ISKIGAMIZIGE-GIIZIS: EVAPORATING LIQUIDS MOON

A PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

Gordon Jourdain

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION

Advisor Dr. Lynn Brice

May 2013

Adviser: [redacted] Lynn Brice

DGS: [redacted] Julia Williams

Acknowledgements

I should like to acknowledge my family and communities of the Lac Croix First Nation, Boise Forte Indian Reservation, and Grand Portage Indian Reservation for defending the privilege to speak and learn authentic Ojibwe traditions. I should like to acknowledge the M. Ed cohort 17 for their diligence in listening to me and providing a much needed peer review for this project. I want to say miigwech to my mother for bringing me into this world and my grandmother for your infinite patience and wisdom. Gichi-miigwech to Dr. Lynn Brice for you guidance and much needed understanding of diversity and for making it acceptable to write from a First Language perspective.

Dedication

This project is dedicated to my mother Mary Jourdain, my grandmother Bebakwewidamook, my elders for their immeasurable wisdom, the students of Ojibwe language and Gaagigegiizhigookwe for her kindness and patience.

Abstract

Curriculum infused with the personal perspective of a First Language (FL) Ojibwe speaker is almost non-existent. A new approach for inclusion of the viewpoint of a FL speaker into classroom lessons is imperative to address the achievement gap for Native American (NA) students. The approach will not only affect the NA students but the students they will have a class with as well. The project is presented with written teachings of the oral tradition of the Ojibwe people from Lake Superior. A strong identity is critical to the development of diversity in an ever-increasing change in the human demographic. This curriculum project was made possible with the help of the wisdom of my elders, coupled with an understanding developed by the traditional teachings of my family and an Ojibwe Environmental Knowledge (OEK) developed over centuries.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

There is a large amount of literature that reveals Second Language Acquisition (SLA) models proven useful in saving world languages from extinction. Although the models serve many languages in different ways, they do not work for all primarily indigenous languages of the Americas (White, 2006). Ojibwe language researchers, linguistics, academics and Second Language (SL) learners produce wonderful grammatical materials useful from a Western perspective but little is produced to represent the worldview of a First Language (FL) speaker. As a result, the lessons and materials lack a transfer of traditional knowledge contained only through learning the language in a traditional setting from pre-birth through to old age. The Western view elucidates how the language works as described by SLA models and the works compiled by "experts" but this is not enough to gain the full value of a society of peoples long on tradition and with deep connections to the land and environment. The question, "Why?" is important to know as well.

This project is not to be viewed as comprehensive; my focus will be to gather and develop a classroom curriculum for an Ojibwe immersion program viewed through a traditional Ojibwe Environmental Knowledge (OEK) lens...in a broader sense, it is hoped that students, educators, administrators, families, tribal elders and communities will use this material to meet the needs of a diverse and ever changing demographic.

Purpose of the project

The purpose of this project will be to gather and develop a classroom curriculum, viewed though a traditional OEK lens and designed initially for an Ojibwe

immersion program. An exciting aspect of this project is the curriculum will be implemented and incorporated immediately as part of an Ojibwe language immersion nest program for Kindergarten children. This language nest is an example of the immediate need to develop curriculum that is authentic and exudes a FL worldview.

Significance of the Study

Little information exists in the study of Ojibwe SLA, especially through the perspective of an FL speaker. Authors, who are SL learners of the Ojibwe language, but not FL speakers, write many sources for literature from an SL learner perspective. None to very little intimate language connections to a sense of place and identity are transferred in this learning other than the grammatical value of the language developed by linguists and academics (Willow, 2010).

Ojibwe language and OEK encompass living in a shared space cognizant in the value of every component as integral to the whole –interconnectedness in a world of inclusion. There is a growing acknowledgment that learning other languages in addition to a primary language is essential to being able to understand more fully the thoughts, needs and ideas of our human partners across the globe, to think about issues from a different cognitive perspective and to move fluidly across other cultures (Soderman & Toko, 2008). The identity of students in relation to their space is critical in the growth and development of understanding and acceptance of a shared humanity and meaningful existence.

It is hoped that this project will begin a scholarly discussion grounded in an understanding of an intimate and authentic perspective developed through centuries of a

sense of origin. As far as the author knows, this may be the first curriculum project to be undertaken by a scholar who is a FL speaker.

Audience

The audience for this project is language educators who ideally will adopt this curriculum approach. Although this project identifies that the curriculum being developed is for immersion language nests, the curriculum may be adapted by increasing the level of language used before, during and after the lessons. The curriculum will be developed to follow the natural changes in the surrounding region of North Central Minnesota – historically a traditional Ojibwe-speaking territory. Ojibwe is one of the most geographically widespread of all North American Indian languages, it is spoken in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota, Rocky Boy Reservation in Montana and much of central Canada (Gwayakogaabaw, 2011).

There is a growing need among practicing Ojibwe language educators in immersion schools for the availability of authentic and environmentally conscience knowledge (Bannon, 2004). These two elements, authentic knowledge and environmental knowledge, are enmeshed in the Ojibwe language and interwoven in all of its teachings. One of these teachings is that human life, even before conception, is a continuous journey of the human spirit towards everlasting life. Fathers are encouraged to sing and talk to the fetus to encourage a smooth and uncomplicated arrival at the time of the first breath - birth. Interaction with the fetus as a spirit prepares the newborn child as a receptacle of the Ojibwe language by programming the fetus to be familiar with the

upcoming new environment. The time in the womb is a critical period of instruction that will leave lifelong impressions in the life of an individual.

The teachings are derived from a life filled with traditional teachings from pre-birth all the way to the present. I was born into an Ojibwe-only speaking family and community in Northern Ontario, Canada. Complementing these traditional teachings and traditional worldview was my grandmother, Bebakwewidamook, who lived until she was one hundred and fourteen years old. As is the custom in traditional Ojibwe childrearing I was selected, from several siblings, for a lifetime of traditional teachings. When summoning up remembrance of this lifestyle several questions come to mind: What is to happen to the language and the knowledge it contains? Who is going to advocate for our connection to the environment when all the first language speakers have passed on to the afterlife? Will there be an understanding of who we are as Ojibwe people – human caretakers of the Earth?

Considerations

I wish to issue a caution not to generalize or make broad interpretations from this project. The project does not include the many different and beautiful Indigenous languages spoken on Makinaako-minis (Turtle Island) and does not suggest there is only one viable alternative worldview. The goal of the curriculum is the Ojibwe language and does not take into account different ethnic languages.

A major consideration in developing this curriculum was to not be guided by the Academic Standards of the States of Minnesota, Wisconsin, or Michigan. However, I do teach in Minnesota and will include the sections I believe take the standards to another level of understanding and would otherwise not be a benefit to the educational

programming. I am a licensed teacher both in Wisconsin and Minnesota. My belief is these standards limit the ability of an Indigenous language to thrive and prevent educators from delivering an authentic curriculum.

The location of the program is not considered a limitation, as the focus of the curriculum is authentic Ojibwe. As the primary FL speaker for this project, I have moved to Northern Minnesota to take part in the revitalization effort to save the language - a development that presented complications at the beginning but was soon eliminated by deeming the language itself as the primary focus. Eliminating the human element from the focus has allowed an inclusion for all students who wish to learn the language and to promote acceptance within others through language and discourse.

Definitions

- Second Language Acquisition (SLA) – the scientific discipline devoted to studying the process by which people learn a second language - any language learned after the first
- First Language (FL) – the language a speaker has learned from pre-birth
- Ojibwe Environmental Knowledge (OEK) - Traditional knowledge (TK), indigenous knowledge (IK), traditional environmental knowledge (TEK) and local knowledge generally refer to the long-standing traditions and practices of certain regional, indigenous or local communities. Traditional knowledge also encompasses the wisdom, knowledge, and teachings of these communities. In many cases, traditional knowledge has been orally passed for generations from person to person. Some forms of traditional knowledge are expressed through stories, legends, folklore, rituals, songs, and even laws. Other forms of

traditional knowledge are expressed through different means. I derived OEK from this definition.

- Makinaako-minis (Turtle Island) – a term used by several Northeastern Woodland Native American tribes to describe the North American continent.

Summary

In summary, the purpose of this project is to develop a curriculum for use in an Ojibwe Language Immersion Nest through an OEK lens. Its significance is rooted in the element that this will be an example of a project grounded in a traditional Ojibwe FL speakers' worldview. Not many sources can make this claim. In the broader sense, it is hoped that students, educators, administrators, families, tribal elders and communities will use this curriculum project as a significant first step in meeting the needs of a diverse and ever changing demographic.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

The purpose of this project will be to gather and develop a classroom curriculum, viewed though a traditional OEK perspective, and designed for use in an Ojibwe immersion language nest. The literature review will gather information that will be used to strengthen the use of traditional Ojibwe Environmental Knowledge (OEK) in an Ojibwe language immersion nest program. There are many first languages in the world and some are even endangered - Ojibwe being one of them. Ojibwe is a North American language indigenous to the Lake Superior region. There were four general thematic categories that were discovered during the literature review and will inform the curriculum project: second language acquisition models, the dynamic nature of culture, learning your own language as a second language, and the inclusion of the environment in the immersion education experience.

