

**LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION
POLICY IN NUNAVUT:**

**CREATING A FRAMEWORK FOR
INUIT LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION**

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Executive Summary

The question of language of instruction (LOI) in Nunavut schools has been a central and, as yet, unresolved, question in Nunavut since before its creation in 1999. The author's *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report in 2000 recommended that a "strong" bilingual model was required, with special attention given to planning a predominant place for the use of the Inuit Language as an LOI throughout the Nunavut school system, alongside English (ESL).

The present paper builds on the 2000 report, focusing on the close link between LOI policy and the broader issue of Inuit Language revitalization, which is perhaps the main criterion of how the ultimate success or failure of Nunavut will be judged by Inuit.

This paper is meant to inform consultations about LOI in the Nunavut school system in three separate but related Government of Nunavut (GN) sponsored draft Bills that will collectively govern the use of Inuit language in all society, but for the purpose of this paper, the education system. The Inuit Language Protection Act and the Official Languages Act are Culture, Language, Elders, and Youth (CLEY) sponsored bills that passed first and second reading in June 2007. The third is the draft Nunavut Education Act, scheduled to be introduced for first reading in the fall 2007 GN legislative assembly.

The proposed Official Languages Act must protect, promote, and enforce all language rights in Nunavut society, but provides an excellent opportunity to actualize, or bring to life, existing Inuit language rights through its provisions.

The proposed Education Act will contain provisions that will govern the use of Inuit language in the education system, and will

determine how and when students will be taught in the Inuit language.

The proposed Inuit Language Protection Bill employs language which challenges the education system and its policy-makers to do something which they have not yet fully embraced: to produce high school graduates with “full proficiency” in the Inuit Language.

Such a high standard is fully appropriate and in keeping with the mission expressed in the Bathurst Mandate to make the Inuit Language the working language of Nunavut. Since “full proficiency” means the attainment, as a normal outcome of schooling, a high level of proficiency in both spoken and written varieties, and in both conversational and academic registers of the language, and for there to be equal linguistic outcomes from unequal starting-points, the Inuit Language must become the predominant language of instruction throughout the entire education system from pre-school to grade 12.

Only by being schooled in academic, cognitively-demanding subjects through the medium of the Inuit Language through to the end of high school can the term “full proficiency in the Inuit language” have any genuine meaning.

Also, only by schooling the upcoming generation of Inuit in this way can the language be sustainable in a way which would both embody Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) principles and allow present and future generations to speak, read and write with ease about a variety of complex and everyday traditional and contemporary topics of importance to Nunavut administration, economy, and self-determination, while contributing significantly to Inuit success, pride and identity through a sense of the school’s genuine, not folkloric, respect for Inuit culture and language.

Inuit Uqausingit/the Inuit Language is an essential attribute of Inuit culture and affords access to Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, whose principles draw from an oral record of ingenuity dating back in the Arctic a millennium and beyond.

“A society’s ability to solve its everyday problems critically depends upon the amount and quality of knowledge it has received from previous generations; the society then adjusts, fine-tunes, and passes this accumulated knowledge to posterity. So, culture is a bit like a pipeline carrying knowledge from the past into the future.”¹

Respect for IQ implies the re-constitution of the current transitional subtractive education system – widely held to be a failure by most stakeholders - into a strong *additive bilingual* system based on mother tongue/Inuit Language medium as the principal language of instruction, supported by a high-quality English as a second language (ESL) program designed to produce academically successful bilingual high school graduates.

Based on applications of current LOI theory to the context of Inuit language revitalization, in conformity with international standards, and drawing upon successful experiences in similar circumstances elsewhere, this paper argues that the proportional allocation between the Inuit Language and English in the system should be normalized to lie in the realm of 80:20, with a preponderance of academic subjects (whether IQ-grounded or translated from English or other languages and brought into contact with IQ) taught mainly through the medium of the Inuit Language by a new generation of bilingual Inuit teachers.

This allocation is within the range of options proposed in the *Aajiiqatigiingiq* report, which contributed to the Bilingual Education Strategy of November 2004. The 80:20 allocation

¹ Homer-Dixon, T. (2001). *The Ingenuity Gap*. (Toronto: Vintage). P. 205.

follows practices similar to those of total immersion, and is also based on the revitalization principle of providing greater support to the language more at risk. It is the most likely policy approach to produce strong bilingual high school graduates, to ensure sustainable non-trivial IQ-grounded language revitalization outcomes, and in so doing, it fully respects Inuit language rights.

The paper closes with a proposal to include in the Inuit Language Protection Bill a table of annual targets for the phase-in of the mother-tongue/Inuit Language-medium system.

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Language of Instruction (LOI) practices and current theory

1.1 Language of Instruction Practices in Canada: What was your experience?

Almost everyone who reads this report and who was educated in Canada will fall into one of four categories of LOI experience, according to your first language (mother tongue/L1).

If you are *an anglophone*, born in Canada or almost anywhere else in the world, you probably went to a school where the language of instruction – the language which your teachers spoke when they taught you math, science, social studies, music, art, and language arts, and the language of your textbooks and learning materials - will almost certainly have been English, your mother tongue. Also, most probably, your exposure to other languages – typically, in Canada, that language will have been French, perhaps a daily “core French” period – will have been an experience of learning of French, not learning in French.²

If you are *a francophone*, born in Canada, and especially in Quebec, you will most probably have had the bulk of your education through the medium of French, your mother tongue. However, if you are a francophone from outside of Quebec (or Northern New Brunswick), and over the age of 40, you may not have had French as the language in which you were normally schooled. You might even have been forced to receive your education in English, since your right to an education in French has only relatively recently – in the 1960s - been guaranteed as a right under the Constitution.

If you are *an immigrant* to Canada from a country where neither English nor French are official, and received your schooling through your mother tongue, assuming that it was the normal medium of education, you will have had a different experience. Once in Canada, if you did continue your education, you would have had to do so through the medium of one of the official languages – French in Quebec or English elsewhere. This is because in the Canadian public school systems, with some rare exceptions for bilingual education in English-German or English-Ukrainian combinations, there is no general practice of offering mother-tongue medium (MTM) education in languages other than English or French. Indeed, over the years, English or French may well have become your strongest language, perhaps even your home language (the language you use most at home) and the language you transmit to your children.³

If you *an Inuk*, a Nunavut land claims beneficiary, and over the age of 50, you may never have received schooling in your mother tongue. If you were among the generations who

² In order for you, a Canadian Anglophone, to have experienced a programme in which French is used as a language of instruction, you would have to have been enrolled in a French immersion programme – a programme in which at least 50% of the school day would have been spent learning French through learning in French and receiving L2-sensitive language arts instruction taught by bilingual (English-French) teachers.

³ Transmission of the parental language in the home to their children is termed *intergenerational transmission*. If this doesn't happen, for whatever reason, it is termed *intergenerational disruption*. When this happens widely in a language group, it is called *language shift*.

were sent to a residential school, you will have had the experience of being forced to learn English through an assimilative⁴ language policy applied by the Canadian federal government and the mainstream Christian churches to all indigenous peoples in Canada.

So, if you went to residential schools, you and your generation was punished for speaking Inuit language or for exhibiting any aspects of Inuit culture. The only protection you had from complete loss of language and culture was if you were an older child when you were sent to residential school. If you were sent away at the age of 9 or 10, you would have been solidly grounded in your mother tongue before you started to learn English. Also, if you were able to return home to re-connect with your family and learn land skills from elders, your experience may be similar to the generation of those Inuit fortunate enough to become fluently bilingual in English and Inuktitut. The early political leaders of the Nunavut project, now respected elders, were of this generation.

If you are *a younger Inuk* and missed the residential school period, you will probably have received your first years of schooling in the N.W.T. through the medium of Inuktitut (if you are a speaker of Inuinnaqtun, this is less likely). Most probably, in these early grades, you were taught by Inuit teachers or Inuit classroom assistants, and you became initially literate in Inuktitut.

But just as you were ready to take off in grade four with your learning and ready to tackle school subjects using your strongest language, you found that your mother tongue was no longer used as a language of instruction. In grade four and the higher grades, the LOI became English and your bilingual Inuit teachers were almost completely replaced by English-monolingual Qallunaat who couldn't explain things in Inuktitut when you needed help. After grade four, you had to learn school subjects in English, a language you were still struggling with. Most likely your early progress in learning slowed, and most of your classmates became so frustrated with school that 75% of them dropped out or were pushed out of school.

The table below summarizes LOI practices in Canada for different groups.

Language of instruction practices

Anglophones	English, their mother tongue, is the language of instruction throughout the school system, including the right to operate their own English-medium school system everywhere in Canada, including in Quebec and New Brunswick.
Francophones	French, their mother tongue, is the language of instruction throughout the school system in Quebec and, thanks to entrenchment of constitutionally-guaranteed rights, in

⁴ Assimilationist: {from Latin “to make something/someone similar or the same as something/someone else”} A short definition of assimilation is this: “Assimilation is enforced subtractive “learning” of another (dominant) culture by a (dominated) group. Assimilation means being transferred to another group.” (TSK. p. 124).

all provinces and territories across Canada. Francophones also have the right to operate their own French-medium school systems, everywhere in Canada, including in Nunavut.

Immigrants	No LOI rights anywhere in Canada. The assumption is that immigrant languages are lost by the third generation and that, therefore, only minimal policy attention has been given these so-called “third languages”. Assimilation to one of the official languages is assumed within Canada’s multiculturalism policy, while in Quebec, immigrants are assumed to adopt French as their principal “civic” language, the language they use in public space and for communicating outside their own language community.
Inuit	In Nunavut, LOI rights may be granted for the first time in CLEY’s proposed Inuit Language Protection Bill and Official Languages Bill. The current general practice is early-exit LOI in Inuit Language with transition to English as chief LOI after early years of primary school.

1.1.1. Transitional vs. Maintenance bilingual education

From this overview, it can be seen that Canada’s LOI policies distinguish between two classes of language speakers.

First, speakers of either of the official languages are encouraged, through LOI policies to become fully proficient in their mother tongue, whether they live in majority or minority settings. Programs for these populations may be called maintenance programs. High levels of proficiency in a second official language are largely voluntary, though encouraged, and generally produce additive bilingual results and positive attitudes to the other official-language group.

Speakers whose primary language is any of Canada’s “third languages” (non-official languages) are not generally encouraged to maintain their mother tongues. Speakers of these languages are assumed to be willing to assimilate to monolingualism in one or the other of the official languages, at least for public or civic affairs and for gaining access to mainstream education. Programs which permit early instruction in one of these languages, while the student attends ESL or FRSL classes, may be called transitional programs, since the student is exited (“transitioned”) from primary-language LOI classes into the English or French LOI mainstream and is deemed to be proficient enough to follow instruction in one of the official languages. Unlike the situation in maintenance programs, transitional programs are not voluntary and, since their goal is to withdraw access to instruction in the student’s primary language, these programs produce subtractive bilingual results.

1.2. A brief overview of LOI theory

Fifty-five years ago, in 1953, and at a time when colonialism and imperialism were being challenged by newly independent countries in Asia and Africa, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, published an influential and important document called The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education. This document is the modern-day turning point in educators' awareness of the need to consider the fundamental role of Mother-Tongue Medium Education throughout the world. As the title of the report suggests, UNESCO felt that it was especially important to develop a positive approach to vernacular languages. Vernacular languages, such as indigenous languages, were defined as languages which were dominated by more powerful languages – in this hemisphere; these were the languages of the European colonizers. Only a concerted effort, UNESCO felt, would bring about policies favouring the use of the child's mother tongue - the child's preferred means of communication, it was felt - in education.

