

LANGUAGE WARRIORS;  
LEADERS IN THE OJIBWE LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION MOVEMENT

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## EZHIBII'IGAADEG

O' o mazina'iganing ingii-kagwe-mikaan ezhi-ayaag Ojibwemowin gaanjishkigaadeg miinawaa enokaadangig naagaanizijig. Niizhtana ashi bezhig Ojibwemowini-ogichidaag ingii-kagwejimaag ji-wiidookawiwaad ezhibii'amaan o' o mazina'igan miinawaa ingii-kagwejimaag neniizhing neningo-diba'igan. Akawe asemaan ingii-miinaag ji-wiidookawiwaad miinawaa ingii-wiindamawaag waa-nanda-gikendamaan. Ingii-aabajitoonan gagwedwewinan.

Ingii-wiindamaagoog enendamowaad Ojibwemowin Anishinaabeg miinawaa Wayaabishkiwejig. Ingii-mikaan aaniish gaa-onji-maajitaamagak ji-gagwe-gaanjishkigaadeg miinawaa Ojibwemowin ezhi-ayaag imaa ishkoniganing miinawaa imaa chi-oodenaang gaye. O' o naanaagagichigan ingii-kizhibendaan aaniish gaa-izhibimaadiziwaad miinawaa gaa-izhi-gikendamowaad ingiw Ojibwemowin-ogichidaag gaye ingii-mikaan wegonen gaa-minwaabadak ogikinoo'amaagowiniwaang wiidookaagowaad anokiiwaad noongom. Ingii-tazhindaan ezhi-gagaanzowendamowaad gichi-apiitendamowaad Ojibwemowin. Ingii-mikaanan izhichigewinan gaa-aabajitoowaad ingiw Ojibwemowin-ogichidaag ji-nitaa-Ojibwemowaad. Ingii-tazhindaanan gaa-izhiwebiziwaad gaa-kashkitamaazowaad miinawaa gaa-aajishkaagowaad miinawaa gaa-manenziwaad miinawaa nandawendamowaad miinawaa waa-inaakonigewaad. Ingii-kagwejimaag dibi go ge-onjiinowaagwen niigaan igo ingiw Ojibwemowini-ogichidaag. Ingii-naanaagajitooon gwayak ezhichigewaad Ojibwemowin-ogichidaag ji-wiidookawaawaad bakaan Ojibwemowin-ogichidaan niigaan igo miinawaa ezhi-giigiikimaawaad miinawaa ezhi-gagaanzomaawaad ji-Ojibwemonid. Ingii-tazhindaanan

wenizhishingin ji-ni-gaanjishkikaag Ojibwemnowin-ogichidaag. Ingii-tazhindaanan enendamowaad gikendaasowin miinawaa gashkitamaasowin miinawaa mashkawiziiwin minawaa ezhi-bakaanakin Ojibwe-niigaaniziwin miinawaa Chi-mookomaan-niigaaniziwin. Awashime ingii-tazhindaanan niigaaniziwining izhichigewinan miinawaa zenagakin miinawaa niigaan odinanokiiwiniwaan Ojibwemowin-ogichidaag.

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation sought to find out about the Ojibwe language revitalization movement and its leaders. Twenty-one language warriors were asked to participate in this dissertation study and were interviewed twice more for an hour each. I gave them tobacco according to Ojibwe tradition, explained the purpose of my study and asked them to help me. Qualitative methods were followed.

The Ojibwe language warriors described perspectives that are held by Ojibwes and non-Ojibwes regarding the Ojibwe language. They identified what conditions have inspired the Ojibwe language revitalization movement and the impact that it has had and is having on reservation communities and urban areas.

The Ojibwe language warriors described their backgrounds and educational paths and identified what has been relevant in their education to the work they do now. They identified sources of inspiration, why they care about the Ojibwe language, and helpful resources and strategies. They described their experiences, their opportunities, barriers, and sacrifices, and their hopes and plans. The Ojibwe language warriors described ways that they develop other language warriors, what advice they have for them, where they will come from, and how they motivate others to speak Ojibwe. They described which leadership styles they preferred. They spoke about what knowledge, success, and power meant to them and what differences they perceive there are in Ojibwe and non-Native leadership. They identified leadership strategies, challenges, and their future tasks.

Hopefully, this dissertation will be helpful to educational settings, tribal and state governments, funding agencies, and to other language warriors.

## Table of Contents

Chapter Bezhig: The Introduction to the Dissertation	1
Introduction	1
The Problem: The Hegemonic Struggle to Maintain Ojibwe	5
Purpose of the Study	10
Background of the Study	11
Significance of the Study	13
The Conceptual Framework of This Study	14
Outline of the Study	15
Chapter Niizh: History and Review of Relevant Empirical Research And a Conceptual Framework	16
Who Cares?	17
Colonization Is Endemic to Indigenous Societies	18
Linguicide	19
Educational Policies Linked with Assimilation	21
Historical Trauma	24
Language Policy- Too Little Too Late	25
Schools As Partners	27
Immersion- “Hailed as the Most Effective Method”	28
Language Planning- Linguists as Partners	31
The Importance of Indigenous Leadership	34
An Indigenous Lens	36