Second Language Acquisition

Although they are successful for many languages, traditional SLA models do not include languages indigenous to Makinaako-minis and will need some tweaking to be useful (Willow, 2010; White, 2006). However, themes deemed to be particularly responsive to the SLA of Indigenous languages in the literature review, shall be extracted as a premise to guide the tweaking that culminate in a curriculum for inclusion in an Ojibwe language immersion nest. It is said that it takes an entire community to help prepare a child for the journey through this world; efforts to do just this are growing on Makinaako-minis.

Individuals and entire communities are working to revive ancestral languages and values with young children through legends, historical stories, and demonstrations (Bannon, 2004). Most FL speakers are unaware that very little of the language is left in the northern states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan – all historically traditional Ojibwe speaking territories. It also takes an entire nation to lose the essence of their identity. Who can better affect the condition of the Ojibwe language? Historically, the purpose for research into Indigenous Language (IL) was primarily to categorize the language for grammatical use and to create experts who made a lucrative living and perpetuated the colonial nature of research (Willow, 2010).

This scientific approach is reflective of the Western ideology of "commodifying" something that is natural to a people and proclaiming to be the exclusive authority. The depth of traditional knowledge is lost during the grammatical transmission of a "commodity" language. Ultimately, SL learners do not receive the full value and teachings of the original language leading to a loss of respect and understanding that is only available from FL knowledge of the language. Working closely with SL learners, the full participation of our FL speakers is required in conjunction with all the necessary credits and compensation. As a FL speaker, it is very difficult to have a conversation with a SL learner who knows the language from a grammatical perspective; there is a sorrowful loss of communication.

The dynamic nature of culture

The learning of a primary language usually takes place very easily, very early, during a specific developmental period in a child's life and no special training is needed (Soderman &Toko, 2008). In the case of the Indigenous language in America, the result

has been forced extinction and extermination of entire peoples' and their languages. To reconcile the devastating effects of historic colonialism on languages, all peoples have to shed the shackles of fear, blame and shame to walk a new road to the understanding of differences. In traditional Ojibwe teachings we see these differences in all of creation and live within the beauty and strength of a shared and diverse community.

Culturally responsible FL teachers are rare and in high demand in areas where FL speakers are non-existent. This circumstance provides an opportunity for an economic emigration of an otherwise financially derelict population self-entombed within the reservation boundaries. There is an urgent need for the knowledge of the old ones that is contained in the language of the FL speaker. Culture and language are enmeshed in the acquisition of the Ojibwe language. In contrast to this is the literature that states there is an academic, economic, or social component that will benefit from learning the second language; but with Anishnaabe ancestral languages there is little such motivation for most people on reservations (Willow, 2010). In this statement, the Western view of language acquisition is apparent in the only purpose being academic, finance, and prestige. I emigrated from Northern Ontario, where the language is still very strong, to be more useful in the effort to revitalize the Ojibwe language in Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin – the only motivation being a spiritual connection and responsibility to the language.

Ancestral cultural awareness, identity, and self-worth are only a few benefits that elicit a more positive motivation for teaching and learning the Ojibwe language at home, school, or community. For example, in addition to teaching the ancestral language, the Cherokee Nation's program addresses the goals of raising the cultural

awareness of Cherokee children, thereby enabling them to remain excited about who they are and what they are learning as they travel through the school years. The Cherokee people believe that the immersion of the preschoolers in their ancestral ways, coupled with the guidance of elders, will provide motivation and modeling that will lead to language acquisition and cultural knowledge (Bannon, 2004). An awareness and practice of culture is key in the efforts to re-establish the identity of Ojibwe children on Makinaako-minis. In another example, in a study of Mexican background students, ancestral culture represented a treasure trove of information that will help inform an educator's desire to present culturally relevant instruction (authentic) to minority students (Godina, 2003). This is not normally the case in mainstream schools for many reasons that shall not be discussed in this paper. The information children receive in public schools does not reflect a traditional perspective vibrant in a cultural awareness that promotes identity and self-worth for Indigenous students.

Simply stated, there is a need for teachers with inherent Ojibwe knowledge in the classroom; they are currently not represented in the formal education of Ojibwe children in mainstream and reservation schools. Complementary to this need is the capacity to develop teachers with the necessary language skills to model proper usage. These teachers will have a well-balanced foundation of knowledge and language base supplemented by an amalgamation of an old and new Ojibwe perspective capable of surviving the onslaught on languages. The legacy of institutional racism exists today in all levels of the education system. University and tribal collaborations, necessary to prepare Indigenous teachers/scholars, are crucial if we are to meet this educational challenge (White et al, 2007). Today there are programs available to teach teachers of

Ojibwe language students and I am a major supporter as a student, FL speaker, educator, and community member.

Your own language as a second language

In many homes, communities, and schools Ojibwe people are learning their own language as a second language. There is an element not apparent in current SLA models that is neglected that pertains to Indigenous Languages of North America. Other languages can go back to their country to be immersed in their language of choice, indigenous languages do not – there is no other country that speaks their language. When the language is gone, it is forever and so are the knowledge and the sense of who were as Anishinaabe people. However, there are entire families that still maintain the language at home and are very successful in acquiring English as a second language in school and from others in the community such as the case in the community where I grew up Gakijiwanong (Guh kih jih wuh nohng) – Ojibwe for where the water flows over.

The cultural interface of mainstream curricula and local indigenous knowledge should be looked at as an opportunity for inclusion in curriculum development discourse. An integral component of this discussion is the development of a sense of place, the junction where multiple peoples come together to formulate an oral history that is representative of everyone, not just the privileged few (Yungaporta & McGinty, 2009). Understanding and acceptance are necessary aspects that alleviate or dispel the unnatural cultural discomfort that impacts on the contents of a vital and healthy discourse of what to include in a curriculum. Without these inhibitions, a curriculum should flourish.

Inclusion of the environment in the immersion education experience

An intimate knowledge of the land is inherent in a language developed to resemble the relationship between an environmental knowledge and a people's sense of place within it. From the first instances of life, an Ojibwe child is exposed to its place through its' human senses. A tikinaagan, (tih kih gnaw gun) Ojibwe for cradleboard, is where I spent many moons listening, feeling, seeing, smelling, and understanding the life around me. I can tell without looking what type of birds are flying through the air, how many, and in which direction they are going. I can also tell whether they landed or have left the area. To help explain this environmental connection, a language program must tap into this awareness of the natural world in order to transfer a concept of self-awareness.

Conclusions/Recommendations

As stated in the introduction, the purpose of this project will be to gather and develop a classroom curriculum, viewed though a traditional OEK perspective, and designed for use in an Ojibwe immersion language nest. My wish is to present the traditional Ojibwe information as authentically as possible, but there is always the potential to have personal biases. After looking into the successes of several SLA models that work for many other languages, the recommendation is to take components of these models and adapt them to be incorporated into a Less Commonly Taught Language (LCTL) like Ojibwe.

This project is not in any way a conclusive exposition of the exciting literature to be found in SLA research, but it is the beginning of a scholarly presentation of an alternative worldview – an Ojibwe worldview from a FL speaker. Although there is

very little literature that addresses infusing OEK into a language learning experience in a language nest, I am hopeful this project will be the beginning of a long and scholarly effort to develop authentic curricula for Indigenous language instruction that has to be included in the State of Minnesota curriculum. Who will the principle recipients of the Ojibwe language be? Students, educators, administrators, families, tribal elders and communities interested in the revitalization of traditional knowledge, the cosmological knowledge represented in physical form on Earth, and people involved in Ojibwe language revitalization efforts are the major beneficiaries of this curriculum project. The next chapter shall reveal a methodology derived for this project.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

As a reminder, the purpose of this project will be to gather and develop a classroom curriculum, viewed though a traditional OEK lens and, designed initially for an Ojibwe immersion program. As a child living in an all Ojibwe speaking community, all of the children I went to school with were able to acquire a second language with only our teacher as the principal speaker of the target language - English. Now the tide has turned, I am now the principal speaker of Ojibwe in an all English-speaking classroom and community. I posit my lived experience as a FL speaker makes the curriculum project possible. As a result, I will present authentic Ojibwe cosmological knowledge acquired through a lifetime of a particular type of existence into a modern immersion understanding. I will contribute this knowledge through the lens of an authentic FL speaker.

The setting of this project lies vibrant in the childhood memories, the rites of passage teachings, and in the continuous development of a traditional Ojibwe lifestyle. Major contributors to this project are family, extended family, and community members of a vibrant and developing language community of students and teachers who have helped develop the man I am today. To my past, current, and future teachers of traditional Ojibwe teachings I am forever indebted.

Curriculum Development

In an effort to transfer traditional OEK to the classroom this project will incorporate the cosmological relationship of the lunar cycle and a traditional lifestyle into an Ojibwe curriculum for Kindergarten children in an Ojibwe immersion language

nest using my life experience and knowledge acquired as a FL speaker from a traditional Ojibwe family.