The following statements are as true today as they were in 1953:

It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium. (p. 11)

It is important that every effort should be made to provide education in the mother tongue... On educational grounds, we recommend that the use of the mother tongue be extended to as late a stage in education as possible. (p. 47)

The UNESCO Declaration put the issue of LOI on the map. Slowly at first, then with more urgency, research and practice on using vernaculars as media of instruction spread throughout the world, and Canada was no exception. Nor indeed was the N.W.T. The first call for Inuit Language kindergartens came in 1972 and ten years later, Inuktitut-medium education was proposed as part of a bilingual strategy in the important report *Learning, Tradition and Change*, produced by the Special Committee on Education chaired by Tagak Curley.

Language Program Recommendation #19 of this Report reads as follows:

Funds shall be made available to the divisional boards to develop Native-language programs in all subjects, at as many levels up to Grade 10 as the language sub-committees think right, but we think that priority should be given to Kindergarten and Grade 3.

Note here both the spirit of the UNESCO report and the first public expression of a desire for a “strong” form of bilingual education (one that advocated support the NWT's native languages up to Grade 10). Such a “strong” form invariably involves a strategy for Inuit Language development across the curriculum, where children take lessons through the

medium of their primary language. As the report says, this would involve “*native language programs in all subjects*” (eg. math, science, social studies, arts, language arts). In such a way, language development in all these ways of knowing is promoted, cultivated and encouraged in a purposeful way.

“Language development” here has two aspects:

- (1) the development and cultivation of the individual child’s mother tongue in both spoken and written forms, through increasingly more complex demands placed on his/her cognitive and linguistic abilities through a progressive and more diversified curriculum, and
- (2) the development of highly-educated bilingual, bi-literate citizenry who can aspire to a range of professional, skilled jobs demanding full proficiency in Inuit Language as well as competence in English, and thereby do their part in fulfilling the promise of the Bathurst Mandate by following the guiding principles of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.

The first aspect has been studied by researchers and practitioners in the field of bilingual education. The second aspect has been studied by researchers and practitioners in the field of language revitalization. The present study draws on research from both fields (especially as related to language situations similar to Nunavut).

For example, according to a recent world-wide survey of medium-of-instruction policies⁵

Most of the studies on medium of instruction, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s were conducted in the field of bilingual education and focused on the effects of choices of medium of instruction at the micro-level, including the classroom and the individual. Questions being addressed at the time pertained largely to the effectiveness and efficiency of different models of immersion in the acquisition of the first and second language, and in academic achievement in content subjects.

This exclusive focus on classroom learning outcomes (in which questions of allocation of time between the two languages in a bilingual program was seen merely as one process variable⁶) was enriched in the 1990s by new perspectives which situated LOI issues in specific socio-political contexts of languages-in-contact, in which LOI decisions were seen in the context of national language policies affecting minorities or aboriginal peoples. In cases where a vernacular language was in contact with a dominant colonial language, there began to be a sharply increased awareness among linguists and educators that LOI policy decision-making was far from ethically-neutral. Here, the relatively new field of language revitalization emerged, to describe and perhaps to prevent the phenomenon of language endangerment, or its end-state language death.⁷

⁵ Tollefson, J. and Tsui, A. (2004) *Medium of Instruction Policies: Which agenda? Whose agenda?* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates).

⁶ The other two, in the well-known model described in Baker C. *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (2nd ed., 1996 p..343) are “pupil-pupil interaction” and “use of curriculum materials”.

⁷ For example, Crystal, D. (2000) *Language Death*. (Cambridge University Press)

During the 1990s, studies started appearing in this new field and university courses began to spring up with titles such as *reversing language shift*.⁸ In such courses, students look at case studies of communities around the world where an increased awareness of language endangerment and shift was being responded to through local efforts in schools, communities and homes/families so as to prevent use of these languages from reaching a linguistic “tipping point”, beyond which there might be very little possibility of recovery.

The role of Professor Joshua Fishman (Yeshiva University, New York) was critical in the development of a comprehensive framework to study the phenomenon of language shift. At the beginning and end of the 1990s, Fishman edited books of case studies, the earlier one entitled *Reversing Language Shift* (1991) and the later one *Can Threatened Languages Be Saved? Reversing Language Shift, revisited: a 21st Century Perspective* (2001). Typical cases studied were those of: Israel, Quebec, Wales, Catalonia, the Basque Country, the Navajo, the Sami, and the Maori.

Fishman also developed a theory of describing stages of language shift, called the GIDS (Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for threatened languages). His original eight-stage scale has been adapted to the situation of American indigenous languages. Variables include: intergenerational transmission of the language in the home (if absent – this is a key tipping point for Fishman), use of the language in government, in the media, in schools, in the workplace, in literacy activities etc. With respect to the use of the endangered language in education, the scale can be presented as follows:⁹

Stage 1 (the weakest stage) - the language is not present in the schools

Stage 2 - the language is not used in the school, and may be actively excluded

Stage 3 - the language is “alive” in school:

- it is used at higher levels as LOI for academic subjects
- but schools may still be under outsiders’ control
- and language is used between teachers and students outside of instructional contexts
- use of the language in school is still short of widespread communicative functions.

Stage 4 – (the strongest stage)

- the language is used in school as LOI for academic subjects and this has been institutionalized¹⁰
- it is used in higher education, as an LOI and as an object of

⁸ “language shift”: the process by which a new language is acquired by a community, usually resulting with the loss of community’s first language. (Richards J. and Schmidt R. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. 3rd edition. Edinburgh: Pearson Education, 2002. p. 293)

⁹ Francis, N. and Reyhner, J. (2002) *Language and Literacy Teaching for Indigenous Education: a Bilingual Approach*. (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters). p. 34-5.

¹⁰ According to Fishman, this stage would also require that the school system be substantially under Inuit curricular and staffing control.

- advanced linguistic, literary and cultural study
- schools are controlled by language-speakers themselves

According to this scale, the use of Inuit Language as an LOI in Nunavut schools would be placed between Stage 2 and Stage 3. This, according to Fishman, is lower than the stage required for sustainability, and therefore, by the same reasoning, the Inuit Language is at risk and the indicated course of action would be to elevate it to Stage 3 and then to Stage 4, in effect, extending mother-tongue education throughout the grades, ensuring that the Inuit Language is always the principal LOI of academic subjects and fully institutionalizing this practice into the future. That, in essence, is what Fishman's recommendation would be on what needs to be done to ensure long-term sustainability of the Inuit Language.¹¹

Contemporary LOI theory also historicizes its cases of language contact. It investigates the roots of today's historic relations of linguistic domination. In the case of Nunavut, this would include the history of Qallunaat-Inuit inter-group relations, the effects of language and cultural contact, the attitudes of both sides (including those of specific sub-groups and individuals) to this contact, the history of schooling, and the belief system (the ideology¹²) of those who established and ran schools for Inuit children.

Since the future history of the Inuit Language depends on today's decisions, LOI theory's historical perspective would project that with the passing away of monolingual elders, and with youth continuing to confront a (still) English-assimilationist early-exit transitional education system, the Inuit Language and the principles of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit which tend to be inherent in its use are at a crossroads – a tipping point - in 2007.

Either Inuit Language will continue to flounder, in a policy sense, in a zone of “unsupported coexistence” or “partial support for specific language functions”– stuck at a stage below the minimum level of sustainability on Fishman's language-shift scale, or it will have to grow. Otherwise, according to a recent sociolinguistic study by one of Canada/Quebec's leading authorities on the Inuit Language, Professor Louis-Jacques Dorais of Laval University, “*it [the Inuit Language] risks being increasingly limited to petty topics, on the one hand, and highly symbolic domains (traditional life, political discourse, religious ceremonies) on the other*”¹³

¹¹ This would bring the Inuit Language into a degree of comparable sustainability with two other languages studied by Fishman and others: Israel and Quebec: two “language revitalization success stories”.

¹² ideology: “a set of concepts, doctrines and beliefs that forms the basis of a political, educational or economic system.” (Richards and Schmidt, *op. cit.* p. 245)

¹³ Dorais, L-J. (2006) *Inuit Discourse and Identity After the Advent of Nunavut* (Quebec City: Universite Laval, mimeo.)

Dorais predicts that, without creating a strong model for bilingual education and training more Inuit teachers, with a target of 85% for 2020, the language will decline and follow the course of Inuinnaqtun.¹⁴

Dorais' conclusion to his 2006 paper is worth quoting in full:

*“In the opinion of the author, Inuktitut can, and must be at the same time the language of identity and the principal means of communication in Nunavut, as it has been in Greenland for a long time. But in order to achieve this, to make ideal versions congruent with reality, efforts must be consented (sic) in the fields of education, public communication, cultural development and personal language attitudes. One can be an Inuk without speaking Inuktitut, but if the language continues to decline, a whole original way of envisioning the world risks disappearing for good. As any other language – and Greenlandic Kalaallisut is a good example – Inuktitut can easily adapt to the expression of contemporary life. There is, thus, no reason that if proper means are taken, it will not survive and thrive into the 22nd century.”*¹⁵

LOI Theory today, then, draws on two research traditions. First is the study of bilingualism and bilingual education, which includes the pedagogy of bilingualism, the bilingual development in the individual, and models of effective bilingual instruction.

The second critically analyses LOI policy-making and resource-allocation in relation to the strong tendency of key decision-makers to reproduce historically unequal relationships of power instead of acting to reverse language shift. In this tradition, LOI issues are seen as part of a broader movement by historically-dominated groups for social change, well-being and self-determination, and explicit emphasis on power relations and the roles of actors of bi-literacy (policy-makers, educators, and parents) are brought out for critical analysis.¹⁶

1.3 Language Policy and Language Planning

Both the LOI theoretical traditions are also nested inside another field: language policy and language planning. There are, conventionally, three types of language planning: status planning, which studies attempts to raise the status (or prestige, or vitality) of a language and its speakers; corpus planning, which studies plans to develop writing systems, to standardize, to develop new technological vocabulary etc.; and acquisition planning, which looks at efforts to promote the learning of a particular language.

Plans to increase the presence of the Inuit Language as an LOI in Nunavut schools would

¹⁴ *Nunatsiaq News*: October 27, 2006. “Expert: Inuktitut needs far more help to survive”. Dorais endorses the recommendations of the Berger report. “Without a full K-12 curriculum in Inuktitut, one cannot any form of balanced bilingualism where Inuktitut and English would have the same strength”. *Ibid.* p. 59.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁶ A recent, excellent, analysis of a model (Continua of Biliteracy) which began in the first research tradition and was enriched by the second, is Hornberger, N. (ed.) (2003) *Continua of Biliteracy: An Ecological Framework for Educational Policy, Research and Practice in Multilingual Settings*. (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters). Jim Cummins and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas are leaders in both traditions.

draw upon all three types of planning. It would have the effect of increasing the status and prestige of the Inuit Language in the eyes of its speakers – and by doing so automatically increases the status of its speakers.¹⁷ It would require elements of corpus planning, so that Inuit Language terminology for advanced high school subjects could be researched, developed and disseminated throughout the school system so that a range of academic fields could be made available through the means of the Inuit Language. Finally, the dimension of acquisition planning would be central: ensuring that the new domains of knowledge would be pedagogically available to the widest possible audience using the best available language-learning methodologies.