A Call for Indigenous Leadership	40
Ojibwe Perspectives on Leadership	43
Theoretical Framework	46
Tribal Critical Race Theory	50
Survivance: “Native Resistance to Dominance”	51
Summary	53
Chapter Niswi: Methodology	56
Research Design	56
A Qualitative Approach	57
Research Questions	57
Participant Selection and Site Selection	58
Role of the Researcher	60
Data Collection Procedures	62
Data Analysis Procedures	63
Credibility and Reliability	64
Generalizability	65
Delimitations	66
Limitations	67
Chapter Niiwin: Perspectives on the Ojibwe Language Revitalization	
Movement; Contexts, Challenges, and Considerations	68
Introduction	68
Ojibwe Perspectives toward Ojibwemowin: The Ojibwe Language	68

Most Ojibwes Want to Learn Ojibwe, But...	68
“It’s Kind of Foggy”: The Uncertain Future of Ojibwe	72
“What Have I Done with My Life?”	72
Section Summary	73
How the Language Warriors Feel Non-Ojibwes Perceive the Language	74
The Jury’s Still Out	74
Changing One Heart at a Time	76
“They Don’t Have a Clue:”	78
<i>Ojibwemotaadidaa!</i> Let’s Speak Ojibwe to Each Other	79
Section Summary	82
Language and Spirituality Go Together:	
Conditions That Have Inspired the Movement	83
Historical Trauma	83
Connecting to a Spiritual Life	84
The Influence of the American Indian Movement	85
Section Summary	86
The Impact That the Movement Has Had and Is Having	86
Awareness of Immersion Is Growing	87
Impact on the State of Minnesota	90
Section Summary	92
Reservation and Urban Differences and Similarities in the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement	92

“People Take It for Granted”	93
“We Need to Get Our Act Together”	94
“Time with Speakers:” It’s Not Easily Accomplished in Cities	94
“Reservation Communities Have the Potential to Be the Very Best Programs”	95
Looking North of the Border	99
Section Summary	100
Chapter Summary	100
Chapter Naanan: Language Warriors, Experiences, Motivations, and Aspirations	103
Introduction	103
Language Warriors’ Educational Paths: What’s Been Relevant?	103
Sources of Inspiration: What Made Them So Passionate?	107
Families and Elders	107
Spirituality	109
Educators as Role Models	110
Section Summary	111
Why the Language Warriors Care about the Language	112
Introduction	112
The Language Is a Gift from the Creator	112
The Language Makes the People Unique	113
“It Has the Base of Our Knowledge: A 10,000 Year Investment”	115
“It’s Another Window in the World”	116

“It Is a Critical Attribute of Sovereignty”	117
“Opening a Window or a Number of Windows to Who We Are”	117
“Like A Bird Who Can’t Sing Its Own Song”	123
“Reawakening the Anishinaabe Within”:	124
“It Brings a New Spirit to My Life”: Learning Ojibwe Has Been	
Life-giving	126
Making a Contribution	127
Section Summary	128
Helpful Approaches to Learning Ojibwe as a Second Language	129
Learning Ojibwe as a Spiritual Activity	129
Having a Strong Grammatical Base	131
“Surround Oneself with Speakers”	132
Teaching Immersion: “Being Forced to Talk”	134
Master Apprentice Programs Work Best	
When They Are Well-Planned Out	135
Other Approaches	136
Section Summary	137
Resources: Helpful Ones and Suggestions for Improvement	138
“You Can’t Beat a Real Flesh and Blood Native Speaker	138
Books in Print	140
Workshops and Networking	142
Life-style Changes	143

Section Summary	143
What's It Like to Be a Language Warrior?	144
"We're into the Battle of Our Lives to Keep Ojibwe Alive"	144
"It's Not about Us"	145
Being an Ojibwe Language Warrior is Rough	147
Opportunities	148
Barriers	149
Sacrifices	152
Section Summary	153
Language Warriors' Hopes and Plans	154
Developing Curriculum and A Resource Center	154
Bringing Ojibwe Back into the Community	155
Developing More Immersion Opportunities	156
A Year-Round Language Camp	158
Ojibwe Immersion at Home	158
More Time for Ceremonies	159
Going Back to School	159
Section Summary	160
Where Are the Next Language Warriors Coming from?	161
The Language Warriors Are Already Here	161
The Immersion Classrooms	162
Elders Who Are Speakers and Elders Who Are Learners	165

Communities with a Critical Mass of Speakers Will Produce	
The Next Language Warriors	166
Section Summary	167
Chapter Summary	167
Chapter Ningodwaaswi:	
Perspectives on Knowledge, Success, Power and Leadership	171
Introduction	171
Perspectives on Knowledge	171
Knowing How Beautiful and Unique We Are”	171
“If People Believe in Themselves Knowledge Will Come”	172
“Things Are Secretly Embedded in Every Word”	173
So Much Knowledge Is Contained within Ceremonies	174
Other Things That Language Warriors Need to Know	175
Section Summary	177
Perspectives on Success: “How Many New Speakers Have Been Created?”	177
“My Favorite Sound in the World Is Children Speaking Ojibwe”	177
“Accomplishing What You Were Put on This earth to Do”	179
“Individual Success Is Pointless”	180
Section Summary	180
How the Language Warriors Defined Power	181
“The Spirits Are the Real Ones That Have the Power”	181
Section Summary	183