Traditional Ojibwe lifestyle is determined by an observation of the yearly lunar cycle, not as a rule but as a necessity for survival in a harsh environment. In the Ojibwe language the moon is called Dibikigiizis (Night-time sun). The moon that will be up in the nighttime sky from March 22, 2012 to April13, 2012 is Iskigamizige-giizis (Evaporating Moon). This is the moon that shall be used to illustrate the knowledge contained in the teachings of the Ojibwe people. For reasons of space and clarity, only one moon out of thirteen shall be used to describe this knowledge in order to facilitate the opportunity for others to add to this critical project. This project does not represent all of the knowledge held by the Ojibwe people.

Scope and Sequence

The scope and sequence of the curriculum project will contain: 1) a strong background knowledge to inform teachers, who may adopt the curriculum, presentation in three traditional stories in Ojibwe and transcribed into English and 2) suggestions for development of a lesson plan with reference to the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and the American Indian Learning Outcomes (AILOS) in several core subject areas. The overarching theme will demonstrate an undeniable cosmological connection to the moon Iskigamizige-giizis (ih skih guh mih zih gay – gey zis) and what she teaches the Ojibwe people about the importance of biological diversity in life forms on Earth.

In the oral tradition of the Ojibwe, a teaching will be shared first in the target language Ojibwe and then in English for each of the three traditional stories. The first

story will reveal how to recognize the signs in the natural world that indicate when the trees will begin to give their gift of ziinzibaakwadaabo (zeen zih baw kwuh daw boh), Ojibwe for maple sap and then when they will be finished giving their sacred liquid. The second story will have teachings of the different types of trees who gave of themselves so we can enjoy their gifts. The final story will contain the preparation of the camp before, during, and after the sugar camp.

Throughout the lessons there will be target language words and concepts that will be developed. Before the lesson there will be a pre-test in the form of questions to assess prior knowledge of maple sugar. The questions will be very simple and shall include recognition of the target language words that will be used during the lesson. After each lesson there will be a post-test to determine second language acquisition of the words to add to an increasing vocabulary. The lessons shall be progressive in nature and will culminate in an increased vocabulary for use in understanding the maple sugar process. The lesson plans will follow a format familiar with primary teacher practitioners but may be utilized for any level Ojibwe language learner. The primary concern is the presentation and oral delivery of material.

CHAPTER FOUR

Introduction

As a general reminder, the purpose of this project was to develop a curriculum for use in an Ojibwe Language Immersion Nest, but it may be adopted in other spaces as well. The curriculum is developed through an OEK lens, its significance rooted in the element that this is an example of a project grounded in a traditional Ojibwe FL speaker's worldview. Stories are told to transfer centuries of knowledge and wisdom to the children who will be keepers of this knowledge in the future. The children are always mindful of their place in the design of the natural world – nature is never a mystery.

To begin, I find it necessary to summon lessons I learned in my lifetime beginning from childhood to the present. As a traditional Ojibwe, I understand my journey to this physical world started from the spiritual world. This journey included a vital time in the womb of my mother. As a developing spiritual/physical being, I had to make sense of my internal surroundings - learning, adapting and being programmed by my mother's experience - the vessel of my life. It is in this place where our physical being responds and develops to a highly individualistic set of conditions. After birth in my physical journey, life circumstance will default to these foundational tenets to make sense of the constant and intricate amount of human interactions and relationships. My elders will expect me to understand and know where it is I come from, I will also need to be grounded in my identity as an Anishinaabe inini.

When an Ojibwe child is born into the physical world and begins to take in the life-giving gift of the air, another journey begins on our mother the Earth. During the

early stages of this journey, a newborn child is constantly wrapped in a waapijiipizon (wah pih gee pih zon) the Ojibwe word for a carrying bag, which is attachable to a tikinaagan (tih kin gnaw gun) the Ojibwe word for cradleboard. The waapijiipizon is reminiscent of the comfort of the womb easing the often, harsh new environment. A child is carried in the tikinaagan for the mobility and strength the construction provides to the fragile body and convenience to the mother. No matter where she is the child is always close by and within safe view. Because the child is wrapped and unable to move around, he is perfecting the skills to recognize the sight, sound, smell, taste, and feel for humans, animals, birds, trees, insects, sun, moon, stars, air, and weather. Ultimately everything that is surrounding the child becomes thoroughly familiar just like the journey in the womb. After a while the child is comfortable in his habitat and has the ability to describe his environment with an increased awareness. An increased awareness of the environment and your role within it develops a sense of identity relative to a refined disposition developed from generation to generation of living in the same place. A disposition molded, not by others, but by what is familiar to you.

Many sources of information are developed to describe the point of view of Native Americans: a Canadian Born Native American (CBNA) writes this project. CBNA is a title given to me by the Government of the United States of America. I address myself by who I am, Anishinaabe - original human being. I tried hard to develop this project entirely from an Anshinaabe perspective without deviating or defaulting to the Western and academic viewpoint taught to me from the Kindergarten to the present M.Ed. program. However, I am lucky to know this world from the ancestral language of the Ojibwe speaking Anishinaabe people therefore I am firmly

grounded in this worldview. I would further describe myself as an Anishinaabe inini. The teachings for an inini (man) and an ikwe (woman) are totally different. Teachings are taught from birth and continue into childhood, adolescence, adulthood, elder hood, and finally into the gaagige-bimaadiziwin (gaw gih gay – bih maw dih zih win) for life of all knowledge. The key to access knowledge is language.

Language develops the human being. Language opens a world that does not exist to anyone who cannot speak the same language. Language connects you to your family, your community, your environment, and to the richness of your past. Language is who you are and the work that you do. This project opens up a world not many can say they are familiar with and further, not many can say they can develop authentically. I am fortunate to be able to do this as a heritage project for the ones who spoke the language, the ones who are learning to speak the language, and the ones who will not speak the language!

There are many teachings contained in the oral histories told by the Ojibwe. For many centuries the eloquent keepers of the history of the nation - grandparents, parents, and extended family members - handed down the teachings through oral presentations. None of the stories were written down, most of them were told only during times when our grandmother the snow covered our mother the Earth. I remember the gentle voice of my grandmother when as a child I would fell asleep watching reflections of the fire chasing shadows on the walls of her old log cabin. The next thing I remember, I would wake up filled with a night full of dreams. Dreams are important to the Ojibwe, it is the way that our Creator and spirits communicate with one another – our pathway to a world where we come from and where we are travelling to on a daily basis. Dreams

develop our creativity. Creativity inspires a desire to learn. When we can go to that space with the children we teach, we are effective.

In the tradition of Ojibwe oral teaching, I shall present three stories commonly shared during the time when the moon is called Iskigamizige-giizis (ih skih guh mih zih gay – gey zis), Ojibwe for the Evaporating Liquids Moon. These stories are meant for everyone to learn and to teach, entertain, and develop the imaginations of children through lessons. The lessons learned are life oriented and model the natural pedagogy of Ojibwe teachings. Ojibwe stories are a powerful interface between worlds that do not share a common view and a means of promoting diverse education into mainstream society.

The stories offered in this project are not meant to be a thorough presentation of the beauty of the traditional Ojibwe, but meant to share a unique sense of contribution to cultural education and language revitalization from an otherwise marginalized perspective. Without a sense of environment what shall our children inherit from us? Please use these gifts to share in the age-old tradition of story telling. In this respect I begin by introducing the following story, *Ininaatig's Gift of Sugar*.

Ininaatig's Gift of Sugar

Introduction and Underlying Beliefs

The following story teaches about knowledge in a cycle of seasons and how the changes contribute to the livelihood of the traditional Ojibwe, a cyclical understanding of the patterns in nature and the structural changes in natural "objects" – ice, trees - and how difficult it was to survive in the harsh Northern Minnesota environment during the times when the stories were told. This story represents an environmental knowledge

apparent in traditional Ojibwe stories and a connection to the natural world as being vibrant with different and equal life forms – a different view of the biological world. The difference is reflected in the language we use when we refer to animate and inanimate nouns (subjects and objects) in the physical, spiritual and mental meaning. Ojibwe believe that all biological living life forms are animate and ones that are not are inanimate.

Trees become alive and can speak, think and do everything a human can, except move of course. This is true of birds as well. In this story the woodpecker opens and closes the trees and informs the Ojibwe people when to begin and stop sugar collection. Sharing the gifts of the natural world is a different idea in comparison to the Western view. In this view a tree is not a commodity to be sold in the market to contribute to the economy and to the environmental demise of our country it is our relative sharing, living, breathing, and drinking the life giving waters with us. Trees were placed on this earth for a different purpose and they always remember to do this every year of their lives. They are hard at work producing photosynthesis and deservedly vacation in the winter, particularly the subject of this story Ininaatig. The trees teach us how to be as Anishinaabe people, to work hard, share, be always aware of diversity and adversity, to make sacrifices, to be thankful for life and to always remember why we were placed on this Earth. These are some of the underlying beliefs contained in the story of *Ininaatigs Gift of Sugar*.

Aabiding iinzan mewinzha, wiinge gii-kichi-zanagi-biboonishi Anishinaabe onzaamigo gabeyi'ii gii-pibooninini. Agaawaago gii-tebaji ji-ani-ziigwaninig. Mii-maawiin igo apii gii-ani-anji-naagozid mikom, gi-ani-makadewizigwaag, apii gii-

bagida'angin zaaga'igaanan miinawaa gii-maajii-bimijiwangin ziibiin. Gii-inendamoog iiinzan ji-mikamowaapan miijim Ziigwaninig, giishpiin etago geyaabi ajina bimaaji'idizowaad.