Language policy initiatives would be necessary to bring about a context within which status, corpus and acquisition planning on behalf of the Inuit Language and its present and future speakers could take place.

One recent theory of language policy¹⁸ says that “language policy is about choice”. In the case of the Inuit Language as a K-12 LOI in the Nunavut school system, the choice turns on the following question or a variation of it:

What should be the LOI policy be in the Nunavut school system so that there will be more positive outcomes than at present for (a) individual graduates, and (b) Nunavut society as a whole?

A language policy theory would say that the answer to this question depends on the answers to three more focussed questions, related to (1) language practices (2) language ideology, and (3) language planning:

1. What changes in people’s language practices are envisaged?

Possible answer: We want Nunavut high school graduates to graduate with full proficiency in the Inuit Language and with a good functional competence in English.

2. What changes in belief or ideology are needed for this policy to work?

Possible answer: We want the Inuit Language to become the working language of Nunavut, through an expanded range of uses and types of knowledge, so that the Inuit Language can be sustained as a successful language in the contemporary world, and that all indicators of its use in schools, communities and families confirm that it has become normalized and out of danger.

¹⁷ There is another advantage of a strong presence of Inuit Language in high school. It would contribute to the subjective perception of increased language vitality among its speakers, which could lead to increased use of the language in homes and communities, which in turn would lead to increased objective vitality.

¹⁸ Spolsky, B. (2004) *Language Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.)

3. What formal, authorized, language planning or language management decisions need to be made?

Possible answer: Legislation proposed by the relevant language ministries (CLEY and Education), with a comprehensive language planning framework (status, corpus, and acquisition), ensuring that a regime of Inuit Language rights be asserted and that the necessary means to implement these rights be put in place.

If such a policy were put forward – and the outlines have already begun to emerge in the form of the two CLEY-sponsored bills of June, 2007 – language policy theory would also remind us that policy isn't made in a vacuum. There are four main forces which co-exist with the language policy process. They are:

1. The socio-linguistic situation in Nunavut: the stage of language shift and the state of the possible threat of English to replace the Inuit Language rather than to co-exist with it. The issue of new mixed varieties¹⁹ (in which both English words or parts of words combine with Inuit Language words or parts of words in new and unpredictable ways) could enter into this. The distinction between the Inuinnaqtun communities (with very advanced stage of language shift) and the smaller Inuktitut-speaking communities (with relatively little language shift) would also be considered here, and different policy decisions would need to be made to reflect different sociolinguistic situations in communities.
2. The issue of Inuit linguistic identity, and the degree to which Inuit desire that they and/through their language become empowered.. Attitudes to bilingualism would come in here, the degree of expressed desire to maintain and learn/re-learn the Inuit Language, and various measures of subjective ethno-linguistic vitality,²⁰ especially with respect to Inuit youth, regarding their vision of the present and future importance of the various languages in Nunavut.
3. Globalization of English, and the widespread desire of people around the world to acquire English as the world's *lingua franca*, a means of wider communication – and not necessarily with the so-called “English-speaking” countries. This is an issue for acquisition planning everywhere in the world, including in Nunavut.
4. The issue of language rights (or linguistic human rights), which reflects the growing value around the world that language provisions need to be made to protect, maintain, and enhance the use of non-dominant or minority languages. Generally, territorially-grounded language rights are easier to grant when a substantial proportion of the territory speaks the language. The language

¹⁹ One term for this (unstable) mixed form is *Inuktitenglish*. (Dorais, *Op. Cit.* p. 9)

²⁰ “Positive Ethnolinguistic Vitality” involves the perception by speakers that their language is alive and well, sustainable and valuable. Positive valuation of the language and culture in the school can washback on positive use, ability, and perception of vitality in homes and communities.

rights factor is also often seen as a necessary tool for the recognition of linguistic diversity as opposed to linguistic homogenization.

1.3.1 But Can Language Policy and Planning really help revitalize endangered languages?

As we have mentioned, Fishman's position has been that languages are endangered not because they are not taught in schools or do not possess official status. They are endangered, according to him, because they lack informal intergenerational transmission and informal daily life support.

This view has been challenged, but in general there is consensus that "schools can't do it [language revitalization] alone". A fundamental question is whether enhanced presence and status in the school will lead to greater home/family and community language status, prestige and actual use. But "it is difficult to establish cause and effect relationships when evaluating the impact of language policies on language behaviour and language shift".²¹

The reaction of speakers of the dominant language is difficult to predict. Quebec's language laws angered Quebec Anglophones, even though Quebec's francophones were asking for nothing more than to guarantee for themselves similar rights to control their own linguistic and cultural reproduction, a desire which anglophone Canadians have never felt necessary to express as policy, since their rights are implicit in practice anyway.²² Thus, for minority groups, the absence of an active policy on their behalf of their language is in effect, an anti-minority policy.

In terms which are important for Nunavut, researchers on Sami language revitalization emphasize that "equality is misunderstood if it leads to an equal division of time and resources between a minority and a majority language".²³ The same point has been made with reference to Ireland's Irish-immersion pre-schools, "equal treatment of different children does not necessarily mean the same treatment is given to each child"²⁴ Therefore, since apparently-equal treatment of languages in a context of language endangerment will not produce equal outcomes, an LOI policy in Nunavut advocating a time-allocation policy of "linguistic equality" (50% of the time spent on instruction in each language) ignores this basic fact of revitalization: in order to begin to redress language power inequalities in society it is necessary for the school to offer a substantial counterbalance.

²¹ Bourhis, R. "Reversing Language Shift in Quebec". In Fishman, J. ed. 2001 *Op. Cit.* pp. 114.

²² Romaine, S. "The Impact of Language Policy on Endangered Languages". In *International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS)*/Vol 4. No. 2, 2002. p. 198.

²³ Magga, O. and Skutnabb-Kangas, T. "The Saami languages. The present and the future". *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 25 (2), 2001. p. 31.

²⁴ Hickey, T. "Mixing beginners and native speakers in minority language immersion: Who is immersing whom?" In *Canadian Modern Language Review* 57 (3) 2001. pp. 466-7

Mariano Aupilardjuk²⁵ once offered this analogy in response to the author's question on language allocation in schools. Holding up an arrow with a long wooden shaft and a short metal tip, he suggested that the allocation of culture and language time in school between English and Inuktitut should be like the arrow, with the long shaft representing Inuktitut and the short metal tip representing English. In his opinion, since the culture and language of English was "so heavy", very little of it was needed for it to have an equal effect to that of Inuktitut, and indeed, when the elder balanced the arrow on his index finger, the perfect point of balance was right at the point where the shaft joined the tip.

Finally, Nunavut's language policy and planning need to be synchronized with its economic realities. In the public sector, including the education system if Article 26 of the Land Claim is to mean anything, it should mean that there will be places for bilingual high school graduates with a strong knowledge of the Inuit Language capable of serving a predominantly Inuit-speaking citizenry. In the private sector as well, bilingual skills will be in demand in growth sectors, many of which bring Nunavummiut in contact with outsiders. Economic development, such as mining, will have a linguistic impact, and specialized training opportunities in both Inuit Language and English can be negotiated with companies.

Since this paper is essentially about LOI theory, we need not expand on all these policy, planning and contextual factors, many of which were discussed in some detail in the *Aajiqatigiingniq* report (2000), which attempted to lay out a "big picture" for an informed discussion of the complexities of LOI planning for Nunavut schools in the broader context of policies for language revitalization.²⁶

Of course, there are other situations in which indigenous nations have sought to raise the status of their language and culture in the face of a powerful national or international language, by advocating their language as the principal LOI within a broader framework of linguistic and cultural renaissance.

In the next section, we look at some of the lessons which can be learned from some of these experiences.

²⁵ Aupilardjuk, M. Personal communication, in response to the author's question during a Uqaqta Inuktitut course in Rankin Inlet, organized by Janet McGrath (Tamalik). May 2003.

²⁶ The term "revitalization" is preferred over the terms "maintenance" or "stabilization". These latter terms focus on preventing language shift, but don't suggest either a restoration of areas which formerly were under Inuit control, or new fields of contemporary thought and governance for which demands the Inuit Language can be cultivated and developed to meet, through involving elders and younger generations in a project aimed at drawing upon the oral traditions of IQ for the needs of today's society. This is nothing short of a major societal project for a exciting renaissance of Inuit Thought for the 21st Century.

2. Nunavut's LOI policies and Language Revitalization experiences compared to other jurisdictions in Canada and internationally

2.1 The Nunavut Early-exit model

In the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report (2000), the model of language education was described as an early-exit bilingual model. This means that, in general, if the Inuit Language is used as an LOI, it will be limited to the early primary grades, after which there is a transition to English as the only LOI for the remaining grades.

This model was assessed in *Aajiiqatigiingniq* as “fundamentally flawed”, and, with the exception of a few individual schools, which have made progress, this negative assessment of 2000 of the system remains valid.

It is called “transitional early-exit”, because the students are said to “exit” from education in their mother tongue at an early stage in their education. With some notable exceptions, the first three grades are taught by bilingual Inuit teachers; then comes the transition to English, following which the remaining grades are generally delivered in English by monolingual Qallunaat teachers.

2.1.1. Educational outcomes of the Nunavut Early-exit model.

Transitional early-exit programs are classified, along with transitional late-exit programs as weak forms of bilingual education. These programs “do not lead to high levels of bilingualism or educational success at group level”. They “lead to very strong dominance in one language”. Also, they “violate linguistic human rights of minorities grossly”.²⁷ They also deny children's right to access IQ to the fullest extent possible.

Such a harsh judgement is borne out by the outcomes of the Nunavut system. Only 25% of Inuit students graduate from a high school, and although as yet there is no criterion-referenced assessment of the language abilities of these graduates, it is safe to surmise that their dominant language, at least for cognitively-demanding literate tasks, would be English. Their levels in the Inuit Language will fall short of full proficiency.

One major research study²⁸ of high-school students by a respected researcher (Ron Mackay of Concordia) found that, while his grade ten students were superficially proficient in spoken English, their academic English was limited.

This outcome is not unexpected from a transitional early-exit model, where students arrive at high school without developing age-appropriate academic abilities in either language. Bilingual education theory would contribute an additional explanation for the

²⁷ See the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report. Also Skutnabb-Kangas, T. 2000 *Linguistic Genocide in Education- or World-wide diversity and human rights?* (Mahwah N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum. 2000). Chapter 8.

²⁸ Mackay's study is discussed in *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report, both vol. 1. and vol. 2.

findings of Mackay's study; namely that the low language proficiency outcomes of schooling in Nunavut are predictable from Jim Cummins' dual-threshold theory.²⁹

According to this theory, bilingual education will be beneficial if schooling helps students attain two thresholds. At the lower threshold, the student becomes grounded in his or her first language, in both conversational and academic proficiency.³⁰ Also, the child acquires both proficiency and awareness about how language works. If this threshold level is achieved, according to Cummins' theory, there will at least be no negative cognitive consequences from learning a second language.³¹

Students who reach the lower threshold in their L1 can aspire to reaching the upper threshold of both conversational and academic proficiency in a second language, providing that their exposure to the L2 is sufficient. At this level, the positive cognitive consequences of bilingual education can be expected.