Developing Language Warriors	183
“We Need a Good Mix of Everybody”	184
Willingness Is Key	184
Personalizing the Relationship with the Spirit of the Language	184
Knowing Oneself and the History of the People	185
Having a “Thick Hide”	186
Being in Love with the Language	186
A Call to War	187
“It’s Not about Me”	188
A Section Summary	188
Advice for Other Language Warriors	189
It’s a Special Calling	189
“It Will Feed Your Spirit”	189
The Time Is Now	190
Work with First Language Speakers to Become Fluent	190
“Never Give Up!”	191
“Keep Fresh and Keep on Learning!”	193
Section Summary	193
Motivating Others to Speak Ojibwe	193
Empowering Others	194
Motivating Others by Example	194
Always Speak Ojibwe	195

Motivating by Teaching Values	196
Using Technology to Create an Ojibwe Presence	196
Section Summary	197
Ojibwe Leadership	197
Qualities in a Leader	198
Leading by Example	199
“Sticking to Something”	201
Leaders Experience a Range of Feelings	201
“Standing Up in the Back of the Canoe”	203
Section Summary	204
Differences in Ojibwe and Non-Native Leadership	205
Bottom-up Leadership	205
Servant Leadership	206
Putting the Community First and Sharing Authority	207
Crabs in the Bucket	208
Section Summary	208
Successful Strategies and Areas of Failure	209
What’s Been Successful?	209
Looking at Other Models	209
Master-Apprentice Program	211
Community Use	212
Higher Education	213



Mandates	213
Strong Institutions	214
Self-Motivation	214
What Is Not Working?	214
Talk without Action Goes Nowhere	215
Inadequate Teacher Preparation, Methods, and Planning	215
Not Working with Native Speakers	217
Too Much Negativity	217
Section Summary	218
Challenges, Needs, and Priorities of the Movement: Tasks That Lie Ahead	220
Using First Language Speakers	220
Building up the Critical Mass	221
Increasing the Domains Where Ojibwe Is Spoken	222
The Need to Be Needed	222
The Need for Leadership	223
Creating a Literary Tradition	224
Training, Recruiting, and Retaining Qualified Teachers	227
Getting Our Communities Speaking	231
Raising the Status of Ojibwe	233
Funding	236
Confronting Negativity and Divisiveness	236
Section Summary	239

Chapter Summary	240
Chapter Niizhwaaswi: Discussions and Conclusions	245
Introduction	245
Findings and Assertions	247
Finding 1: Spirituality is a central value that guides the language warriors and the movement.	247
Finding 2: Identity is another important source of motivation.	251
Finding 3: Most language warriors are community-minded and are concerned about helping the community heal and to become strong again.	252
Finding 4: One of the ways of increasing the use and presence of Ojibwe in communities is teaching it in the schools and the most effective method of teaching and learning Ojibwe is immersion.	254
Finding 5: Many of the language warriors have a high regard for knowledge in the Ojibwe culture and in higher education and strive to bring them together to help the people.	256
Finding 6: The learning and teaching of Ojibwe are political acts.	258
Finding 7: Relationships provide support for the Ojibwe language warriors and strengthen the movement through networking.	259
Finding 8: Many Ojibwe people and non-Ojibwe people do not value Ojibwe enough to want to learn it.	260
Finding 9: Servant leadership is essential to complete the many	

tasks that the movement faces.	261
Future Research	265
Conclusion	266
References Cited	269
Appendices:	283
Appendix A: Definition of Terms	283
Appendix B: Translation of the Ojibwe Text from Chapter Bezhig	286
Appendix C: Interview Questions	288
Appendix D: The Participants	290
Appendix E: Native American Languages Act of 1990	293
Appendix F: Fishman's Eight Stages of Language Loss	296
Appendix G: Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages	297
Appendix H: Navajo Nation Long-Range Navajo-Language Goals	209
Appendix I: Hinton's Approach to Language Planning	301
Appendix J: Obama's Endorsement of the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	302
Appendix K: Related Languages to Ojibwe	303
and a Map of the Ojibwe Language	304

## CHAPTER BEZHIG: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DISSERTATION

### Introduction

*Mii iw ezhichigewaad o'omaa igiw anishinaabeg. Giishpin awiyya waabamaad abinoojiinyan igiw idash wenijaanisiwaad onandomaawaan bezhig akiwenziiyan, gemaa gaye mindimooyenyan. Ogagwejimaawaan, "Gaawiin ina gidaa-wiinaasii a'aw niniijaanisinaan?" Giishpin dash "Eyanh'" ikidod a'aw akiwenzii, gakina bangii gegoo omiinaawaan, memindage asemaan. Mii dash i'iw enaawaad ji-ozhitoowaad wiikondiwin. Owiindaanaawaa i'iw apii giizhigadinig ged-izhichigewaad.*