Megwaago bagwaje'ii babaa-endaawaad, odoodaanaamiwaang iinzan onoondawaawaa' mitigoo' maaji-webaashinid. Onoondawaawaan iinzan gaye babaa-mamadweyaako'igenid baapaasen mitigokaang. Babaa ando-manidooshiwenid. Gegoo iinzan onji-zhaabweweseni dibishkooje'ii mitigokaang, obaabaayiwaan iinzan inendamoon, "Awiya ganabaj ninoondawaa?" Giikwekitaa, hay' gaawiin awiya owaabamaasiin ji-ayaanid imaa odaanaang. Mii iinzan biinash gaa-ani-inendang, ganabaj gosha naa indani giiwanaadendam epiichi…epichi-gawanaandamaan.

Ingoding igo omaamaayiwaan onoondaan iinzan gewiin gegoo, aabamaabamaad onaabeman, "Gegoo na gidikid?"

"Gaawiin gegoo nindikidosii," ikido iinzan inini.

Gii-kwekibagizowag iinzan manji-niizh, apii awiyan ganoonigowaad, "Giga-gikino'amawininim gegoo ge-ondinamegiban gemiijiyeg miinawaa wiika ji-gawanaandanziweg ingoding." Gakina go waajiiwaawaad gii-koshokaawag miinawaa gii-segiziwag. Gaawiin gosha mitoog ogaganoonaasiwaa' anishinaabe'. Geget dash gii-izhiwebad, gakina go ogii-noondawaan mitigoon gaga-noonigowaad. Ininaatig, gii-kiigido'.

Ogii-gikino'amawaa' ji-giishkizhaminid owiiyaw, gaawiin memooch gichi-niibiwa. Ogii-wiindamawaa' ji-mamiginaminid ge-onjijiwaninig ezhi-giishkizhond. Da-waankamin miinawaa da-zhiiwaagamin. Ogii-wiindamawaa' ji-onzaminid biinash ji-ani-makadewaagamininig miinawaa ji-zhiiwaagamininig. Mii apii-gemijiwaapan

magizhaa gaye geyabi odaa-onzaanaawaa biinash ji-mishkawaagamininig. Giishpiin ziiginigewaad imaa gichi-onaaganing, ane'amowaad biinash igo da-ziinzibaakwadoowanini.

Mii gaa-izhichigewaad gaa-izhi-gikino'amawindwaa. Ogii-ozhitoonaawaa zhiwaagamizigan miinawaa ziinzibaakwad. Ogii-ozhitoonaawaa gaye ziinzibaakwadoonsan. Biinash iinzan gaani-izhi-depisewaad gemiijiwaad ji-ani-ziigwaninig apii ge-giigoonyikewaad. Gaa-izhi-bimaaji'igowaad iinzan ini ininaatigoon ingi Anishinaabeg

It was the end of a long, cold winter, and a family was starving. The hunting had not been good that year, and all the stored food had been eaten. There were not grocery stores then. As the family looked out at the lake near their camp, they noticed the ice was changing color, from white to black. This meant that the ice was thin and would break apart in a few weeks. Spring was coming. They would find food then, if they could stay alive that long.

Behind them, the family heard the trees crackling in the wind. They heard a woodpecker tapping on a tree, looking for insects. Above the noise, the father thought he heard someone speak. He turned but saw no one. He thought that hunger must be making him hear things.

All of a sudden the mother heard someone say, "I will teach you a way to make food so that you will never have to starve." The whole family was surprised and frightened. Trees don't talk to human beings! Yet, it was true. They had all heard it. Ininaatig – the man tree – had spoken.

He told the family to cut his skin, not too deep, but just enough. He told them to collect the liquid that flowed from the cut. It would be clear as water and cold and just a little sweet. He told them to boil the liquid until it became a dark, thick, sweet syrup. They could eat this food, or they could boil it more until it became even thicker. If they poured the syrup into a trough and stirred it back and forth, it would turn into sugar.

The family did exactly as they were taught. They made maple syrup and sugar. They also made candy. Now they had enough food to keep them strong until the ice on the lake broke and there would be fish. The man tree had saved their lives (Wittstock, 1993).

Nanabosh miinawa Ininaatigoog (Anishinaabe – Gichigamiing)

Introduction and Underlying Beliefs

This second story is consistent with the traditional sense of animate and inanimate objects/subjects that seemingly come alive at will. In this story we introduce a different type of character, the greatest storyteller of all, our great uncle Nenabosh. He was human and non-human sometimes he had the uncanny gift of changing himself into other life forms. Nenabosh was the only one to attain this idea of metamorphosis or supernatural transformation or so he declared! He was the first human being to ever walk on this Earth, back when everything was not known to have names.

The story begins with when everything on earth was new. This idea suggests a time of a long time ago, back when the earth was being created, when life was plentiful and it was comparatively easier as a result. In the time of human beings, the Anishinaabe began to take advantage of their bounty and would not pursue their work and health, losing sight of the gifts of the “One Who Made All Things” – the Creator.

To teach the Anishinaabe a lesson, Nenabosh filled all the Maple Trees with water to dilute the syrup and turn it into a solution of sap and water. Now to be able to get the gift, Anishinaabe would have to work hard and stay healthy to get at it. The story also talks about the cyclical activities of hunting, fishing, and gathering and the social and economic implications that permeated in a subsistence society. This story also introduces another tree, which is vital to the survival and the technology of the Ojibwe – Wiigwaasaatig (Wee gwaah sah tig) for the Birch Tree. However, the significance of this tree will be discussed in another story. The story of *Nanabosh miinawa Ininaatigoog* will be told in Ojibwe first than it will be translated into English.

Mewinzha, gii-oshki-akiiwang, gichimanidoo ogii-ozhitoon gegoo ge-onji-wendizid niizhoogaadejig. Gii-paataniino awesiinh, apane gii-mino-giizhigad, miinawaa ininaatigoog apane ogii-ayaanaawaa meshkawaagamig zhiiwaagamizigan. Amanjigo apii waa-ayaawad awiya zhiiwaagamizigan, mii etago gii-pookwaagibidood awiya mitigoons ezhi-bangigaad ininaatig megwaa mamiginang minik igo waa-ayaad awiya.

Aabiding giizhigad, Nanabosh gii-pabaamose. “Indaa-awi-waabamaag sa niijiiwaaganag anishinaabeg amanjigo naa ezhi-ayaawaagwen,” inendam iinzan. Gaa-izhi-izhaagwen iwidi endaanid i’i anishinaabe’. Ogwenawaabamaa’ iinzan. Gaa-izhaa-babaa-andone’waad. Weniban gebabaa-nootshkimegwenid ziibiikaang miinawaa zaaga’iaganikaang. Weniban gebabaamendaminid ogitigaaniwaan. Weniban gebabaamawinzonid. Engwaamas iinzan gaa-izhi-mikawaad. Mii nangona babaa-baakidone-azhagijishininid megwaa biinji-bangigaanig zhiiwaagamizigan imaa odooniiwaang.

“Hay’, Gaawiin gwayak,” ikido iinzan Nanabosh. “Niij-anishinaabeg gakina da-gitimishkiwag miinawaa da-wiininowag giishpiin izhibimaadiziwaad owe gwayak.”

Nanbosh gaa-izhi-naazibiid ziibiing. Ogii-maajiidoon gechi-michaanig biskitewinaagan gaagii-ozhitoogwen. Ogii-abajitoon biskitewinaagan ji-awazoobiid. Gaa-izhi izhaagwen waanakong ininaatigong ji-biinji-ziiginang nibi ge-onji-aakewaagamininig zhiiwaagamizigan. Gaawiin geyaabi gii-pangigaasinoon meshkawaagamig zhiiwaagamizigan imaa giishkibidoowaad mitigoonsan ininaatigong Anishinaabeg. Agaawaa go gii-shiiwaagamin miinawaa gii-akewaagamin.

“Mii gwayak apane ge-inaakamigak,” ikido iinzan Nanbosh. “Gaawiin geyabi da-onji-gaasinoon zhiiwaagamizigan. Mii etago owe ekewaagamig ziinzibaakwadaabo ge-onjigaag. Giishpiin wii ayaawaad Anishinaabeg, niibiwa biskitewinaaganan oga-awadoonawaan dibishkoo gagii-izhichigeyaan. Da-manisewag niibiwa miinawaa da-boodawewag ji-gizhaapikizigewaad. Oga-onzaanaawaa ziinzibaakwadaabo gabeyi’ii jibwaa ondinamowaad bangii zhiiwaagamizigan. Niiji-anishinaabeg gaawiin geyaabi da-wiininosiiwag miinawaa da-gitimisiiwag. Maagizhaa oga-gichi-apiitendaanaawaa zhiiwaagamizigan gaa-miinigowaad gichimanidoon. Gaawiin gaye etago iwe, owe ziinzibaakwadaabo da-onjigaa aabidiing etago endaso-gikinoonowin. Gaawiin da-ondami’ayaasiiwag awiya ji-anodowenjigewaad, ji-noodashkimegwewaad, ji-mawinzowaad, miinawaa ji-gitigewaad. Mii gwayak apane ge-izhi’ayaag, “ ikido iinzan Nanabosh.