The dual-threshold idea is complemented by another idea developed by Cummins: the interdependence principle. According to this principle, *to the extent that instruction in the Inuit Language is effective in promoting full proficiency (conversational and academic) in the Inuit Language, transfer of this proficiency to English will occur provided there is adequate exposure to English (either in school or in the environment) and adequate motivation to learn.*³²

Mackay's Igloolik study showed that the early-exit model fails to bring students to either of the thresholds, and its biggest failure is its failure to promote full proficiency in the Inuit Language – both for its own sake, and as a foundation for achieving full proficiency in the second language, English.

With the early and abrupt introduction of English-as-LOI, interrupting the children's cognitive/academic/literate development in their L1, they cannot simply continue their cognitive development smoothly in the L2, introduced abruptly, too much and too soon. The children must lose time grappling with English, which is not introduced as an additional language but as a new, full-strength, LOI. Cummins' research over 30 years has convincingly shown that for a new LOI to be fully developed as a adequate tool for

²⁹ A recent account of Jim Cummins' evolving contributions to bilingual education theory is *Language, Power and Pedagogy: Bilingual Children in the Crossfire*. (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.) 2000. His theories were summarized in the *Aajjiqatigiingniq* report and applied to the Nunavut situation.

³⁰ "academic" proficiency in the Inuit Language would include both complex oral genres (eg. stories, land enskilment), context-reduced high school as well as literate genres in Inuit Language whose content is informed by the educational philosophy of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit. It can also include translations/adaptations of academic texts and imaginative literature whose original language was English, French, Greenlandic or any other language.

³¹ Those students who emerged relatively unscathed from their Residential School experience may well have been the older children already grounded in Inuit Language and Inuit ways of knowing (IQ) through informal education in their home communities and on the land. According to the dual-threshold theory, they would have reached the first threshold.

³² This principle is discussed in Cummins, J. (2007) "Language Interactions in the Classroom: From Coercive to Collaborative Relations of Power". In Garcia, O. and Baker, C. (eds.) (2007) *Bilingual Education: An Introductory Reader*. (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters) p. 113.

academic learning - even in cases in southern Canada of immigrant students who arrive having reached the lower threshold in their L1 in their home country's school system - it takes from 5 to 7 years to achieve full age-appropriate proficiency in English.³³

For Inuit students whose access to their L1 lower threshold is prevented by the transitional early-exit model, this process of attaining a higher threshold would take even longer or, as in the case of the Igloolik students in Mackay's study, would simply be out of reach.

The inescapable conclusion is that Nunavut's transitional early-exit model which "dumps students into English when they are not ready"³⁴ fails to develop Inuit students' cognitive-academic abilities in either language.

2.1.2. Subtractive bilingualism

A typical problem of Nunavut's high school students is that even though their spoken Inuit Language may (or may not!) be sufficient for everyday purposes, especially when conversing about local or informal topics, they probably experience difficulty conversing with monolingual or Inuit Language-dominant elders. Academic English will not come easily to them, and being exposed to Academic Inuit Language may be frustrating and humiliating experience for them.

These outcomes are the product of a language education which has "*subtractive bilingualism*"³⁵ as its direct outcome. This term refers to the fact that students' acquisition of English has come at the cost of eroding their competence and confidence in their mother tongue. Put even more strongly, the impact of formal schooling in English on children's knowledge of their mother tongue for many has been a process of replacing Inuit language, culture and ways of knowing with another, alien, language and culture.³⁶

2.2. Beyond Transitional Models: Lessons from other jurisdictions³⁷

Beyond transitional early-exit models – a "weak" form of bilingual education – there are strong forms of bilingual education. These forms lead to high levels of bilingualism, educational success at the group level, and respect linguistic human rights of minorities.

The *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report surveyed various "strong" bilingual program-types – and these were recommended in the Nov 2004 announcement of the Bilingual Education

³³ This is assuming that the teachers are trained in second-language teaching and are preferably bilingual. Neither of these conditions generally applies to Nunavut's Qallunaat teachers.

³⁴ An opinion expressed by one of the Aajiiqatigiingniq teacher informants. (*Op cit.* vol 2., p. 30)

³⁵ This term is discussed further in Section 3 of this report.

³⁶ This is the assessment of Louis-Jacques Dorais on the basis of decades of experience in Nunavik and Nunavut. (Dorais, L-J. 1996 *Language in Inuit Society*. Iqaluit: NAC, Chapter 8)

³⁷ It must be noted that the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut commissioned excellent studies of language policies in Canada and abroad: *Government Responses to Language Issues*. These excellent papers are available on-line from the Commissioner's web-site.

Strategy. The two which are most indicated, according to child and community characteristics, are:

Immersion: for students who come to school speaking English

Mother-tongue/Language maintenance (the modified “Qulliq” model): for students entering school speaking the Inuit Language

Other jurisdictions in Canada and internationally have, to a greater or lesser degree, attempted to come to grips with similar LOI and language revitalization

Lessons from New Brunswick

Of the ten Canadian provinces, only one is officially bilingual – New Brunswick. The province has a special demographic character with 63% of the population declaring English as their mother tongue and 32% declaring French. New Brunswick’s Acadiens are proportionally the largest French-speaking community outside of Quebec and are concentrated in a large French-majority geographical area in the north of the province.

In the 1960s, the provincial government decided to embrace the mother-tongue principle for educating the children of each linguistic community and set up two parallel mother-tongue education systems, one in French and one in English, each possessing its own unilingual educational bureaucracy and school boards, each controlled by officials belonging to its own linguistic community, and each reporting to its own deputy minister. This solution to the delivery of mother-tongue education to New Brunswick’s two linguistic communities through two parallel unilingual systems has been called a dual education structure.

Each language is represented at the tertiary level with a mother-tongue medium university: University of New Brunswick (Fredericton and Saint John) and Mount Allison University (Sackville) are English-language universities and the Universite de Moncton is a French-language university.

In the Official Languages of New Brunswick Act (1969), it is stated in Section 12 that

In any public, trade or technical school:

- (a) where the mother tongue of the pupils is English, the chief language of instruction is to be English, and the second language is to be French;*
- (b) where the mother tongue of the pupils is French, the chief language of instruction is to be French, and the second language is to be English*

- (c) subject to paragraph (d), where the mother tongue of the pupils is in some cases English and in some cases French, classes are to be so arranged that the chief Language of instruction is the mother tongue of each group with the other official Language the second language for those groups; and*

(d) where the Minister of Education decides that it is not feasible by reason of numbers to abide by the terms of paragraph (c), he may make alternative arrangements to carry out the spirit of this Act.

New Brunswick encourages members of the anglophone majority group to learn French. French as a Second Language (FRSL) programmes have been established at all levels, from primary school to university, and agreements with Canadian Heritage under the Canada-New Brunswick Agreement on Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction promote the learning of both FRSL and ESL (English as a Second Language).

Section 12 (c) provides for cases of mixed communities with children of different linguistic backgrounds sharing a school. It may also apply to children who have both English and French as first languages; that is, children who have acquired two languages from infancy or at a very young age, and who “move so seamlessly from English to French and back again that they cannot identify which language is their stronger, as with the majority of the population of Grand Falls.”³⁸ Such a situation occurs in Iqaluit; even so, the New Brunswick solution would be to use the mother-tongue formula, but if that is not feasible, to “make alternative arrangements”³⁹ to deliver a strong bilingual education.

Rehorick⁴⁰ points out that in both systems, there are students with limited abilities in the language of instruction. There may be, in the French side, students who have the right to a French-language education by virtue of having one francophone parent, but whose French - possibly because the mixed-marriage household operates in English - may not be as advanced as that of a child whose parents are both francophone and who use French as the language of the home. Likewise, in the English system, there may be children of immigrants who use another language than English in the home and may begin school with limited abilities in the language of instruction.

This feature of the New Brunswick system is also a feature of the Nunavut system. Total immersion pre-schools and careful assessment of the child’s linguistic profile and identity upon entry to the school system are two institutional means of helping children reach a high common standard of spoken Inuit Language (through the pre-school program) and to help the school develop an appropriate instruction policy for each child (through the initial assessment).

Like the Inuit Language in Nunavut today, French in New Brunswick in the 1960s, before the New Brunswick Official Languages Bill was passed, was seen to be an endangered language at risk of losing more speakers to English with every passing year.

³⁸ Rehorick, S. 2003 *The Critical Role of the Education System in Creating Bilingual Citizens: New Brunswick as a Microcosm of Canada*. Invited paper presented at Visions and Challenges: Official Languages in the 21st Century, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. Page 1. Ottawa. Retrieved from http://www.unb.ca/slec/hot_topics/bilingual_citizens.html. 17/06/07.

³⁹ One such alternative arrangement, offered as an option for consideration in Iqaluit in the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report, was “dual-language immersion”, a model catering to two linguistic groups’ children learning and using each other’s language.

⁴⁰ The information presented here is drawn from Rehorick’s paper.

But, in one generation, there has been a remarkable turn-around, and the education system must be recognized as a key component in reversing French-to-English language shift.

Also, the establishment of a French-medium university, l'Universite de Moncton, was of great importance in the struggle for French language revitalization, and researchers from this university have contributed greatly to our understanding of the factors which are necessary to promote objective and subjective linguistic vitality of threatened languages.

Both school systems pride themselves on strong mother-tongue education coupled with high-quality second-language programs, with the objective in each system of producing strong bilingual graduates. One quarter of the Anglophone student body is enrolled in French immersion, and there are both early-start (eg, Grade 2) and intermediate (eg, Grade 7) immersion options available. The province is piloting an Intensive Core French (eg, three periods a day) program at the Grade 5 level. Approximately 40% of high school graduates achieve a functional level of French.

The New Brunswick government's declared goal is to reach a level whereby 70% of anglophone high school graduates achieve a functional level of French by the year 2013.

The lessons for Nunavut of the New Brunswick approach to bilingualism appear to be:

1. Achieving revitalization through a monolingual mother-tongue education system

The French-language system has been successful in for revitalizing an endangered language through the establishment of a monolingual mother-tongue maintenance school system in that language. Its graduates have, by and large, reached basic functional levels of proficiency in English, despite the fact that English is not used an LOI in the French system. Instead, there are ESL (English-as-a-subject) programs taught by bilingual francophone teachers, and, depending on the community, there are informal opportunities to hear and use English outside the school setting.

2. Choosing an appropriate ESL Program model to develop bilingual abilities

The ESL program in the French system in New Brunswick appears to be a form of "core" L2 program, which has generally been found to be insufficient to produce students who can function in the L2.

This is why in the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report an argument was put forward to offer, as a minimum, and depending on extensive community consultations, two periods a day – one ESL Language Arts period plus one period in which English is used as an LOI.⁴¹

⁴¹ *Aajiiqatigiingniq* was written long before CLEY's proposed Inuit Language Protection Bill, in which it is proposed that graduates of Nunavut high schools be prepared to become "fully proficient" in the Inuit Language in both its spoken and written forms. Such a goal, if it is to be taken seriously, would require that the Inuit Language become the chief/principal/predominant LOI throughout the K-12 school system. Recall that the proposal made in *Aajiiqatigiingniq* – an open-ended planning framework in which the Department

This is the equivalent of a proposal to go beyond the “core”-dosage of one period a day, to an “extended core”-dosage (two periods a day). The “Intensive Core”-dosage (of three periods a day), which is being piloted in some schools in New Brunswick’s English-language system, would be more than the minimum proposed by *Aajiiqatigiingniq*, and would detract from the time needed to develop the Inuit Language as the chief language of instruction in Nunavut schools for Inuit children.