*A'aw idash akiwenzii naanaagadawendam, gaa-pi-a'inaabandang megwaa gii-pi-oshki-bimaadizid gii-makadeked. Giizhaa onaanaagadawenimaan iniw abinoojiinyan waa-wiinaad. Apii idash i'iw ojijiseg giizhigad, iw apii gi-waawiindamawaad wii-wiikongewaad, apii gaa-kiizhitoowaad iw wiikondidwin, onandomaawaan iniw akiwenziiyan. Gegoo idash omiinaawaan agwiiwin, gaye dash i'iw miijim gaa-kiizhideg omiinaawaan.*

*Wiin idash a'aw akiwenzii onandomaan aanind anishinaaben, wiin igo odoonenimaan minik ge-nandomindwaa anishinaabeg. Mii idash iwapii gaagiigidod a'aw akiwenzii dazhindang i'iw gegoo gaa-kikendang megwaa gii-oshkinigid owaawiindaan i'iw inashke waa-izhi-wiinaad iniw abinoojiinyan. Gakina gegoo wayaabandang anishinaabe mii imaa wendinamowaad anishinaabeg wiindawasowaad; gonimaa owe aki gomaa gaye gichi-gami gomaa gaye ba'otig, gomaa gaye endaso-ondaanimak, gomaa gaye giizisoog, anangoog, aanakwad, mitigoog, asin, gonimaa gaye*

*gakina igiw awesiinyag, gakina gaye igiw giigoonyag, gomaa gaye gakina bebaamisejig  
binesiwag. Mii imaa gakina wendanimowaad waandawasowaad,*

*Naaningodinong jii gwewidamoog anishinaabeg wiindawasowaad.*

*Naaningodinong gaye nagamo a'aw anishinaabe waandawasod; mii idash imaa megwaa  
nagamod, ani-wiindang i'iw izhinikaazowin ezhinikaanaad iniw abinoojiinyan.*

*Mii iw gaa-onji-izhichigewaad, naaningodinong awiyya gii-onji-bimaadizid  
giiishpin gii-wiinzod abinoojiinh.*

*Gaawiin dash owii-kidaanaawaa i'iw miijim gaa-kiizhidenig. Mii sa i gaa-  
izhichigewaad igiw anishinaabeg waandawasowaajin,. Igiw idash anishinaabeg gaa-  
wiinzonid oniijaanisiwaan wenijaanisingin oga-inenimaawaan iniw gaa-miinaawaad  
oniijaanisiwaan. Naaningodinong miinawaa oga-wiikonge'aawaan iniw oniijaanisiwaan  
begosendamowaad ginwenzh ji-bimaadizinid.*

This story was told in the Ojibwe language by John Binesi (Gaagige-binesi) from Fort William, Ontario, (Jones, 1919) about the tradition of parents offering tobacco to an elder and asking the elder to name their child. This passage tells that these traditional Ojibwe names come from the spirits, from natural and supernatural phenomena, and from fasting and dreams. This story is translated in Appendix B. These names are spirit names and from the time of the child's naming, it is believed that the child will be known in this world and in the spirit world by this name forever. This Ojibwe spirit name gives the person an identity and a sense of belonging within the community and an entrance into the spirit world at the end of his or her life. Before the arrival of missionaries,

government agents and school teachers, there were no last names in the Ojibwe nation, except for cases of intermarriage with a European father.

I have two Ojibwe names; Gwayakogaabaw (Stands straight) which I received earlier in my life and Baa-Zaagajiwed (Coming over the horizon) which I received much later. My wife and our children and grandchildren all have Ojibwe spirit names, but we are known by our English names outside of our circle of family and friends. Much of the power, knowledge, and tradition of naming still exist today within the Ojibwe nation. However, there are many Ojibwe communities where the language is no longer spoken, where young people no longer fast or dream or receive the gift of naming others, and where babies no longer receive their Ojibwe names. Even in those communities, however, there is hope that the language, the culture, and the naming tradition will continue because there still are speakers, healers, dreamers, and ceremonial leaders and there are still people who are learning the Ojibwe language and the traditional ways.

Many of those who have kept traditional ways alive and those who are learning them believe that if the Ojibwe traditions and the language are forgotten, people will continue to suffer and the world will end. Ojibwe is a language that is Indigenous to this continent and the Ojibwe people believe that the Indigenous peoples of this land are this continent's caretakers. According to Vizenor (2008), there are no Indians, only individual tribal nations, like the Ojibwe. I choose to use the term Indigenous and capitalize it to stand for the original inhabitants of this land.

The Ojibwe language and culture are being threatened because of the colonizing educational system of the past and the present-day and the hegemonic discourses of

assimilation, colonization, exploitation, linguicide, Christianization, modernization, urbanization, economics, pop culture, globalization, and mass media. However, some of the Ojibwe people are fighting to preserve their language, culture, identity, treaty rights, ceremonies, and way of life. This battle is a fight for survival as a people and for peace and healing between peoples, within communities, and within oneself. Along with this ongoing historical struggle that began with the European invasion of 1492, a reawakening of the language and culture is occurring and it is having a big impact in schools and communities on the reservations and in urban areas (Crawford, 2000; Fishman, 1997; Francis & Reyhner, 2002; Hinton & Hale, 2001; Treuer, 2001; Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005). If the power relations had been different, perhaps all people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, in Minnesota would have been able to read and understand that introductory passage in Ojibwe, at least those in northern Minnesota, because Ojibwe is the Indigenous language of that region. However, today even most Ojibwe people in northern Minnesota and Wisconsin are unable to read or understand that passage. Ojibwe has become “endangered.”