Mii dash wenji-izhi-ayaag geyaabi owe apii.

A long time ago, when the world was new, Gitchee Manitou made things so that life was very easy for the people. There was plenty of game and the weather was always

good and the maple trees were filled with thick sweet maple syrup. Whenever anyone wanted to get maple syrup from the trees, all they had to do was break off a twig and collect it as it dripped out.

One day, Manabozho went walking around. “I think I will go see how my friends the Anishinaabe are doing,” he said. So he went to a village of Indian people. But there was not one around. So Manabozho looked for the people. They were not fishing in the streams or the lake. They were not working in the fields hoeing their crops. They were not gathering berries. Finally he found them. They were in the grove of maple trees near the village. They were all just lying on their backs with their mouths wide open, letting the maple syrup drip into their mouths.

“This will not do,” Manabozho said. “My people are all going to be fat and lazy if they keep on living this way.”

So Manabozho went down to the river. He took with him a big basket he had made of birch bark. With this basket he brought back many buckets of water. He went to the top of the maples trees and poured the water in so that it thinned out the syrup. Now thick maple syrup no longer dripped out of the broken twigs. Now what came out was thin and watery and just barely sweet to the taste.

“This is how it will be from now on, “ Manabozho said. “No longer will syrup drip from the maple trees. Now there will only be this watery sap. When people want to make maple syrup they will have to gather many buckets of the sap in a birch bark basket like mine. They will have to gather wood and make fires so they can heat stones to drop into the baskets. They will have to boil the water with heated stones for a long time to make even a little maple syrup. Then my people will no longer grow fat and

lazy. Then they will appreciate this maple syrup Gitchee Manitou made available to them. Not only that, this sap will drip only from the trees at a certain time of the year. Then this will not keep people from hunting and fishing and gathering and hoeing in the fields. This is how it is going to be," Manabozho said.

And that is how it is to this day (Bruchac & Caduto, 1988).

Nanabosh Giikimoodid Ishkode – as learned from elder Gerry Smith (LCO Ojibwe)

Introduction and Underlying Beliefs

This story represents an oral teaching delivered in a classic traditional Ojibwe form. The story affirms the dynamics of family relationships - grandmother and grandson, father and daughters, and the endless work that needs to be accomplished to subsist on a yearly basis. The story also introduces additional characters: Animikii (uh nih mih kee), Nookomis (Know koh mis), and daughters of Animikii and exemplifies the conventional ability of Nenabosh to transform into different beings seemingly at will.

In the style of Ojibwe tradition, Nenabosh lives with his grandma in a wigwaam on the island. It is this family dynamic that is the driving force behind oral traditions and guarantees transfer of knowledge to the grandchildren. I had the special privilege of being a Nenabosh to my grandmother until she was one hundred and fourteen years old. Fathers are to ensure the wellbeing of their daughters in all aspects of life, even when the fathers are not close by and busy working somewhere else. As a father I take lessons from Animikii on how to take care of my daughters, even though they have left my home.

Then there is Nenabosh, who is generally the principle character, storyteller, and teacher of the Ojibwe Anishinaabe. He exuded all the human traits possible from one end of the behavior spectrum to the other. If there was anything that could happen or be done, Nenabosh did it first. He is our great uncle our foremost teacher and keeper of knowledge and wisdom.

An influential discovery of those times was the numerous uses of the birch tree. It could be used for medicine – a natural aspirin, to write on – scrolls, birch bark biting, to shelter our homes, to make our homes, to start a fire with, for arts and crafts, to prevent meat from rotting at a time when there wasn't refrigeration – it has a natural ingredient that prevents rotting - to hold water, and to use for transporting things on water – war craft, people, and goods. Birch bark trees are truly a gift from the Creator.

The above are some of the underlying beliefs contained in this version of *Nanabosh Giikimoodid Ishkode.* Again this classical story will be told first in Ojibwe than translated into English.

Mewinzha gii-endaawag Nenabosh miinawaa ookomisan imaa Mooningwanekaaning minis. Aapiji weweni gii-izhi-bimaadiziwag, apane ogii-pizindawaan okoomisan Nenabosh aadisookenid gii-dibikadining. Ogii-minotawaan aadisookenid biinash igo ji-nibaad. Ingoding idash bezhig gikinoonowin gii-kichi-gisinaa biiboon, gii-kinwaa biboon gaye, aapiji-gii-kinwaagonagaa gaye. Engwaamas igonaa gakina gegoo ogii-ani-jaaginaanaawaa ge-onji-bimaadiziwaad, wiiyaas, misan, nibi, memindage ishkode ge-onji-wazowaad miinawaa giizizekwewaad.

Agaame'ii iwidi gii-ayaag noongom gaa-miskwaapikaag, mii iwidi gii-endaawaad ingi niizh ikwezensag. Mii go apane gii-ayaawaad gakina gegoo. Made

zaaga-pasigewag gaye endaso-gigizheb. Mii awe odaanisa' Animikii. Weweni ogii-pami'aa' odaanisa' ji-mino-ayaanid gabe biboon. Endaso Dagwaagin mii iwidi nakakeyaa ezhi-giiwed biitaweyi'ii Zhaawanong miinawaa Ningaabi'anong, baanimaa miinawaa jibi-azhe-giiwed ani-ziigwaninig.

Gii-saziikizid bezhing oshkiniigikwens mii sa awe gaa-pizindawaad odedeyan, gii-oshiimenyimaawi bezhig ikwezens aapiji ogii-shawendaan gakina gegoo, memindage awesiinya'. Mii go apane gaa-igod ini omisenyan, "Engwaamizin gigii-igonaan gosha gidedenaan, ji-biindigaansiwaad awiya omaa biindig waaginogaaning! Gaawiin mino-ayaasii awe Nenabosh, giga-gagwe-makamigowaa gegoo eyaayeg."

Megwaa go iwidi minising Nenabosh owaabandaan zaagaapasigenid endaanid iwidi agaameyi'ii. Giikajiwag ookomisan miinawaa ogwenawimiijinaawaa. Nenabosh inaabid agaaming omikwendaan gwayak ge-inaadawitoopan ji-naadinang ishkode.

"Nenabosh gego-naanaadagawendangen" odigoon ini ookomisan.

"Hownh' nookomis gaawiin inga-mikwenimaasiig ezhichigewaad endaawaad iwidi agaaming" gii-ikido Nenabosh.

Ogii-paabii'aan ookimisan ji-gawingoshinid, mii-gaa-izhi-aazhawaadagaakobatood. Mii go apii ani-maajiiziigong, ingoji go Onaabani-giizis. Mii apii eni-ogiidaagonaagaag, wiinge naa minwaadagaakobatoo Nenabosh. Ajina go gii-pimibatoo ji-dagoshing iwidi waaginogaaning. "Aaniin ge-inaadawi'owaan ji-biindigeyaan waaginogaan inendam Nenabosh?" Gaa-izhi-mamadweyaako'iged ishkwaadenming.

"Na! Wenen gaa-madweyaako'iged?" ikido zeziikizid ikwesens.

"Dagashkomaa inga-inaab" ikido weshiimewimaawid ikwezens.

“Engwaamizin, miimaawiin awe Nenabosh” ikido zeziikisid ikwezens.

Weshiimewimaawid gaa-izhi-baakinang ishkwaandem. “Ooohh! Nashke gosha naa gaa-niibawid, wiinge gii-kaji. Nindaa-biindiganaa na? ” ikido.

Zeziikizid ikwezens ogii-inaan oshiimenyan, “Gaawiin gigii-onji’igonaan gosha gidedenaan ji-biindiganaasiwang awiya!”

Mii dash gaa-izhi-mawinid oshiimenyan. “Oh, yay! Wiinge gosha naa gii-kaji miinawaa bakade awe Waabooz.”

“Gego mawiken, biindigazh!” ikido zeziikizid ikwezens.

Jiigishkode iwidi ogii-awi-asaan Waaboozoon. Miziwe enaabi misawaabandang gakina gegoo eyaanig imaa waaginogaaning. Madweyaagamijiizo jiigishkodewabid. “Gwanaajiwiwag, ikwezensag” inendam Nenabosh.

“Ganawaabam weweni Waabooz” ikido zeziikizid ikwezens.

Weshiimewimaawid ogii-shawenimigoo’ apane awesiinya’ imaa waabamigod babaa-anokiid biindig miinawaa agwajiing. Gii-kizhewaadizi ikwezens. Omisenyan dash apane ogii-inanokii’igoon. Ingoding igo gwenawi’ondinamowaad nibi ji-ozhitoowaad naboobiikaan ogii-kanoonigoon omisenyan, “Nishiimenh daga nibinaadin, gaawiin gidayaasiimin nibi ji-naboobiikeyang. Engwaamizin gaye. Gego gaganoonaaken awesiinyag izhaayin iwidi dawaa’iganing. Mikwendan gagii-ikidod gidedenaan.”

“Gaawiin gosha indaa-kashkitoosiin ji-naadinamaan niizh akik nibi niineta onzaam gozigon, gidaa-wiijiiw na?”, gii-ikido ikwezens.