Beyond the Intensive Core programme, we begin to enter the realm of immersion programs – which we will discuss more fully below, in Section 3.

3. The importance of protective legislation

The New Brunswick francophone school system was the fruit of protective legislation at both the federal and provincial levels. In particular, the 1969 New Brunswick Official Languages Act paved the way for mother tongue school systems for both of the province’s official language communities.

The lesson for Nunavut is that the two CLEY-sponsored Bills and the anticipated Nunavut Education Act need to be aligned in favour of a strong bilingual model, with the Inuit Language as principal LOI in the context of a broad language revitalization policy.

4. University-level LOI, with the creation of the University of Moncton, serving the Province’s francophone community. It also provides made-in-New Brunswick French-language teacher education.

of Education would mandate (only) two periods per day (i.e. 20% approximately) in each language, leaving the rest of the day (60%) up to community consultations and local DEA decisions – was formulated in 2000 in the absence of any explicit policy guidance, either from CLEY or from the Dept. of Education on the degree of importance which should be given to the Inuit Language.

So, the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report would permit the choice by communities of an 80-20 language allocation in favour of the Inuit Language. English would be taught through an Extended Core program. Given the very high – and increasing - informal exposure to English in Nunavut outside of the formal school system, it is plausible that an objective of “full proficiency in the Inuit Language” is a realizable goal, while also attaining high levels of conversational fluency and at least intermediate levels of literacy in English. In that sense, the ESL proficiency outcomes of the Nunavut system would almost certainly be superior to those found among ESL graduates from the French-medium schools in New Brunswick or among French-medium high school graduates from Quebec, for whom informal exposure to English outside the school context is less than in Nunavut.

The question of the best age at which to introduce English was also discussed in *Aajiiqatigiingniq*, and it was felt that there was no reason not to introduce oral English in the early grades, if the community so desired. In a recent discussion of the question, Hornberger writes: “It should be emphasized that [research findings] that a stronger first language leads to a stronger second language do not necessarily imply that the first language must be fully developed before the second language is introduced. Rather, the first language must not be abandoned before it is fully developed, whether the second language is introduced simultaneously or successively, early or late, in that process.” (Hornberger, N. 2003 *Continua of Biliteracy*. (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, p. 23). The problem in Nunavut schools is that the Inuit Language is, generally speaking, abandoned before it is fully developed (i.e. at both conversational and academic levels).

The lesson for Nunavut is to highlight the urgent need for a new generation of bilingual Inuit teachers to staff a bilingual School system where the Inuit Language is predominant and principles of bilingual Education, IQ and ESL are the norm rather than the exception. Annual targets for the development of Inuit teachers to meet the annual extension of the right to Inuit Language-medium education, as proposed below, could be fostered by the creation of a Inuit-medium tertiary institution.

.Lessons from Hawaii

Hawaii is the only bilingual state in the U.S. The current movement to revitalize Hawaiian language and culture is an attempt to create a political and cultural renaissance after over a century of conquest and oppression. By the mid-1990s, there were fewer than 1,000 native speakers, largely over 80 years old. At the time of the first immersion program, the Hawaiian language was at the lowest stage on the Fishman graded disruption scale, but today, it has been called “arguably the most dramatic language revitalization success story to date, certainly within the US context”.⁴²

The Hawaiian Language Immersion school model (*Kula Kaiapuni Hawai'i*) provides total immersion in the Hawaiian language from Kindergarten to Grade 12. It can be called immersion because the children come to school speaking English, and generally speaking, English is the language of the home.

The program begins with a *Punana Leo* (“language nest”) total immersion preschool in Hawaiian language for children between the ages of two and five. Hawaiian language is the only language taught from kindergarten to grade four. English instruction is introduced in grade five and is limited to one hour per day from grade five through to grade twelve. Therefore, the language allocation ratio between Hawaiian and English is 80:20.

The program also includes Hawaiian as the medium through which students receive the entire curriculum, including language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The first cohort of students graduated in 1999. Hawaiian is also taught at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, and in 1998, the first teacher preparation program specifically aimed at preparing Hawaiian immersion teachers was established.

The general evaluation of the educational outcomes of this program is positive:

Although the program has emphasised language revitalisation as opposed to academic achievement, Hawaiian immersion schooling has yielded significant academic benefits. Immersion students have garnered prestigious scholarships, enrolled in college courses while still in high school, and passed the state university's English composition assessments, despite receiving the majority of their English, science, and mathematics instruction in Hawaiian. Student achievement on standardised tests has equalled and in

⁴² McCarty, T. “Revitalising Indigenous Languages in Homogenising Times”. In Garcia, O. and Baker, C. (eds.) *Op.cit.* 2007. p. 37.

*some cases surpassed that of Native Hawaiian children enrolled in English-medium schools, even in English language arts. There is also evidence that Hawaiian immersion develops critical literacy and cultural pride.*⁴³

The Hawaiian experience with language revitalization through 80:20 immersion deserves to be better known in Nunavut, particularly in Kitikmeot. In 1986, fewer than 50 children in all of Hawaii could speak the language. Now there are more than 2,000.

Although the program has not been without challenges – principally jurisdictional - the Hawaii approach of placing the focus on language and cultural revitalization⁴⁴ has awakened consciousness and pride among Native Hawaiians, a necessary condition for academic success.

Lessons from Aotearoa/New Zealand

The Maori experience is world-famous among all those concerned with reversing language shift as part of a broadly-based cultural renaissance.

English-assimilationist education policies had been so strong in the 19th and 20th centuries that by 1979, the Maori language was predicted to die before the turn of the century. New approaches were sought, and at first there were attempts to integrate Maori culture with Pakeha (=Qallunaat) culture in schools. However, this approach was judged to be merely a softer form of assimilation than the previous policy.

Next, a period of multicultural education was tried – the “*taha Maori*” period of the 1970s and 1980s - similar to the “cultural inclusion” approach attempted on occasion in Nunavut – but this was seen as merely a paternalistic attempt to contain Maori demands for self-determination, serving the interests and concerns of Pakeha rather than the Maori.

The two developments which began to reverse Maori-to-English language shift were: (1) bilingual schools and, more important, (2) the emergence of Maori-medium immersion schools, administered and staffed by Maori teachers. By the turn of the century, there were over 600 total immersion pre-school language nests, (kohanga reo), and almost Maori-medium 300 primary schools (*Kura Kaupapa Maori*/ Maori Philosophy Schools).

Today more than 60 secondary schools offer bilingual education with varying degrees of Maori-medium instruction (from total immersion with a 90:10 mix to partial immersion of the 50:50 type). In any event, the Maori language is designated as “the principal language of instruction” in the revised (1989) *Education Act*, and therefore only total immersion programs conform to this wording in the Act.

⁴³ McCarty, T. *ibid.* p. 38.

⁴⁴ Three articles in Hinton, L. and Hale, K. (eds) *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice* (San Diego: Academic Press) 2001 are relevant here: Hinton, L. “An Introduction to the Hawaiian language”, Warner, S. L. N. “The Movement to Revitalize Hawaiian Language and Culture”, and Wilson, W. and Kamana, K. “*Mai Loko Mai O Ka 'I'ini*: Proceeding from a Dream” The ‘Aha Punana Leo Connection in Hawaiian Language Revitalization.”

As in the Hawaiian case, it was a parent-initiated movement beginning in 1982 for the establishment of Maori-medium pre-schools – the *Te Kohanga Reo* – which represented a major turning point for Maori attitudes to language and education.

Overall, the evaluation of Maori-medium education is positive. However, it reaches only a tiny percentage of Maori children, and “those few students who are lucky enough to learn the Maori language in *Kohanga Reo* and *Kura Kaupapa* are likely to lose their language skills when they reach higher levels of education”.⁴⁵

The Maori have also had problems recruiting teachers sufficiently competent in the Maori language to teach in total immersion programmes. In 1997, the Ministry of Education launched a *Maori Language Education Plan*, in which various strategies have been adopted to increase the supply of Maori-medium teachers, including scholarships for teacher trainees, face-to-face recruitment campaigns, in-service Maori training for active teachers, etc.⁴⁶

Perhaps the most widely-accepted lesson to be learned from the Maori experience is the importance they give to the Maori-language pre-school language nests. These include culturally-relevant pedagogy, the involvement of elders and parents as teachers, and a significant degree of local control over children’s education.⁴⁷

Finally,

*“The “Maori-agenda”/kura kaupapa Maori schools have rejected the type of ‘bilingual education’ where Maori and English would have equal position as classroom languages, and they clearly want maintenance programmes”.*⁴⁸

Lessons from Wales

The role of Welsh-medium education is acknowledged as a key element in the revitalization of Welsh after centuries of conquest and domination by the English. There is today Welsh-medium education at all levels. Policy initiatives have also been extended to the home. Midwives counsel expectant mothers on language issues, promoting the use of Welsh in the new-borns’ homes. Playgroups are available to children from birth to school age to play within an informal Welsh setting, with opportunities for parents to socialize and learn or improve their Welsh at the same time, something like the Maori language nests, which also encourage the involvement of parents, grandparents and the extended family as care-givers and co-learners/co-mentors.

⁴⁵ Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut. *Government Responses to Language Issues, International Examples: New Zealand*. p. 50. Available on Languages Commissioner’s web-site.

⁴⁶ Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut. *ibid.* p. 50.

⁴⁷ May, S. “Maori-Medium Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand” in Tollefson and Tsui eds. 2004 *op.cit.* pp.21-41. Also see King, J.” *Te Kohanga Reo: Maori Language Revitalization*” in Hinton and Hale eds. *Op.cit.* pp. 119-128.

⁴⁸ Skutnabb-Kangas, T. *Op. cit.* 2000. p. 604.

At primary and secondary levels, there are two main types of Welsh-promoting schools, according to the linguistic strength of the community. In communities where native Welsh-speakers are strongly present, Welsh-medium/mother tongue education is offered in “*traditional*” schools, with the formal study of English introduced at the age of seven in a limited “core” form. Jones and Martin-Jones comment that “informally, pupils learn English through regular exposure to it via the media, local peer groups, and family networks. By the time they enter secondary school at age 11, most native Welsh speakers are reasonably bilingual and biliterate”.⁴⁹

In communities which are more anglicized, Welsh-medium schooling is available in “*designated*” bilingual schools as an alternative to the local English-medium school. Welsh is the main LOI in these schools. Here, the children come from English-speaking homes, and the schooling approach is therefore a Welsh-immersion model. These schools teach most (if not all) aspects of the curriculum through the medium of Welsh.⁵⁰

The proportion of Welsh-to-English varies: in “*traditional*” bilingual secondary schools, 50% or more of the curriculum is offered through the medium of Welsh. Depending on the local school authority, the number of subjects offered through Welsh may increase. In “*designated*” schools, the “most (if not all)” proportion would appear to be in the 80%-90% Welsh-medium range: that is, a near-total immersion model, with academic results – including results in English – comparable to those of students graduating from English-medium schools, allowing for normal contact features of Welsh English.

The Welsh-medium schooling experience has two further lessons for Nunavut. First, it has explicitly rejected a diglossic model of the relationship between Welsh and English. This means that educational policy-makers have rejected the idea that some form of separate compartmentalization of the two languages would be consistent with Welsh language revitalization. Indeed, their leading bilingual education researcher, Colin Baker, has written that to stabilize Welsh-language use in the informal, intimate, home domains so beloved of Fishman would be a death sentence for Welsh.