The Ojibwe language and culture are dynamic and are continuing to change. As first language speakers of Ojibwe die, the language and much of what they know is dying with them. Ceremonies, stories, songs, teachings, place names, and medicines are being forgotten. However, some Ojibwe people are dedicating their lives to learning and revitalizing the Ojibwe language and culture. Because of their leadership, dedication, and personal sacrifices, Ojibwe has a good chance of surviving within this century and becoming strong again. These people in this study are referred to as “language warriors.”

I chose to use this term to signify the battle that Indigenous people must fight to save and revitalize their people's language and culture. I have used this term for the past ten years, as have others in the movement. I refer to them by their spirit names reinforcing the importance of spirit names and providing some privacy, as well.

For most of my life I have had the opportunity to learn, speak, and teach the Ojibwe language, which I consider a gift. I have worked closely with first-language speakers of Ojibwe to create books and CDs. I have seen the Ojibwe language become more and more threatened, as the first language speakers of Ojibwe are dying and only a few new speakers of Ojibwe are taking their place. In my post-graduate studies in educational policy and administration, I have chosen to focus on Native American leadership by learning more about the experiences, challenges, successes, and motivation of the language warriors within the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. If others in the community consider me a language warrior, so be it.

The first chapter of this dissertation presents the background of the study, the problem statement, the purpose, and significance of the study. Some special terms, which are used in this chapter and throughout this dissertation are defined in Appendix A. This chapter, also, briefly addresses the three components of the conceptual framework of this study.

#### The Problem: The Counter-hegemonic Struggle to Maintain Ojibwe

Ever since the Whites outnumbered the Ojibwe, the Ojibwe have been involved in a counter-hegemonic struggle to maintain their language, their culture, their spirituality,



their lands, and their way of life. As long as power between nations remains unequal, there will be a battle for survival of the Ojibwe language and culture (Treuer, 2001).

The Ojibwe language could become extinct within this century unless action is taken now (LaFortune, 2003; Martinez, 2005; Treuer, 2001). The Ojibwe people who are serious about reasserting their identity in the face of the homogenizing imperial-capitalist culture believe that they must challenge the dominance of European thought as reflected in the hegemony of European languages. Alfred (2005) stated that “the act of speaking and using Onkwehonwe (Indigenous) languages to reorganize and reframe our existences is perhaps the most radical act we can perform as Onkwehonwe warriors” (p. 248).

Prior to the European invasion, hundreds of Indigenous nations flourished and had healthy world views. They had deep knowledge, healing ceremonies, and powerful truths (Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005). At first, when the Europeans were fewer in number, they made treaties of peace and friendship with Indigenous nations. Those Europeans were dependent on those Indigenous people for their survival and were greatly outnumbered. However, many Indigenous people had no immunities to the diseases and no previous exposure to alcohol, which the Europeans had brought with them from Europe, and Indigenous populations were weakened and destroyed. As the Euro-Americans and Euro-Canadians increased in population and military strength, they expanded westward and forced Indigenous nations to sign treaties to cede land. Indigenous nations were confined to reservations on the poorest land, their lives were overregulated, their traditional ways of subsistence were destroyed, and their spiritual ways of life and ceremonies were outlawed. Their tribal lands owned in common were divided into

individual allotments to become private farms to discourage tribalism and communal life. The surplus lands within the reservations were sold to non-Indians (Meyer, 1994; Treuer, 2011). Children were taken from their parents forcefully, placed in government and church-run boarding schools, and taught to be ashamed of being Indigenous. Their Indigenous customs and beliefs were forbidden, their Indigenous languages were punished out of them, and the English language and European immigrant values, knowledge, and culture were forced upon them. The practice of forced boarding and residential schools lasted for almost one hundred years. Even today, when such practices are no longer being forced on the people, the trauma and shame continues, and now the ways, ideas, values, and language of dominant society have become the norm in many Indigenous communities.

In 1924, most Indigenous people of the United States were finally granted U.S. citizenship, only after many Indigenous people had returned from their voluntary service in World War I. When corporations realized that these “poor” reservation lands had rich natural resources of oil, coal, and uranium, they tried to negotiate with traditional leaders for these resources without much success. Then, the corporations influenced the federal government to restructure tribal governments that would allow its members to elect their own leaders every four years. Many of these new leaders, who frequently had been indoctrinated in the boarding schools, would be convinced that progress in Euro-American terms and assimilation were the most important keys to survival, and perhaps these elected officials would be easier to negotiate with (Deloria, 1969; Deloria, 1999; Deloria & Lytle, 1984; Peacock & Wisuri, 2002).