“Ambegoda giga-wiijiiwin. Apane gigitim ji-anokiiyin!” ikidowan omisenyan. “Biidoon nimbiinsikawaagan!” Mii dash gaa-izhi-naazibiiwaad iwidi eyaanig odawaa’iganiwaa.

Megwaa babaa-ayaanid iwidi agwajiing, Nenabosh gaa-izhi-azhe-anishinaabewi-idizod ayaad biindig waaginogaaning. Gakina gegoo obabaa naanaagajitoon. Omisawinaan gakina gegoo, memindage ishkode! “Aaniin ge-inaadawitooyaambaan ji-bimiwidooyaan ishkode” inendem. Obabaa-andowaabandaan gegoo ge-abaajitood. Ogii-noondawaa’ ikwezensa’ biidwewe-aagonagishkigenid beshiw. Gaa-izhi-azhe-waaboozo-idizod miinawaa ezhi-atood imaa opikonaang bi-baakaakoshkaanig ishkwaandem, gaa-izhi-zaagijibatwaadang ishkode.

“Hay’ Mii awe Nenabosh! Gigii-moodomigonaan ishkode” izhi-biibaagi zeziikizid ikwezens. Apane maajii-aadagaakobatood Waabooz iwidi Mooningwanekaaning. Gici-babiibaagiwag ikwezensag bimiba’iwed Nenabosh. Ojaagizogon gaye ishkode imaa opikonaang onzaan waasa apatoo.

Apii go ogii-ani-gwenawenimaa’ odaanisa’ Animikii. Mii go apii gii-ani-makadewizid mikom. “Daga inga-awi-waabamaag indaanisag, “ inendam, gaapi-izhi-bazigo’od. Gii-kichi-mindido Animikii; maamaa-dinangwiitaad noodin imaa gii-onji-seni, inaabid ingoji, waasigan imaa gii-ojiniseni, megwaa bimaashid opimeyaashid opikonaang onji-ziigiseni nibi. Gwataanendaagozi aapiji Animikii, naniizaaniziwag gakina awiya megwaa bimi’ayaad. Mii zhigwa ani-beshwaabandang eyaanid wiijaanisa’, mii noondawaad baabiibaaginid, “Ingimoodomigonaan Nenabosh ishkode!” Enigok gaa-izhi-bimised gwayak endanitaagozinid wiijaanisa’.

Owaabamaan awiyan ani-maadagaakobatoonid, ani-ondaapazowan. Waabooz gichi-bimba'iwe beshiw bi-ayaanid Animikiin. Ezhi-baaginanaad Animikii Waaboozoon. Oshkiba'iwed waabooz. Indawaa gii-azhegiiwe-adagaakoba'iwe iwidi nakake Miskwaabikaang. Kichi-weshkiba'iwe baa-beshwaabanda'igod Animikiin. Mii zhigwa ani-beshwaabandang ji-agwaawaadagaakobatood owaabamaan mitigoon bagoneyaakozind. Mii zhigwa gichi-beshiw bi-ayaad Animikii, gegaago ji-debibinigod – gii-piindigegwaashkoni ezhi-bagonezinid ini mitigoon. Wiinge gichi-nishkaadizi Animikii, ogii-kichi-baapaaginawaan mitigoon. Gichi-gimiwan, animikiikaa, waase'an miziwe, noodin, biindig idash mitigong dabinawaa.

Mii dash gaa-ikidod Animikii, "Gedebi'idiz biinjiba'iweyin imaa ingozis owiiyawing, gaawiin gidaa-babaamenimisinoon imaa ayaayin biindig. Mii go izhiganawendan ishkode meshkod idash gidaa-gikino'amawaag gebi'ayaawaad Anishinaabeg ji-aabajitoowaad ingozis owiiyaw. Ogaa aabajitoonaawaa ji-boodawewaad, ji-ozhigewaad - weweni ji-inenimagwaa imaa ayaawaad biindig, ji-onaaganikewaad, ji-ojiimaanikewaad, ji-ozhibii'igewaad, miinawaa ji-na'inigewaad gegoo ji-onaaji'ayaasininig. Mii iwe ge-inanokiiyin minik gebimaadiziyin!"

A long time ago Nenabosh and his grandmother lived on Madeline Island. They lived a very careful lifestyle; Nenabosh always listened to his grandmother telling creation stories as the night came. Once one year the winter was extremely cold, it was a long winter, the snow was deep. They had finally ran out of everything they needed to live as a result – meat, wood, water, and especially fire to keep warm with and to cook. They were the daughters of Animikii- the Thunderer. Animikii took care of his

daughters well so they would have good winters. Every Fall Animikii would go to his winter home in between the South and the West, only to come back again in the spring.

The older daughter, a younger woman, she was the one who listened to their father, the one who was younger loved everything, especially animals. She was always told by her older sister, " Our father told us to be careful, not to let anyone into our wigwam! That Nenabosh is not to be trusted, he will try to take what you have away."

Meanwhile at the island, Nenabosh could see the fire from the wigwam of the girls across the other side. Him and his grandmother were cold and they did not have anything to eat. As he looked across to the other side he thought about how he would be able to get a hold of the fire.

"Nenabosh don't think about anything," his grandmother told him.

"Okay Nookomis I won't think about what they are doing, the ones who live on the other side," Nenabosh said.

He waited for his grandmother to fall asleep, and then he walked across the ice to the other side. It was the time of early spring, the time when it is The Moon That Hides Tracks. It is the time when you can walk on top of the snow, he made good time in the hard crusty snow on the ice. "How will I be able to get into the wigwam" thought Nenabosh. He knocked on the door.

"Na, who is that knocking," asked the older girl.

"I will look," said the younger girl.

"Be careful, it might be that Nenabosh," said the older girl.

The younger girl then opened the door. "Oh! Look at that who is standing there, it is very cold. May I bring it in?" she said.

The older girl said to her younger sister, “Our father said not to let anyone in the wigwam.”

The younger sister began to cry, “ Oh, But it is a very cold and starving rabbit.”

“Don’t cry, bring him in then!” said the older girl.

The younger sister went and placed the rabbit close to the fire to warm up. The rabbit looked all over admiring everything that was in the wigwam. His stomach was rumbling, as he sat close to the fire because was very hungry.

“They sure are beautiful girls,” thought Nenabosh.

“Keep an eye on that rabbit,” said the older girl.

The younger sister was always loved by the different animals as she was observed working inside and around outside of the lodge. She was very gentle and loving.

Her older sister, on the other hand, made her do all the work most the time. As they found out they did not have any water to make soup, her older sister called her, “ Younger sister, go fetch some water, we don’t have any to make soup. Be careful too. Do not talk to anyone while you go down to the water hole. Think about what our father told us.”

“I will not be able to get two pails of water on my own because it too heavy, you should go with me?” said the younger girl.

“Let’s go then, I will go with you. You are always lazy to do your work!’ said the older sister. “Bring my coat.” Then they went down to where they had a watering hole in the ice.

While the girls were gone outside, Nenabosh changed back into an Anishinaabe inside the wigwam. He went around observing everything. He desired to have everything, especially the fire. “How will I be able to get that fire” he thought. He went around looking for something to use to hold the fire. Suddenly, he heard the girls’ footsteps coming in the snow. He changed himself back into a rabbit and put the fire on his back onto his fur, and as the door opened he ran out with the fire.

“Hey! It’s that Nenabosh! He is stealing our fire,” yelled the older girl. Nenabosh started running onto the ice towards Madeline Island. The girls were yelling really loud as he ran. The fire started burning him on his back because he had a long way to go.

At the same time, Animikii was starting to get lonesome for his daughters. It is about the time when the ice starts to turn black. “I am going to go see my daughters,” he thought, as he took off. Animikii was really big; wind was created as he flapped his wings, lightning was created from his eyes as he looked around, as he was flying and turned water fell from his back. Animikii is fearsome and dangerous to be around. As he approached closer to where his children lived, he heard them yelling, “Nenabosh is stealing our fire!” He flew harder and faster towards the sound of his daughter’s voices.

Suddenly he saw someone running across the ice, smoking from its back. Rabbit was running away as Animikii came closer and closer. Animikii threw lightning at rabbit. As the lightning landed repeatedly around him, nearly missing him, rabbit turned from his direction and headed towards Red Cliff. He kept turning from left to right, as Animikii came closer to hitting him several times. As rabbit got closer to the shore he saw a hole in a tree. By this time, Animikii was about to grab rabbit when rabbit jumped

into the hole. Animikii was very angry and he threw lightning onto the tree. It rained very heavily, it was thundering and lightning all over, it was really windy, but rabbit was safe inside the tree where it was peaceful and calm.

Then Animikii said this, " You are lucky you are inside the flesh of my son, I will not bother you when you are inside there. You can keep the fire and you can teach the Anishinaabeg to use the gift of my son. They can use it to start their fires, to make a safe shelter when I come around, to make baskets, and to make water transportation, to use for writing, and to put things away so they will not spoil. That will be your work as long as you shall live" (Smith, 2005).