Instead, Welsh language planners aim to achieve bilingualism without diglossia. This means that most people will be bilingual but will not restrict one language to a specific set of purposes. Welsh is expected to be used for a wide range of purposes, not to be relegated to “low”, vernacular functions in the name of stability sustainability.

Baker summarizes:

It is believed in Wales that allocating separate functions for Welsh and English will relegate the Welsh language to low status and subordinate uses. Welsh would have sentimental and not instrumental (eg. economic) value. Thus the Welsh view is that a functional separation of languages in Wales will lead inevitably to language decline.

⁴⁹ Jones D. and Martin-Jones, M. “Bilingual Education and Language Revitalization in Wales: Past Achievements and Current Issues” in Tollefson and Tsui eds. 2005 *op. cit.* pp. 43-70

⁵⁰ Jones D. and Martin-Jones, M. *ibid.* p. 53.

*The Basques have created a similar argument against a diglossic functional separation and are working for the normalization of bilingualism.*⁵¹

This policy stance carries over into the methodology of delivering a bilingual curriculum. Rather than functionally allocating somewhat rigid blocks of time to one language or another, there is a move to use an approach called transliteracy, once the students are firmly grounded in their primary language (Welsh) and are at least conversationally functional in English. The approach involves the simultaneous use of both languages in cognitively-demanding tasks (typically in the upper years of high school). A reading may be introduced in English, then discussed in Welsh and a written reflection produced in Welsh. The next day, the language mix could be reversed, with both languages serving as resources (both linguistic and cultural) and contributing to a deeper understanding of the topic. Obviously, fully bilingual and biliterate teachers would be required to make use of this interesting approach.

Other Lessons from Europe

There are many minority-language communities with similar experiences to the Welsh, and to a greater or lesser degree, each has used Mother-Tongue Medium and bilingual education as a key component of language revitalization. Greenland, the Basque Countries, Catalunya, Ireland, Estonia, Latvia, and the Sami (especially the Sami of Norway) have LOI experiences of value to education language planners in Nunavut.

All of the language revitalization movements depend on giving the language at risk as much institutional support as possible, and this means providing a strong presence of the language in the school. The role of the school in developing the child's mother tongue is now well understood, and it is also clear that the entire education system, understood in the broadest sense, from pre-school through to tertiary education, using informal apprenticeships and networks as well as formal means needs to be involved in any serious language revitalization campaign, if it is to stand any chance of success in the face of a powerful global language such as English.

Internationally-applicable guidelines for mother-tongue-medium education of national minorities in Europe were adopted by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 1996 in a document entitled *The Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities*.

Especially relevant lessons for Nunavut could be drawn from the following articles:

12) Research indicates that in primary school the curriculum should be taught in the minority language. The minority language should be taught as a subject on a regular basis. The State language should also be taught as a subject on a regular basis preferably by bilingual teachers who have a good understanding of the child's linguistic and cultural background. Towards the end of this period, a few practical or non-theoretical subjects should be taught through the medium of the State language.

⁵¹ Baker, C. "Biliteracy and Transliterationacy in Wales", in Hornberger, N. (ed.) (2002) *Op. Cit.* p. 85.

Wherever possible, States should create conditions enabling parents to avail themselves of this option.

13) In secondary school, a substantial part of the curriculum should be taught through the medium of the minority language. The minority language should be taught as a subject of study on a regular basis. The State language should also be taught as a subject on a regular basis preferably by bilingual teachers who have a good understanding of the children's cultural and linguistic background. Throughout this period, the number of subjects taught in the State language should gradually be increased. Research findings suggest that the more gradual the increase, the better for the child.

14) The maintenance of the primary and secondary levels of minority education depends a great deal on the availability of teachers trained in all disciplines in the mother tongue. Therefore, ensuing from the obligation to provide adequate opportunities for minority language education, States should provide adequate facilities for the appropriate training of teachers and should facilitate access to such training.⁵²

The Hague Recommendations advocate mother-tongue medium education as the primary LOI at all levels of schooling, and express a strong recommendation for the inclusion of bilingual teachers in the dominant language as a second language. In terms of language allocation, the Hague Recommendations advocate that primary education would be approximately 80% in the mother tongue, as would be the early years of secondary school. In the upper grades of secondary school, gradually, subjects could be introduced in the second language, but with the mother tongue remaining predominant (i.e. at least 60% of the instructional time).

⁵² For the full OECD document, see www.osce.org/documents/hcnm/1996. Last consulted 22/06/07.

3. Additive and Subtractive Bilingualism. Immersion as a Way to Revitalize a Language.

3.1. Additive and Subtractive Bilingualism: some examples

As was mentioned in the footnote on page 1 of this report, Canada's French Immersion programs for anglophone students are widely recognized as a successful example of additive bilingual education. This term refers to the fact that, as a rule, an English mother-tongue student enrolled in such a program can, if he or she continues to attend this program, acquire a relatively high level of competence in French at little or no cost to English, their mother tongue.

In the case of Nunavut, the learning of English by Inuit students is the opposite of additive: it is subtractive.

The *Aajiiqatigiingniq* project used a statistical method to correlate Nunavut high school students' self-assessed ability (both spoken and written) in the Inuit Language with their ability in English, also self-assessed. It was found that the correlation between these two scores was negative to a statistically significant degree. This means that a high score in English was strongly correlated with a low score in Inuit Language. A similar finding was reported by McAlpine et al. for Nunavik.⁵³ In both studies, the correlations strongly suggest that there is a pattern of subtractive bilingualism in both Nunavut and Nunavik. A comparison of the results of the two studies suggests that the extent of the subtraction (i.e. the erosion of the Inuit Language) is stronger in Nunavut than in Nunavik.⁵⁴

Barbara Burnaby has contrasted the relative success of French immersion for anglophone children with the relative failure of English-only submersion for aboriginal children. In French immersion programs (in which Anglophone parents choose to send their children to a school program in which the language of instruction is not the language of the home), the teachers in the immersion program are bilingual, the program is voluntary and parent-supported, the children's language (English) is a dominant language not threatened with language shift or loss, and generally the families who decide on this option are of middle-class socio-economic status.

On all of these counts, the use of English as the non-optional LOI beyond grade four in Nunavut is not immersion but submersion, and the system-wide result is one of

⁵³ McAlpine, L, Taylor, D., Pesco, D. and Caron, M. (n.d. 1998?) "Bilingualism among Inuit Youth in Arctic Quebec: Additive or Subtractive?" (McGill University, Faculty of Education. unpublished paper, n.d. 1998?)

⁵⁴ Martin, I. (2000) *Report of the Research Project: Language Attitudes, Ability, Use, Vitality and Sociolinguistic Trends Most Likely to Affect School-based Language Planning and Promotion Policies (Aajiiqatigiingniq volume 3)* Iqaluit: Department of Education. September 2000. p. 18.

subtractive, not additive, bilingualism for those who do not exercise their only option⁵⁵, that is, to quit school before graduating.

The English-only language-in-education policy which Nunavut inherited from the N.W.T. and which has perpetuated cannot, for the reasons listed by Burnaby, be considered an additive programme, despite some superficial similarities to French immersion for anglophone children. The more appropriate term is submersion or sink-or-swim model.

This model sees children with a non-dominant language-at-risk being forced to accept instruction through the medium of a dominant/majority/official language, where the teacher does not represent the child's language or culture, does not understand the mother tongue of the child, and where the dominant language constitutes a threat to the child's mother tongue, which runs the risk of being displaced or replaced by the dominant language. The child does not become fully fluent in his or her mother tongue, since there is no opportunity or encouragement in school to develop an academic proficiency in the mother tongue. This situation can be termed a subtractive language learning situation.

3.2 These concepts are summarized in the following table:

⁵⁵ Nunavut students, unlike Anglophone students in an immersion program who can always fall back on an English-as-LOI system if they don't like the immersion program, do not have the option of transferring out of the English-submersion situation into an Inuit-Language-as-LOI system.

Definition Box

Additive language learning

A new language is learned **in addition** to the mother tongue, which continues to be used and developed. The person's total linguistic repertoire is extended.

Additive bilingual education (additive bilingualism)

A form of bilingual education in which the language of instruction is not the mother tongue or home language of the children, and is not intended to replace it. In an additive Bilingual education program, the first language (Inuit Language in Nunavut) is maintained and supported. For example, the bilingual programs in French for English-speaking Canadians are intended to give the children a second language, not to replace English with French.

Additive spread of English

The incoming language (English in Nunavut) is initially used for new functions, but does not replace original language(s), which continue to be used and developed, even if some diglossia may occur. Later, terms in Inuit Language may develop for the new functions and concepts introduced originally through English.

Subtractive language learning (subtractive bilingualism)

A new, dominant, language (English in Nunavut) is learned **at the cost** of the mother tongue, which is displaced and sometimes replaced. The person's total linguistic repertoire does not show (much) growth as a result of the learning.

Subtractive spread of English

The incoming language (English in Nunavut) at first *displaces*, then *replaces* the Inuit Language, domain by domain.

Diglossia

Functional differentiation between languages, eg, using one language at home or in the neighbourhood, and another one for more formal, official purposes. "Stable diglossia" is sometimes considered a strategy for preventing language loss, by clearly labelling domains in which each language is mainly used. Fishman has advocated a "stable diglossia" approach, especially for severely endangered languages, such as Inuinnaqtun. As was mentioned, the Welsh and the Basques have rejected this approach, fearing that stabilization of a language in a subordinate relationship to another language is a sure means of hastening its loss of prestige, vitality and therefore, its decline.

3.3 Immersion as a Way to Revitalize a Language

Immersion was initiated in Canada as an improvement over more traditional modes of second/foreign-language teaching, such as "core", "extended core" and so on. Here are some definitions

Definition Box

“Core” second-language learning models common in programs teaching French as the target language (the language being learned) to in anglophone school systems in Canada.

“Core” second-language teaching program

Core is a basic program where the target language (the language being learned, not the child’s mother tongue) is the subject being studied.

Typically, this will be 30-40 minutes per day.

Ratio of mother-tongue instruction to target-language instruction: 90:10.

General results: Core French is not, on its own, seen to produce functionally bilingual students over their cumulative schooling experience for students living in English-dominant settings. However, informal out-of-school exposure, summer language camps, student exchanges, school trips to Quebec or France, may compensate for the limited lack of input provided formally and students may develop high levels of competence, depending on their motivation and exposure to French-language settings.

Extended Core programs

This program includes a core period in which the target language is a subject of study and, in addition, adds a second period in which a subject is taught using the target language as a language of instruction.

Ratio of mother-tongue instruction to target-language instruction: 80:20

General results: Extended Core is a marked advance over Core, and should over the student’s cumulative schooling experience, prepare students to function at a intermediate level of proficiency in French. Increased proficiency, as with Core, may come with motivation and exposure to French-language settings.

This model was, in effect, the one proposed in the Aajjiqatigiingniq report as the minimal amount of formal instruction mandated in each language for a strong bilingual program.

Intensive extended core programs (New Brunswick)

The same as extended core, with two periods in which the target language is a language of instruction.

Ratio of MTM instruction to target language instruction: 70:30

General results: This program should show steady gains over Extended Core, And over the student’s cumulative schooling experience, should prepare students to function at a mid- to high-intermediate level of proficiency in French, with higher levels dependent on motivation and exposure to French in natural settings.