Federal government policies terminating Indian land and status and relocating Indians from reservations to urban areas were initiated in the 1950s. However, in the 1960s and 1970s some urban Indians became activists and began to organize and motivated Indians in urban areas and reservations to join them in raising awareness nationally and internationally about the pitiful conditions that America's first people were facing in urban areas and on reservations. The American Indian Movement, which began in Minneapolis, has had local, national, and international involvement and impact. AIM started survival schools in order to teach Indigenous children their tribal languages and histories and struggled for recognition of treaty rights, religious freedom, and justice (Banks, & Erdoes, 2004). In 1978, Indians in the United States were finally granted religious freedom. In the same year, the Indian Child Welfare Act was passed to stop the practice of adopting Indian children outside of their families and tribes. In 1990, a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act was passed to stop stealing and desecrating Indian remains and to begin to return bodies and bones from museums to reservations for proper burial. The Native American Language Act was passed in 1990, and although no programs or funding were attached to it, the NALA did state that the United States had the responsibility to act together with Native Americans to ensure the survival of these unique cultures and languages (see Appendix E). A short background of these government policies and acts may help the reader understand the dilemma of language and culture loss.

The survival of culture and language is a worldwide concern, especially among the Indigenous people of the land. John Mohawk (1982) stated that "the destruction of

people of the world is the concern of all the people of the world and that the people of the world need to take action to unite to reject the “oppressors, the genocidal perpetrators, the ethnocidal perpetrators” (p. 550). He believed that the place for people to unite is in world organizations where the rights of Indigenous people can become a whole new body of international law in which the codes of behavior can guarantee the rights of all people. Twenty-five years later his work and that of many other Indigenous leaders and movements, such as AIM (American Indian Movement), have made and continue to make a difference. The preservation of Indigenous languages and cultures is becoming international policy. In 2007, after two decades of negotiations between governments and representatives of Indigenous people, the United Nations adopted the Declaration of Indigenous Rights. This Declaration established a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, well-being and rights of the 350 million Indigenous people in the world today. The rights to self-determination, culture and language, education, health, housing, employment, land and resources, environment and development, intellectual and cultural property, indigenous law and treaties and agreements with governments were addressed. 144 nations voted in favor, eleven abstained, and Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States were the four nations who opposed it. This vote shows that lots of work still remains to be done where Indigenous people still reside as minorities in their homelands they once exclusively occupied. However, on Thursday, November 19, 2010, President Obama agreed to endorse it. The United States was the last of the four countries to give their endorsement (Appendix J).

## Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this qualitative study is to increase the understanding of the development, lives, activities, struggles, perceptions, and motivations of language warriors. Very little information exists in language revitalization literature about its Indigenous leaders. This study may, also, contribute to the “knowledge that is critical to supporting commitments to self-determination, native-community building, and revitalizing language and culture” (Johnson, Benham & VanAlstine, 2003, p. 163). Another purpose is to describe how the decolonizing work of language revitalization is survivance. Vizenor stated that survivance is “native resistance of dominance” and “an undeniable trace of presence over absence, nihility, and victimry” (2008, p. 17). It is counter-hegemonic. These are key components of the theoretical framework.

A movement is taking place among Indigenous communities throughout the world who are concerned about keeping their languages and cultures alive. Indigenous language revitalization movements are filled with hope. Gould (2004) described decolonization, when she stated in her dissertation that hope exists when Indigenous communities are “willing to step outside of the mindset and framework of their colonizing government,” when they “exercise their sovereignty, learn from, and collaborate with other Indigenous people who have successfully reversed the negative trends and consequences of colonization,” and when they “mobilize their communities and begin their healing process” (p. 5).

## Background of the Study

Ojibwe is one of the most geographically widespread of all North American Indian languages. Ojibwe is spoken in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota, and Rocky Boy Reservation in Montana and much of central Canada (Valentine, 2001, p.1). The terms Ojibwe, Chippewa, Saukteaux, Anishinaabe, and even Ottawa, a related dialect, are often used interchangeably to refer to the same tribe and language (Appendix K). Ojibwe and Anishinaabe are the terms used in this study. This study uses American Indian, Native, Native American, Indigenous and Anishinaabe interchangeably. Indigenous is capitalized when referring to the native people (Appendix A).

About half of the Ojibwe tribe's population lives in urban areas off the reservation. In many reservations and urban areas, only the elderly are first language speakers of Ojibwe. When they die, the language dies with them. Even though today there are more speakers of Ojibwe in Canada, where the various First Nations have been more isolated, the survival of Ojibwe is also a concern within many Canadian communities. For the past thirty years, Ojibwe has been taught in many of the reservation schools and some of the urban schools in the United States and Canada, but almost always as a second language. Many Ojibwe language students learn only to count and to recite lists of animals and foods. They do not learn the language well enough to keep it alive or to use it with their children. Although many parents are unable to speak Ojibwe, they do believe it should be taught in the schools (Bergstrom et al., 2003; Cleary & Peacock, 1998; Hinton & Hale, 2001; Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005).