Development of a Lesson For a Kindergarten Class

Enweyang is an immersion language program at the University of Minnesota in Duluth (UMD) that, since 2009, has provided the opportunity for pre-school and school aged children to learn, listen to, speak and use Ojibwe on a daily basis. Enweyang is also a laboratory school that provides observation and teaching opportunities for university students in the College of Education and Human Services Professionals. Enweyang is a remarkable resource for revitalizing the Ojibwe language: I am the Interim Director and Head Language Nest Teacher. I am both a First Language Master Speaker and a licensed teacher in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

As a first language speaker, I am passionate about efforts to revitalize the Ojibwe language. My classroom is an environment for language learning that is authentic to the Ojibwe culture and reminiscent of my acquisition of the language. I understand that it is not sufficient to transcribe English materials into Ojibwe for an authentic immersion experience. I develop thematic units and lesson plans from a deep

understanding of the Ojibwe worldview. The above stories have been handed down by oral tradition and meet the standards and benchmarks established by the state of Minnesota. I feel the stories provide sufficient background knowledge and material to meet requirements for a P-12 mainstream curriculum and need to be included. The authentic information and material contained in this project is adaptable in meeting areas of Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Technology, Art, Language Arts, and Physical Education.

After telling the story of ***Ininaatig's Gift of Sugar***, all in the traditional Ojibwe oral style, I was able to bring in the following items to my Kindergarten class:

- booka'igan(boo kuh ih gun) - an old-fashioned hand drill along with bit.
- negwaakwaajigan(nay gwah kwah jih gun) - a maple tap – two types; closed and open face, both hand made by a local elder.
- Biskitewinaagan (bih skih tay wih gnaw gun) - a birch bark basket to catch the sap. Hand made by a friend in the traditional method.
- Ininaatig (ih nih gnaw tig) - a piece of maple tree log for drilling; to practice our technique. The kids really enjoyed the hands-on with tools.

First and with close supervision, I presented the drill to the class and spoke about safety precautions working with sharp tools. The children took turns, in small groups, drilling into the maple tree log for the rest of the week. A respected local elder, Jim Northrup, donated home made negwaakwaajiganan to our school when he heard what the mission of our school was. He made two types, one closed-faced and one open-faced to use for demonstration. We discovered how to make the taps and why a maple tree would be useful for the purpose of channeling the sap to a reservoir – the

maple tree has natural pith down the center. Sumac is another tree that is used for the same purpose. Second, the children could now drill a hole and then attach the negwaakwaajigan. The third was to make a biskitewinaagan. What happened here was amazing. I gave the children a piece of paper and asked them if they could fold the paper in such a way as to catch water with it. A funnel type – with the paper pinched at the one end was the most popular but proved to be not to be functional because it eventually leaked. However, we had a few students fold the paper so it would catch water. I demonstrated how to fold the paper without any creases to make a biskitewinaagan. We made all of the pieces to use for getting maple sap.

The above lesson took two weeks to complete, ensuring a thorough understanding of the tools for collection of the sap. Along the way, I told the stories of ***Nanabosh miinawaa Ininaatigoog*** and ***Nanabosh Giikimoodid Ishkode*** as we continued to expand activities or interest to a Kindergarten class. After some experience, our students were able to use the equipment safely I continued in different subjects with Maple Sugar as our central theme. Our unit culminated with a visit to a maple sugar camp at the Bagley Nature Center on UMD campus. Although the Center has great programming, our students were thoroughly prepared by being immersed completely in the process of maple sugar tree identification, drilling, tapping, collection, and finally tasting the gift from the Ininaatig – maple sap right out of the tree! The preparation prior to our trip made for a meaningful experience for teachers, families, and students by using the natural world as a classroom.

Learning to be a part of a world that is harsh and sometimes extreme, giving and loving the Ojibwe people flourished by harnessing and thriving within the natural

environment. Having lived in a worldview that was filled with centuries of gathering this knowledge, I am eager to demonstrate to teachers of Anishinaabe children, the weightlessness of knowing the information contained in this project. Anishinaabe children need to know how to be Anishinaabe! And indeed all children need to be human. However, I also feel we all need inclusion of diverse cultures and languages in the pedagogy of mainstream education.

By using the natural world as a classroom, I have forged meaningful relationships with students, families, teachers and communities that will last as long as my breath shall flow. I am hopeful the effects of this relationship will forever be entrenched in the promising lives of the children that have been touched by the teachings of my "old ones." In the natural world there is only humility, courage, respect, wisdom, love, truth and kindness and because the traditional Ojibwe worldview is similar to the natural world, I share this project with you the teacher of our most sacred resource – a child.

Connections to K-12 Academic Standards For Kindergarten

As demonstrated above the stories have been handed down for generations by the graceful art form of oral tradition, the ostentation and articulation of the artist often reflected in the delivery. The stories meet the K-12 Academic Standards developed for the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the American Indian Learning Outcomes (AILOS); a framework developed by the American Indian Learner Outcome Team to disseminate American Indian History, Culture and Language Curriculum. For the purposes of this project I concentrated on K Academic standards in Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, and World Languages. Listed below are…

Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards for Science:

SCI.K.I.B.1 The student will raise questions about the natural world

SCI.K.III.B.1.1 The student will describe daily and seasonal changes in weather.

SCI.K.IV.G.1.1 The student will observe and describe the environment using the five senses.

SCI.K.0.1.1.2.1 Use observations to develop an accurate description of a natural phenomenon and compare one's observations and descriptions with those of others.

SCI.K.O.3.2 Interdependence Within the Earth System

SCI.K.O.4.1 Structure and Function in Living Systems

SCI.K.O.4.2 Interdependence Among Living Systems

Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards for Social Studies:

SOC.K-3.I.A Family Life Today and In The Past

SOC.K-3.I.C Many Peoples and Cultures Meet in the Making of North America

SOC.K-3.III.A Family Life Today and in the Past

SOC.K-3.III.B Civilizations in World History

SOC.K-3.III.C Famous People in World History

SOC.K-3.IV.B.1 The student will understand that we can learn about the past from different sorts of evidence.

SOC.K-3.VII Government and Citizenship

Minnesota K academics Standards for Language Arts:

LA.K.I.A Word Recognition, Analysis, and Fluency

LA.K.I.B Vocabulary Expansion

LA.K.I.C Comprehension

LA.K.I.D Literature

LA.K.III (Speaking, Listening and Viewing) The student will speak clearly and effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences and actively listen to, view and evaluate oral communication and media.

Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards for World Languages:

FL.K-12.1 Communicate in Languages Other than English

FL.K-12.2 Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

FL.K-12.3 Connect with Other disciplines and Acquire Information

FL.K-12.4 Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

FL.K-12.5 Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World

American Indian Learner Outcomes (AILOS)

And for the American Indian Learner Outcomes (AILOS), I concentrated on numbers 4-7 from 17 elements. AILOS recommends the following:

4. Harmony and Balance

The health and well–being of both humans and wildlife are dependent upon the quality of the natural environment. All forms of life are interdependent and the use or misuse of one will affect others. It is important for students to study the practices of American Indians who have traditionally understood the balance of nature and who believe all life must be treated with reverence and respect. The wellness of the individual results largely from a balance of physical, emotional and mental health. Seeking harmony and balance enhances the well–being and stability of a family. Similar statements can apply to society as a whole; social issues as well as economic issues. As students seek ways to solve problems on personal as well as societal levels, it is advantageous for them to

have access to philosophies and ideas that are relevant. This will enable students to apply informed decision–making processes to promote healthy lifestyles, social well–being and stewardship of the environment.

5. Values

All students should learn that American Indians had and continue to have a distinct value system, the center of which is respect for the Creator, elders, family, community, Mother Earth and land. Respect is manifested through such behaviors as practicing traditions, learning language, listening, cooperating, honoring elders, non–interference, showing patience and tolerance, acceptance, humor, humility, gratitude and respect for all living things. The study of the American Indian value system will assist students in examining their own values and related behaviors. Cultural Content/American Indian World View American Indian cultural values are based on the spiritual belief system and oral teachings. Cultural values are ideals and establish cultural norms.

6. Oral Traditions

American Indian oral tradition and teachings are used to transmit culture and preserve the history of American Indians. The study of American Indian oral tradition will assist students in understanding the culture and recognizing the importance of oral history.

7. Family Life

All students should learn that American Indians have strong family traditions that include the extended family. This increased understanding will promote more effective cross–cultural communication in a diverse society.

I have chosen to highlight the above standards from the Minnesota State Standards and the standards from the American Indian Learner Outcomes (AILOS)

within the Indian Education Curriculum section of the Minnesota Department of Education. I feel strongly that the presentation of an authentic Ojibwe viewpoint through the use of the moon Iskigamizige-giizis demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the flow of seasons. The knowledge is reflected in the oral traditions revealed through stories and acted on through activities. Although this project focuses on one of thirteen moons, a project that includes all thirteen would be massive and best left to the ones who want to find connections for the future and to the past. I hope to influence first language speakers to continue the writing of our connections to the environment. Much to my surprise this project has been a challenge to write from a traditional first language perspective, as this perspective is an inclusive one and I have been trained not to omit other life forms for sake of mutual respect. However, I found solace in the thought that western worldview academia finds this aspect to be totally acceptable! The reader is reminded this project is not intended to be representative of everything about the moon Iskigamizigegiizis. Chapter five shall provide a summary and conclusions derived from this curriculum project.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions

The curriculum project was derived from an internal desire to present a FL speaker's worldview of teachings that are excluded from mainstream education and in particular Ojibwe language immersion schools. Dibiki-giizis the moon as I know it in Ojibwe, can teach us many things we need to gain knowledge from the constellations and the different environments on a shared planet. The authentic Ojibwe knowledge contained in this understanding is simply not transferred from teacher to student. This transformational information is not apparent in a hybridized Ojibwe language classroom. Most of the teachers in Ojibwe language immersion schools in Minnesota and Wisconsin are second language learners. The extent of their language experience is derived from studying Ojibwe in a classroom taught by other non-FL teachers – mostly linguist who teach *about* the language. My desire is for students, educators, administrators, families, tribal elders and communities engaged in Ojibwe language immersion to use the information contained in this project. In respect to the strong ties developed in this community the information is delivered in the age-old style of the traditional Ojibwe teacher – oral.