All of the above program models may be incorporated within a school system in which the child's home language is the principal LOI. None of the above models involve a home-school language switch (where the school's LOI is not the language of the home).

Immersion, on the other hand, does involve a home-school language switch at least 50% of instructional time, according to conventional definitions. There are many forms of immersion, usually described along two dimensions:

I. Proportion of Instructional Time spent in the target L2

Partial: 40-60% of the instructional time is spent in the target L2

Total: 70 – 100% of the instructional time is spent in the target L2

II. Grade-level of Introduction of Program:

Early: the immersion program is started in the early primary years

Delayed: the immersion program is started in the middle primary years

Late: the immersion program is started in the later primary years

French Immersion in Canada is one of the most intensively studied and researched language-teaching programs in the history of language education, world-wide.

Harley (1994) observed that many French immersion students, whatever program they may have followed in their primary schooling, tend to select one or two subjects in high school each year plus a course in French language arts, with the rest of their schooling in English. She also noted that there is a tendency for immersion to attract learners from relatively favoured social backgrounds, although this is not necessarily always the case.

Johnson and Swain (1997)⁵⁶ list the core features of a “true” immersion program. In an Inuinnaqtun immersion program, L2 would refer to Inuinnaqtun, L1 to English.

1. the L2 is the main medium of instruction
2. the L2 curriculum parallels the L1 curriculum
3. overt psychological and other support exists for the L1, both from parents and the school
4. the program aims for additive bilingualism
5. exposure to L2 is largely confined to the classroom
6. learners generally enter with similar (and limited) levels of L2 proficiency
7. the teachers are bilingual

⁵⁶ The OBE, Harley and Johnson and Swain citations are from Johnstone, R. “Characteristics of Immersion Programmes” in Garcia, O and Baker, C. (eds.) *Bilingual education; an Introductory Reader* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters: 2007, pp. 19-32).

“Immersion” need not only refer to the learning of French by Canadian Anglophones. It may refer to learning a foreign language (eg. English immersion in Austria or Hungary or China) or an endangered heritage language (as we have seen in the case of Welsh or Hawaiian immersion for children who are of Welsh or Hawaiian ethnic background, but who come to school speaking English, and whose homes are completely or predominantly English-speaking).

At this stage, one needs to emphasize that normally the term “immersion” is restricted to majority children with a high-status mother tongue (in Canada, typically, English) whose parents voluntarily choose (among existing alternatives) to be instructed through the medium of a language (in Canada, typically, French) which is not the child’s mother tongue or language of the home. Immersion classes are homogeneous and are taught by bilingual teachers. The child’s mother tongue – for immersion to work properly – must be in no danger of being replaced by the language of instruction. Only in this way can immersion be said to be an additive bilingual education option.

In *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report, “immersion” was, however, the model proposed for the Inuinaqtun communities, where the children come to school speaking English, but where there is a strong community and parental desire to recover and revitalize the language and to restore it to common everyday use. So, Inuinaqtun immersion programs with a substantial amount of instructional time devoted to Inuinaqtun were presented in that report as the best approach to produce young speakers of Inuinaqtun and, over a generation, to respond to expressed community wishes to bring the language back to life.⁵⁷

The situation of speakers of Inuinaqtun most closely resembles these latter Welsh and Hawaiian cases, as would any situation in Nunavut where children come to school speaking English and/or whose homes are wholly or predominantly English-speaking and where there was a strong parental desire to reinvigorate the Inuit Language by means of immersion education.

We have already mentioned the work of Burnaby in clarifying the difference between “true immersion” programs and “submersion” or “sink-or-swim” programs which have until recently been the norm for aboriginal students in Canada, and in Nunavut. Consequently, the idea of immersion makes the most sense in Nunavut in Inuinaqtun-speaking communities of West Kitikmeot. It would also seem to make sense in Iqaluit for Inuit students who come from homes in which Inuit Language is not the predominant language. In point of fact, the distinction made in the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report between “Inuinaqtun immersion,” recommended for West Kitikmeot, and “the Qulliq model” –

⁵⁷ Various documents from the Kitikmeot Language Revitalization Project (Kugluktuk, 2006) suggest that the preferred language allocation between Inuinaqtun and English is a 50-50 model. Given the extremely low starting point and the limited resources, it is not unreasonable to see this allocation as an achievable medium-term target. If successful in developing resources, teachers, materials etc, to operate up to Grade 12 on a 50-50 basis, the option of a Hawaiian-style revitalization through total immersion should remain open as a possibility.

Inuit Language mother-tongue education, really – are not terribly different as models, and their long-term goals (full proficiency in the Inuit Language) are the same.

Neither model presumes a homogenous student body; indeed, in each (but more in Iqaluit) there will be a variety of linguistic repertoires among students and an even more diverse variety of out-of-class Inuit Language-contact opportunities (probably more in Iqaluit).⁵⁸ In both cases, it would be necessary to develop community language plans so as to connect up all three points on the language revitalization triangle: home/families, school, and community so that they collaborate in using the Inuit Language more fully⁵⁹.

⁵⁸ In a recent study of language in Iqaluit, L-J. Dorais observes that “Despite its increasing symbolic and political value, Inuktitut seems to be in decline in Iqaluit homes. Testimonies and observation show that English and code-switching (between Inuktitut and English) are increasingly used by younger speakers....it appears that a majority of younger parents speak English to their kids or mix both languages.” Dorais concludes that “The key to the survival and flourishing of Inuktitut is education. Our respondents are conscious of that. All of them say that they would like Inuktitut to be taught up to Grade 12. And they are right. If the present situation continues, the language not taught beyond grades 3 or 4, it will never be possible, in the opinion of this author, to give Inuktitut its proper place in Nunavut. It will, for sure, continue to be spoken for some decades, at least outside of Iqaluit, but its use risks being increasingly limited to petty topics, on the one hand, and highly symbolic domains (traditional life, political discourse, religious ceremonies) on the other. It will never become Nunavut’s principal working language.” Dorais, L-J. (2006) *Inuit Discourse and Identity After the Advent of Nunavut*. (Quebec: Universite Laval. unpublished manuscript).

⁵⁹ In Catalonia, such as plan would be called a plan to “normalize” the use of the language in these domains.

4. How LOI policy is important for promoting and maintaining a sustainable Inuit Language-speaking society in Nunavut

LOI policy, to be effective, must be one of a number of language policy initiatives at the territorial level, and these initiatives must be the result of broad consultations, substantial sociolinguistic research – especially into language use and attitudes – and an honest and open prior ideological clarification.⁶⁰

When Nunavut was being created, language questions were left unresolved, despite worthy attempts, such as the Nunavut Implementation Committee (NIC) Language Policy Conference in Iqaluit March 1998, chaired by John Amagoalik. *Aajiiqatigiingniq* reviewed the report of this conference⁶¹ at which all the major language issues were discussed and recommendations made for action by the new Government of Nunavut.

It seems to the author of this paper that if one reads the NIC Language Policy Report, the Bathurst Mandate/Pinasuaqtavut of 1999, the Report of the NWT Languages Commissioner of 1998, the Report of the IQ Program Workshop (Arviat, February 2000), the Report from the September IQ Workshop (Sept., 1999), sponsored by CLEY, as well as language studies on communities [Arviat (Tagalik, 1998)] and regions [Kitikmeot (Aylward, Kiliktana and Meyok, 1996)] and then the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* study which synthesized these reports and presented its own research on language attitudes, it would not be an exaggeration to say that, at the time of the birth of Nunavut, the main lines of a necessary prior ideological clarification had been achieved with respect to the future of the Inuit Language as the working language of the new territory, and that the school system had to change to accommodate “the Nunavut dream”.

It took four years after the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report for the government to announce its Bilingual Education Strategy. Curiously, in the first proposed Education Act (2001) there was no mention of bilingualism or strong support for the Inuit Language as an LOI. In fact, it appeared that the framers of the first Act – later withdrawn – had not even read the LOI reports which their department had commissioned.

It would be idle to speculate on the reason for the seeming lack of urgency on the part of the Department of Education to prioritize bilingual education and Inuit teacher training in the years following the creation of Nunavut.⁶²

⁶⁰ The need for “prior ideological clarification” is highlighted in Marks Dauenhauer, N. and Dauenhauer, R. “Technical, emotional, and ideological issues in reversing language shift: examples from Southeast Alaska”. In Grenoble, L. and Whaley, L. (eds.) (1998). *Endangered Languages: Language Loss and Community Response*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 62-3.

⁶¹ *Op.Cit.*(2000) vol 2. *Sources and Issues*. Pp. 22-28.

⁶² Some of Dorais’ elder respondents were critical of Inuit politicians, “whose promise to protect Inuktitut was, they believe, forgotten as soon as they were in power” and one respondent felt that the presence of Qallunaat in key decision-making positions (eg. Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister) prevented Ministries from embracing pro-Inuit policies. (Dorais, L-J. (2006) *Op.Cit.* pp. 57-58)

At the present moment (summer of 2007) is a unique window of opportunity to engage in a language ideological debate as part of the public consultation on the two Bills proposed by CLEY.

Because of the tabling of the two CLEY-sponsored language bills in June, 2007, to be followed by a new Nunavut Education Act, anticipated for later in the year, it would not be an exaggeration to say that we are approaching an important language policy tipping point for the Inuit Language as the working language of Nunavut and for a strong LOI policy in the schools.

4.1 The Need to Harmonize new *Education Act* and CLEY's two Bills

As has been pointed out, a basic rule of language policy is that in the absence of a policy to the contrary, the status quo will remain in force. Dominant languages will retain and extend their dominance, and minority languages will lose vitality and their speakers will abandon them in prestigious domains.

In this sense, Nunavut's education system operates with a (covert) policy of Inuit language submersion and will continue to do so until such time as there is a clear indication that this policy will be replaced in a new *Nunavut Education Act*. This Act will need to replace the subtractive characteristics of the Nunavut education system with additive ones, and be in harmony with the spirit and letter of the two CLEY Bills, the Inuit Language Protection Bill and the Nunavut Official Languages Act.

A simple test of these legislative instruments will be the degree to which they support and strengthen the use of the Inuit Language and transform the current subtractive bilingual system into a positive additive one, ensuring that in the future, Nunavut's high school graduates will be fully proficient in the Inuit Language, while maintaining a reasonable standard of ESL proficiency.

4.2 Nunavut Education System Judged a failure in two recent reports: Berger 2006 and Mayer 2007.

The Berger report of 2006⁶³ broke new ground in identifying the mismatch between the labour supply needs of Nunavut, the rights of the Inuit under Article 26 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, and the continued existence of a transitional, subtractive model of bilingualism which graduates only 25% of its students on the other.

Berger emphasized the urgent need to support Inuit language at higher levels of education in order to maximize the human resource development potential and to reinforce the economic, social and IQ knowledge-generating infrastructure of Nunavut.

The lack of an education system which maximizes the human resource development potential in Nunavut is also being seen as a serious impediment to devolution of more

⁶³ Berger, Justice Thomas R. (2006) *The Nunavut Conciliator's Final Report*. (Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada).

powers and autonomy to the territory. Paul Mayer's recent report on Nunavut devolution repeats Berger's judgement of a year earlier and repeats Berger's failing evaluation of Nunavut's education system⁶⁴ for not providing an appropriate education and for failing to train skilled professionals.