Schools, in general, have not respected Indigenous languages or cultures and little time or money has been dedicated to their instruction. However, tribal schools in recent years have begun to receive financial support from casino revenues, federal programs, and special foundation grants to fund their language programs (LaFortune, 2000; Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005). Total immersion is the most promising method of instruction and new immersion programs are just getting started in Ojibwe country in both reservation and urban communities (Martinez, 2005; Pease-Pretty-on-Top, 2001). Some young Ojibwe adults, who have worked closely with speakers in a master-apprentice relationship, have begun to emerge as Ojibwe speakers. In the Ojibwe tradition, the youth regarded the elders as their teachers and learned what they could from them and this still happens today with or without special funding (Kugel, 1998; Peacock & Wisuri, 2002). The master-apprentice model (in it a second language speaker pairs up with a first language speaker) was popularized by Hinton (2002) as an effective Indigenous model of language preservation. These emerging speakers are assuming leadership roles and starting new programs (Martinez, 2005). At the same time that “pop culture” and globalization are impacting every part of Ojibwe life, there is a reawakening of the importance of Ojibwe language and culture, a returning to one’s language and traditions (Peacock & Wilson, 2002). Some Ojibwe people are seeking to learn about their traditions, spirituality, and language. Others are not. Some believe it is impossible, some think it is not important, and others think it is too late (Alfred, 2005). However, there are those who believe that if the Ojibwe language dies and *asemaa* (tobacco) is no longer offered, and prayers are no longer said in Ojibwe, the world will come to an end. They

believe that the Ojibwe people were gifted with a language, a way to pray, and a way of life. They were put on this part of Turtle Island to be its caretakers and to follow the ways that were gifted to them. Their survival as a people and the survival of Mother Earth depend on being faithful to the traditions (Benton-Banai, 1988; Johnston, 1976; Treuer, 2001).

### Significance of the Study

This study aims to increase awareness and understanding of Ojibwe language warriors, their leadership, and language revitalization. Languages and cultures that enrich our lives and give them constructive purpose and direction are the most human of all resources and there is a sense of urgency as almost all Indigenous languages in the United States and Canada are facing possible extinction within this century. There are those who say that language death is inevitable or that it is too late to recover one's language or that there are more pressing matters or that it doesn't matter at all (Hinton & Hale, 2000; Cleary & Peacock, 1998). Others state that it is one of the greatest challenges that will face Native Americans in this century (Greymorning, 2001, Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005). More than twenty years ago, Deloria and Lytle (1984) emphasized the significance of Native languages and their relationship to self-determination, identity, and survival when they stated "language is the first glue that links people together, and the major emphasis in self-determination and ultimately in self-government should be the preservation of language where it still exists and the cultivation of it where it has eroded or fallen into disuse." They further stated that "language is the



key to cultural survival and cannot be considered in isolation; it is and must be the substance of self-determination” (p. 251).

Treuer (2010) concludes his book on the *Ojibwe* in the People of Minnesota Series with thoughts on the revitalization of the language and culture:

The Ojibwe can succeed in revitalizing their language and culture, but they need help. They need more Ojibwe people willing to learn, teach, and advocate for their language. More people must be willing to devote themselves to traditional lifeways and language. The Anishinaabe also need help from the outside. They need political support for sovereignty and program development. They need expertise and assistance in the creation and development of educational institutions, especially those that focus on language and culture. And they need money to fund the efforts already under way. Contrary to popular assumptions, most tribes and most tribal members are not well-off. There is plenty of work to do for anyone who cares, regardless of one’s race. At stake is not just the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Ojibwe but rather the best chance the Ojibwe have to improve basic health and welfare for their people.

The state and nation cannot repeat the terrible mistakes made in their previous treatment of the Minnesota Ojibwe, nor can they sit idly by while the battle for linguistic and cultural survival rages on. There is a part for all to play. History is not simply read, it is made (pp. 80-81).

Treuer states that everyone can help with these efforts to revitalize the language and culture. Hopefully, this study will be helpful and informative to all who read it.

### The Conceptual Framework of This Study

To understand the motivations, efforts, and strategies of language warriors and the Ojibwe language revitalization movement, this study employs a conceptual framework made up of three theories: hegemony, survivance, and tribal critical race theory.

## Outline of the Study

This study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter Bezhig (One) defines the problem, provides some background for the proposal, its purpose, its significance, its conceptual framework, and the research questions. Chapter Niizh (Two) is a review of the literature of past educational policies, consequences, language revitalization planning, and several layers of leadership. It concludes with the conceptual framework of this study. Chapter Niswi (Three) describes the research methodology used to complete this study. Chapter Niiwin (Four) presents an in-depth look at the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. Chapter Naanan (Five) focuses on the language warriors themselves. Chapter Ningodwaaswi (Six) focuses on the leadership of the Ojibwe language warriors. Chapter Niizhwaaswi (Seven) summarizes the findings of this study and make recommendations for those in Indigenous language revitalization movements and in Indigenous leadership development

## CHAPTER NIIZH: HISTORY AND REVIEW OF RELEVANT EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This literature review discusses the problem of Indigenous languages and cultures becoming extinct and why this matters especially focusing on the Ojibwe language and culture. Colonization, globalization, and “pop culture” have caused linguicide and most Indigenous languages of the world have suffered, including Ojibwe. On the one hand, the educational system and its policies and leadership have almost destroyed the Ojibwe language and culture. On the other hand, the educational system, its policies and leadership can help revitalize the Ojibwe language and culture. The leaders who are involved with this revitalization movement are called “language warriors.” This study identifies reasons for caring and causes of the problem. The educational policies of the past, especially the destructive policies of the boarding school system, have had devastating effects that have persisted through the generations causing historical trauma. This literature review identifies some language planning models and looks through the layers of leadership- linguistic, Indigenous, and Ojibwe leadership. Finally, the conceptual framework of this study is explained.