My grandmother Bebakwewidamook (bay buh kway wih duh mook) was a member of the Moonz (Moose) Clan she is the principal source for the teachings I carry for the Ojibwe nation. She passed away at one hundred and fourteen (114) years of age, seven (7) years ago in 2006. Her date of birth as we know it in our family is 1892 roughly. Records are not available for births of Anishishinaabe children during this time. Her grandfather, Wegimaawab a traditional war chief, Midewiwin chief and

Healer of the Ojibwe nation, raised her. He was one hundred and seventeen (117) years of age when he went to the spirit world. Grandma, as we all know her in my family and community, always told me she was around twenty (20) years old when her grandfather left. That would place the year of birth for Wegimaawab in 1793. Through these two people and those before them accumulatively, I can trace through oral family history the teachings from as far back as the 1700's. I further state the teachings have not been changed! I speak the same language they did; I *live* in the language and there is not a loss of transference of authentic knowledge as noted in contemporary Ojibwe language acquisition experience and academic expectations.

As an oral teaching society, I am the beneficiary of centuries of knowledge kept and extended to future generations through a strong knowledge and use of Ojibwe language. The only way to have access to this repository of traditional worldview is through language learned in a family and community setting that is all Ojibwe speaking. However, as a result of acquiring a formal academic training perspective I underwent a personal transformational process and find it necessary to share a small glimpse of a world that is bombarded with personal and mainstream expectations. I want to share what I learned before my Ojibwe notion is tainted with the teachings of a foreign academic worldview, as have most of my Anishinaabe colleagues that embrace the benefits of mainstream society. There is always a constant clash and turmoil within individuals to maintain a healthy balance of the old and contemporary ideas of living in two worlds.

Educational Implications

As mentioned in the literature review, there were four distinct and unifying ideas surmised from the readings that informed the curriculum project: second language acquisition models, the dynamic nature of culture, learning your own language as a second language, and the inclusion of the environment in the immersion education experience. From these ideas I began to understand and made an attempt to demonstrate how the oral tradition of the Ojibwe people have a common environmental thread with the Indigenous peoples of the world. Literature written from the perspective of the FL Ojibwe speaker does not exist and I had to learn from the writings of other Indigenous people, some who from what I can ascertain are FL speakers from the authenticity and quality of their writings.

The curriculum project presents how, as a FL speaker, I can derive lessons from refined oral traditions that cultivate a distinct Anishinaabe understanding of the creation of the world and universe. The Anishinaabe worldview is excluded from presentation in mainstream education, other than just to have special mention as a society that made simple technologies to survive in a harsh environment. I refute this notion and point out the limitations presented in the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards as habitual roadblocks to authenticate OEK as a viable source of education for all the children of the world. There is a global domination of traditional earth-based people that were dispossessed of land base, culture and language that I use as evidence of this point.

In the introduction of chapter one I posited several questions: What is to happen to the knowledge contained in the language of a traditional lifestyle? Who is going to advocate for the earth-based connection I have as a first language speaker when I go be with the spirits? Will there be an understanding of who I am as an Ojibwe person when

I have left for my final journey? These are the questions that soothe why I should write from a FL perspective. The last thing I want to do is disrespect my teachings by writing them down.

Recommendations for Future Curriculum Work

As a keeper of authentic Ojibwe knowledge, I can only write portions I feel are relevant and I have found in other sources – written or oral that were already presented in a public forum or venue. One has to be grounded in a strong knowledge of the teachings to understand what can and cannot be shared. I encourage the ones with traditional OEK to come out and share as much as they feel is right for the public good and for the complete education of students. I also encourage students and families to seek out the ones who take care of this knowledge. I also caution seekers of this knowledge to be cautious from whom they are getting this knowledge. There are many fly-by-night traditional people that may have reasons other than love and kindness to share the knowledge and who will take advantage of an honest person. I also caution keepers of this knowledge as well to be wary of with whom they share this knowledge.

For the future I want the lessons of our environment to guide us in our journey through a shared humanity – let us not repeat the suffering inflicted on our earth by the ones who do not share this teaching. Let us write and share what we have learned as an earth-based perspective and allow the world around us to return to a balanced equilibrium. Seek those ones who have the knowledge of the natural world to guide you and learn the languages the lens through which you will learn the teachings. And above all, engage in discourse and continue to insist that these teachings be shared with all the

children of the world through our education system or even at home – the origin of all our teachings.

As a FL speaker and a non-traditional student, I received an extremely traditional education in everything Ojibwe. I am able to hear, smell, taste, feel and see exclusively in the language. I lived according to what was given to me as an Ojibwe Anishinaabe and did not learn until later on in life what it means not to be. I balance the two worldviews and cherish the beautiful position of having an ability to walk in two-worlds and be successful in both. To the new and old learners of Ojibwemowin, master who you are as prominent participants on earth and let everyone know who you are! Let the whole world know there are alternative worldviews that are embodied in the natural world through languages. Live the language of your ancestors.

Conclusion

The whole endeavor of the curriculum project exudes an understanding of where we stand as a human life form participating in a shared journey. All human beings are an earth-based people with a connection to the natural world, some believe, some do not, and some just simply do not want to know! Ojibwe teachings tell us this is so and we are all related and were made at the same time with the same earthen materials. For our life forms to continue we must acknowledge the earth-based knowledge of the world and bring it to the forefront as a viable complement to a contemporary and necessary education. Something tells me we had it right all along! But in the rummage for academic, monetary affluence and privileged circumstances languages like Ojibwe were simply left on the road for dead by many even Anishinaabe people – opting to

promote the status quo in education, government and judicial systems that were once foreign. All is not lost though.

Many Ojibwe Anishinaabe people in Canada speak the authentic language and are in a position to help with the revitalization of Ojibwe in Northern Michigan, Northern Wisconsin, and Northern Minnesota – once all traditional Ojibwe speaking territories. Having been blessed with oral tradition, I know my family history and can trace my lineage to families in Northern Minnesota – primarily Boise Forte, Grand Portage, and Fond Du Lac (FDL). Recently I have been reconnecting with family in FDL Minnesota to trace the oral knowledge I carry from my grandma to records that are available to the tribe. I am also helping a relative in FDL to relearn a language that has all but been lost in this community.

Knowledge of family relationships reflects a connection to the land that is so strong in Indigenous peoples of the world – we are from North America we do not come from anywhere else, this is our home! The blood of our ancestors runs deepest in this continent, more than anyone else. Everywhere I step and touch the earth I am touching my ancestors and I will never leave them to run away to some other land. Let us tell our children the truth about the land we share, maybe in their lifetime there will be a true understanding of our origin as brothers in the heart of the Creator.

References

Bannon, K.T. (2004). Reaching children through their ancestral language and authentic literature. *Reclaiming Children and Youth. 12(4),* 232-236

Caduto, M. J., Bruchac, J., & , (1988). *Keepers of the earth*. (p. 145). Golden, CO: Fulcrum, Inc.

Gillanders, C. (2007). An English-speaking prekindergarten teacher for young latino children: implications of the teacher-student relationship on second language learning. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 35*(1), 47-54.

Godina, H. (2003). Mesocentrism and students of mexican background: A community intervention for culturally relevant instruction. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 2(3),* 141-157.

Graham, B. (2005). The development of aboriginal language programs: a journey towards understanding. *Canadian Journal of Education, 28*(3), 318-338.

Soderman, AK, & Toko, O. (2008). The social and cultural contexts of second language acquisition in young children. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 16*(3)*,* 297-311.

White, F. (2006). Rethinking native american language revitalization. *American Indian Quarterly, 30(1 & 2),* 91-109.

White, C., Bedonie, C., de Groat, J., Lockard, L., & Honani, S. (2007). A bridge for our children: tribal/university partnerships to prepare indigenous teachers. Teacher Education Quarterly, 71-86. Yunkaporta, T., & McGinty, S. (2009). Reclaiming aboriginal knowledge at the cultural interface*. The Australian Educational Researcher, 36*(2), 55-72.

Willow, A.J. (2010). Cultivating common ground: Cultural revitalization in Anishinaabe and Anthropological discourse. *American Indian Quarterly, 34(1),* 33-60.

Wittstock, L.W. (1993). *Inaatig's gift of sugar: traditional native sugaring*. (Pp. 9-11). Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Productions.

Yunkaporta, T., & McGinty, S. (2009). Reclaiming aboriginal knowledge at the cultural interface. *The Australian Educational Researcher, 36*(2), 55-72.