almost 3,000 people, has long been striving to maintain its Mi'kmaw culture and language. The elementary school has an immersion program.
5. Methodology: Brian Arbuthnot asked that the research be conducted through McGill. Donna-Lee Smith contracted Jean-Sébastien Vallée to do the interviews. Josephine Peck and Donna-Lee Smith formulated the questions. Jean-Sébastien Vallée stayed in Wagmatcook for 2 weeks and worked alongside John Gould, a fluently bilingual community member. All the interviews were recorded; John Gould was able to conduct interviews with the Elders in Mi'kmaq and translate them. Jean-Sébastien then transcribed them.

Most of the teachers and children were interviewed in groups in the school; however, based on availability, some of these participants were interviewed in their homes. The interviews with the parents and the elders were conducted in their homes and were not done in groups.

There were approximately 30 questions; the interviewer was given freedom to guide the questions according to the responder, often encouraging the Elders, for example, to engage in a discussion. The children tended to give very short answers. Donna-Lee Smith synthesized the results by taking each question and recording the number of responses from each group.

For example: (A question for the children) What language does your family speak to you at home?

Mother: Mi'kmaq 16; English 5; Both 3. Father: Mi'kmaq 12; English 7; Both 3. Grandparents: Mi'kmaq 14, English 10, Both 6. Other: Mi'kmaq 3; English 2; Both 8.

Donna-Lee Smith also collected responses to questions such as: Do you think learning Mi'kmaq will help or hinder your child?

The results were then used in a recommendation report presented to the Wagmatcook Board of Education: *A Look at The Certificate in Aboriginal Literacy Education and its Impact on Wagmatcook*.

APPENDIX

MI'KMAW LANGUAGE I

This course introduced the participants to the Francis-Smith orthography system and its philosophy. It helped them develop a stronger understanding of Mi'kmaq history and language and improved their reading and writing skills with the use of extended vocabulary and pronunciation exercises. The assignments included the production of curriculum material for the elementary classrooms and daycare.

Murdena Marshall taught this all-important first course. She is an Elder from the Mi'kmaq community of Eskasoni and holds her Master's in Education from Harvard University. She is a member of the Association of the Mi'kmaq Grand Council and is an esteemed cultural agent and promoter of the Mi'kmaq language.

MI'KMAW LANGUAGE II

This course continued to explore the Francis-Smith orthography, furthering the participants' reading and writing skills and their understanding of Mi'kmaq values and spirituality. Again curriculum materials were developed, and in order to maintain continuity Murdena Marshall taught this course as well.

MI'KMAW LANGUAGE III INTERMEDIATE

Participants continued to develop their reading and writing skills by using stories and histories told by Elders and other community members. They investigated "atukwaqnn" as told by the Elders and they compared the vocabulary, spelling, and grammar used by various age groups over different periods of time. The materials developed for the classroom included short stories, children's storybooks, short plays and puppet shows.

Josephine Peck taught this course.

MI'KMAW LANGUAGE IV ADVANCED

This course built on the skills that the participants acquired in Intermediate Mi'kmaq. This time existing Mi'kmaq texts were interpreted and specific non-Mi'kmaq texts were translated applying advanced grammar rules. Emphasis was placed on the structure of nouns, pronouns and verbs; also on the conjugation of verbs, hidden parts of speech, verb classification, plurals and sentence pattern.

Josephine Peck taught this course.

CULTURAL SKILLS I

For this course Josephine Peck coordinated 1 and 2 day workshops that examined a variety of traditional Mi'kmaq beliefs, practices and crafts. The participants learned about the traditional use of plants for medicinal purposes and how to make ash baskets. They prepared a feast of eels, corn, and blueberries for community members and Elders and offered an evening of traditional food, music and dancing.

Josephine Peck found Elders, traditional spiritual leaders and craft people to conduct the various workshops.

LANGUAGE ARTS I

Mary Rose Julian used traditional Mi'kmaq legends, local stories, holidays, practices and beliefs to create illustrated children's storybooks. Halloween and Christmas stories were rewritten from the Mi'kmaq perspective; posters, other teaching aids, and lesson plans were developed for the classroom.

Mary Rose lives in Eskasoni, has her Master's in Education and is the Director of the Centre of Excellence. She has a high appreciation of the crafts and spirituality that are uniquely Mi'kmaq.

LANGUAGE ARTS II

For this course, Joanne Alex created an outline of a balanced Mi'kmaw literacy program for today's elementary classroom in cross-curricular subject areas. It focused on the creation of learning centres that promote language usage through hands-on activities. The participants developed materials and lesson plans for use in the learning centres.

Joanne Alex, who is Josephine Peck's daughter, is a gifted, dedicated teacher who holds her B.A., B.Ed., and M.Ed.. She is the principal of the elementary school in Waycomaugh.

ADVANCED GRAMMAR

Bernie Francis gave the participants an in-depth look at the grammatical structure of the Mi'kmaq language; elements of grammar were explored, such as transitive and intransitive verbs and cases of nouns, especially the "fourth person" (animate object of the third person). And, as in all the courses, proper spelling, and pronunciation were emphasized.

Bernie Francis co-published Micmac Grammar of Father Pacific, and co-developed the Francis-Smith orthography of the Mi'kmaq language with Doug Smith in 1970-4. He holds an Honorary Doctorate from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Josephine Peck taught this course bringing in her educational background and all her years of experience as a teacher and principal. The course examined the present curriculum and existing resources in order to plan a cohesive Mi'kmaw content-based program for lower elementary. The participants determined the vocabulary, grammatical and language required for various learning levels.

CULTURAL SKILLS

Mary Rose Julian shared her vast cultural knowledge with the participants in this last course. It further developed their knowledge of Mi'kmaw skills, stories, sites, foods, medicines, and crafts that can still be found in Wagmatcook. They went on field trips to collect medicinal plants and on a boating trip to the Glooscap Caves; they created hand drums and learned Mi'kmaw chants; and they wrote booklets of recipes, superstitions and jokes.

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