Both reports concur that the continued outsourcing of Nunavut's skilled and professional jobs to non-Inuit workers represents a significant loss of revenue to the territory. The continued role of English as the LOI in upper primary and secondary education, and its concomitant high drop-out/push-out rate represents a non-viable policy approach which leaves a vast amount of potential cultural capital under-developed, to the detriment of Nunavut as a whole.

4.3 Analysis of the Education provisions (Sections 8 and 45/4) of the (proposed) Inuit Language Protection Bill

The broad-brush preamble of the proposed Inuit Language Protection Bill clearly underlines the importance of language to sustaining Inuit identity, facilitating the strong development of individuals, aiding the engagement of Inuit Language speakers in socio-economic development, and serving "as a foundation necessary to a sustainable future for the Inuit of Nunavut as a people of distinct cultural and linguistic identity within Canada." This broad expression of revitalization and renaissance is fully in keeping with contemporary LOI and revitalization theory and the cases we have mentioned in this paper.

The Bill also affirms the Inuit Language as "a language in which education services are available and capable of producing desired individual and community outcomes in Nunavut".

It also states— for the first time in the history of Nunavut education - a proficiency goal with respect to Inuit Language:

8. (2) *The Government of Nunavut shall, in a manner that is consistent with Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit,*
- (a) *ensure that the education program is in all respects capable of producing secondary school graduates **fully proficient in the Inuit Language, in both its spoken and written forms.*** (bolding added).

While it is true that the Bill doesn't precisely define what its authors mean by "fully proficient" (this paper has attempted, in places, to suggest what this could mean, if intended in an appropriately robust way). Appropriately, the Bill requires the GN to develop *competency targets for all developmental levels, and to provide early childhood curriculum, classroom materials and programs in the Inuit Language (Section 8 d. i.)*

adult and post-secondary education and upgrading programs in the Inuit Language

⁶⁴ "Go slow on Devolution, Report says" *Nunatsiaq News* (Jim Bell) June 15, 2007.

(Section 8 d. ii), and

training, certification and professional development for educators that is capable of producing the number, type and quality of educators required to implement [the above required programs] (Section 8. d. iii.)

This – could be – if policy is actually connected to concrete planning - a significant step forward toward a language-in-education framework, a framework for reversing school failure, in which full proficiency⁶⁵ in Inuit Language is the goal of the K - grade twelve education system.

The only possible interpretation of the changes required to meet the goal of Section 8, clause 2a – necessary for full revitalization and expansion to become the chief working language of Nunavut - is that the Inuit Language must be the chief LOI of Nunavut’s pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education system.

This can only mean an Inuit Language-to-English proportional allocation *normalized* in the range of 80 – 20⁶⁶

Since the stated objective is full proficiency, the best, indeed the only, means for achieving this goal is mother tongue education through the medium of the Inuit Language for all Inuit, whether in immersion mode for students learning it as an L2 or in “qulliq” mode for those learning it as their L1.

4.3.1. A weakness of the Bill: the slow phase-in period.

The right to mother-tongue medium education under Section 8 of the Protection Bill is subject to Section 45 (4), which states that

“Section 8 comes into force

(a) for Kindergarten to Grade 3 on August 15, 2009; and

(b) for all primary and secondary grades on August 15, 2019.”

⁶⁵ Full proficiency, in terms consistent with LOI Theory and with the bilingual education principles articulated in the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report, should be defined by taking seriously Jim Cummins’ distinction between conversational and academic proficiency. This distinction was discussed in *Aajiiqatigiingniq* and in Cummins’ earlier writings as one between basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive-academic language proficiency (CALP). Curriculum and pedagogy aiming at full proficiency will need to provide ample opportunities for both context-embedded and context-reduced learning, as well as for cognitively demanding subject-matter content across the grades. Francis and Reyhner (2002, Chapter 5) discuss how Cummins’ framework can be applied to indigenous mother-tongue and immersion programs. Nor is there any reason in principle why criterion-referenced levels of proficiency of the Council of Europe Common Reference Framework for Languages in all spoken, written (and visualising – an addition proposed by teachers in the Kitikmeot Language Revitalization Project) could not be developed to assist with an operational definition of full contemporary Inuit Language proficiency.

⁶⁶ In keeping with the Hague Recommendations, this proportion in the final year of high school *might* dip below 80% – 20%, but gradually, and preferably in classes taught by a bilingual teacher.

The 12-year delay (from 2007-2019) in the application of the Mother-tongue medium right seems to be motivated by three considerations:

- (i) the right should be phased in over a 12-year period (2007-2019), a period which is equivalent to the number of grades in the system, excluding kindergarten.
- (ii) the phase-in of Grade 1- 3 rights is accelerated (three grades are proposed to be phased in over two years (2007-09)
- (iii) no intermediate benchmarks need to be proposed for the phase-in of rights for Grades 4-12.

But Section 45 (4) imposes a very lethargic phase-in period before Inuit parents can exercise their language rights. First, there is no reason not to grant the K - Grade 3 right immediately upon passage of the Bill, since – with very few exceptions (mostly in the Inuinnaqtun communities) – there already is substantial mother-tongue medium education throughout Nunavut from K through grade three. At the very latest, August 15, 2008 should be the date of application for this early primary sector.

With respect to the right to mother-tongue/Inuit Language-medium education following 2008, there should be yearly targets for the phase-in, and in this regard, it may be helpful to revisit the time-lines first proposed in the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report, but with the starting point set at 2007 instead of 2000.

The K to grade 12 phase-in period proposed in the report was to take 10 years, but Stage I was to be 3 years of preparation, community consultations, teacher development and the putting in place of other necessary infrastructural components. This stage could be reduced to one year (2007-2008), since already three years have passed since the Department announced its Bilingual Education Strategy in 2004 and during this time, some community consultations have happened, a new plan for Inuit teacher development has been put in place, and more materials for Inuit Language teaching have been produced. Given this situation, one year (2007-08) of focussed, purposeful preparation should be enough to start the clock on full implementation.

During Stage II of *Aajiiqatigiingniq*, the bilingual programme was to have been phased in on an annual basis. Translated into today's time-frame, this would mean phasing in the right to Mother Tongue/Inuit Language-medium education in primary school as follows:

- Grade 4: no later than August 15, 2009
- Grade 5: no later than August 15, 2010
- Grade 6: no later than August 15, 2011
- Grade 7: no later than August 15, 2012

In the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* report, the Inuit Language as an LOI in primary school was projected for 2005. With the seven-year time lag in getting started, the new completion date would be 2012.

With respect to secondary school, and again allowing for the Department's seven-year lag, the phase-in period would be:

- Grade 8: no later than August 15, 2013
- Grade 9: no later than August 15, 2014
- Grade 10: no later than August 15, 2015
- Grade 11: no later than August 15, 2016
- Grade 12: no later than August 15, 2017

This way, as in the *Aajiiqatigiingniq* proposal, the whole plan could be initially phased in by 2017 and then subjected to a ten-year period of stable operation over the period 2017-2027.

The advantage of the above proposal over the proposed draft of Section 45 (4) of the Bill is that it sets annual targets for the Department of Education to meet.

It also communicates to the Department, and to the Nunavut public, a sense of urgency and purpose which now must start to take hold in the culture of the Department of Education and CLEY around bilingual, immersion and mother-tongue education.

There are two strands to this urgency, which must be taken particularly seriously by the Department: (1) the Inuitization of the teaching profession in Nunavut to meet the proportionate-to-population level (85%), as mandated by the NCLA, and (2) the commitment to phasing in an Inuit Language medium education in an annual grade-incremental way.

5. Conclusion

Contemporary theories of language of instruction include a framework which looks at classroom instructional outcomes and, as well, one which examines the wider socio-political framework of language revitalization.

The Inuit Language is an endangered language, and past and present policies of transitional early-exit bilingualism is a recipe for wide-spread educational failure, a judgement delivered both in the author's *Ajiiqatigiingniq* report (2000) and in two recent high-profile reports. This educational failure is holding back individuals, communities, and the territory at large.

The legislative vacuum on Inuit language rights in education is beginning to be filled, with the CLEY-proposed Inuit Language Protection Bill (June, 2007), however far from perfection it may be in its draft form. It does have one outstanding apparent virtue: if its language promoting the goal of "full proficiency in the Inuit Language" can be believed and will be supported by planning and resource allocations to match this appropriately high goal, Nunavut may be able to build an education system which graduates Inuit students with full proficiency in their own language – not an unusual human request, and one for which there are successful precedents, both in Canada and abroad.

This type of legislation, long overdue and perhaps just in time to prevent the Inuit Language from reaching a critical tipping-point beyond which full language revitalization might be impossible, sets goals which can be met only through a system which is committed to Inuit Language mother-tongue education, in which bilingual outcomes serve the societal goal of Inuit Language revitalization, building pride and self-confidence in the sustainability and prestige of Inuit language and culture.

The case of New Brunswick's minority francophone population is pertinent here, since they have managed, with strong legislation and a commitment to mother-tongue education delivered through a distinct French-language education system, to turn an endangered-language situation around over a generation.

"Full proficiency" in the Inuit Language means, at the very least, that a substantial majority of school subjects in the K – 12 system will need to be taught in the Inuit child's mother tongue. This can be accomplished in an immersion format if the Inuit child's community or family has already shifted to English. Students should be exposed to good English as a second language instruction for an hour a day (approximately 20% of the instruction time). This was in fact an option put forward by the *Ajiiqatigiingniq* report.

With a 80%-20% division of labour normalized between the two languages, it can be predicted that the English (ESL) communicative outcomes of Nunavut's graduates will not be inferior to the ESL outcomes of the graduates of the mother-tongue education systems of Quebec or New Brunswick. Since young people's informal exposure to English outside the classroom is, arguably, even stronger in Nunavut than in Quebec (at

least outside of Montreal), and (some regions of) francophone New Brunswick, this is not an unreasonable prediction.

Most importantly of all, however, is that a strong mother-tongue Inuit-language education system with ESL (and perhaps, experimenting with Welsh-style translanguaging in the upper grades of high school) would produce bilingual graduates whose acquisition of English would not – as in the present system – be at the cost of full proficiency in their mother tongue. Nunavut’s school system would advance from a state of subtraction to one of addition, and from a state where the linguistic human rights of Inuit are minimal or absent to one in which they are respected, in keeping with international standards.

The Nunavut education system as it is currently set up is doubly inhibiting. Firstly, it places a major roadblock in children’s natural learning path as they are about to emerge into making full, elaborate, proficient age-appropriate use of their mother tongue.

Such a state of affairs is not a good thing for children, and it is disastrous public policy for Nunavut, which needs to produce graduates in order to develop into a skilled, confident, citizenry able to enjoy the best of both cultural and linguistic worlds available to them. As a territory, Nunavut cannot afford not to support as much as possible the Inuit Language as the principal IQ pipeline carrying knowledge from the past into the future, to use Thomas Homer-Dixon’s apt metaphor.

The strongest recommendation of this report, then, is that, the new *Education Act* must embrace the objective of language revitalization through providing opportunities to achieve full proficiency in the Inuit Language and strong levels of additive bilingualism in Inuit Uqausingit and English (ESL).

For this objective to become a sustainable norm for Nunavut’s graduates, this paper argues that policies which fall short of providing substantial exposure to the Inuit language as the principal language of instruction in Nunavut schools will be inadequate. If positive, additive policies are put in place, however, we concur with Louis-Jacques Dorais that there is no reason why the Inuit Language wouldn’t survive and thrive well into the 22nd century.