Some of the most important works in the last twenty years on language revitalization that were helpful to this study were published in a series by Northern Arizona University. Titles include *Effective Language Education Practices and Native Language Survival* (1990), *Maintaining Indigenous Languages, Revitalizing Indigenous Languages* (1999), and *Stabilizing Indigenous Languages* (1996), *Teaching Indigenous Languages* (1997), *Learn in Beauty: Indigenous Education for a New Century* (2000),

*Indigenous Language Revitalization: Nurturing Native Languages* (2003). *One Voice, Many Voice -Recreating Indigenous Language Communities* (2006), and *Indigenous Languages across the Community. Encouragement, Guidance & Lessons Learned* (2009). These books include speeches and papers by linguists and Native language activists delivered at the annual language symposiums. Most of the contents of these books are easily accessible on line. Skutnabb-Kangas wrote a 800-page book filled with worldwide case studies on linguistic genocide entitled *Linguistic Genocide in Education –or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights*. Hinton and Hale prepared a handbook called the *Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*. Wilson, a Dakota language warrior, with Yellow Bird created a decolonization handbook entitled *For Indigenous Eyes Only*. Indigenous language revitalization is a relatively new field, but the sense of urgency and significance is increasing among tribal leaders, community members, educators, and linguists.

#### Who Cares?

Besides the importance of language to survival as a people and self-determination, there are other reasons for caring about language loss. Krauss (1998) identified four reasons: (1) the *aesthetic*, each language has its own beauty; (2) the *scientific*, linguistic diversity; (3) the *ethical*, there are human, linguistic, and cultural rights; (4) and the *ecological*, in which we are just beginning to understand the world in which we live. Bradley and Bradley (2002) added the symbolic reasons of group-identity and self-esteem. Crystal (2000) gave five similar reasons. Littlebear (1999) argued that the most important reason for saving indigenous languages today for American Indians is for the

spirituality that is embedded within them. Leonard (2007) stated in her dissertation that for Indigenous people “language is viewed as a powerful gift and a reciprocally shared responsibility and commitment within a larger ecological realm” (p. 177). Fordham (1999), in her study of the use of Ebonics as guerilla warfare, pointed out that its use is a resistance that preserves the essential self and a collective identity. Standard English has been an “instrument of enslavement, oppression, and dehumanization” (p. 277). Revitalizing Indigenous languages is a way of strengthening one’s individual and collective identity and fighting against hegemony and the historical trauma it has caused. In a sense, it’s a way of healing and becoming whole again. This process is called decolonization. One theme that emerged from the literature review is that standard English is important for survival of the body, but Indigenous language is important for one’s spirit (Littlebear, 1999).

Within Ojibwe country there is an awareness of the cultural and spiritual importance of the Ojibwe language and that the time to act is now. Treuer (2001), an Ojibwe language warrior, confirmed that “a battle now rages to keep Ojibwe alive. At stake is the future of not only the language, but the knowledge contained within the language, the unique Ojibwe worldview and way of thinking, the Anishinaabe connection to the past, to the earth, and to the future” (p. 5).

#### Colonization Is Endemic to Indigenous Societies

To understand decolonization it is important to understand that colonization, which began in 1492, affected every aspect of Indigenous life and still does today. Wilson (Waziyatawin) and Yellow Bird (2005) asserted:

Colonization refers to both the formal and informal methods (behaviors, ideologies, institutions, policies, and economies) that maintain the subjugation or exploitation of Indigenous Peoples, lands, and resources. Colonizers engage in this process because it allows them to maintain and/or expand their social, political, and economic power. Colonization is detrimental to us because the colonizers' power comes at the expense of Indigenous lands, resources, lives, and self-determination. Not only has colonization resulted in the loss of major rights such as land and self-determination, but most of our contemporary daily struggles (poverty, family violence, chemical dependency, suicide, and the deterioration of health) are also direct consequences of colonization (p. 2).

Colonization has caused harm to Ojibwe children, especially those who experienced the assimilation policies of the government and mission boarding schools. Their languages and cultures were seen as inferior, unnecessary, and uncivilized. English was linked with “modernity, convenience, and unity” within the educational system for the past century (Ramirez & Castañeda, 1974; Martinez, 2005; Waziyatawin, 2005). Many of the problems that have existed and still exist in Indigenous communities throughout the United States and Canada are due to colonizing leadership within education, its policies and practices. Swisher and Tippeconic (1999) stated that “cultural and linguistic genocide (ethnocide) has been directed toward Native people for many years and that of all the oppressive government policies, perhaps the most devastating have involved education” (p. 11).

### Linguicide

The spread of English is causing linguicide throughout the world. Skutnabb-Kangas noted that English is an “imperialistic language” (2000). Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, in a recent conference on Indigenous languages, stated that most of the world's languages will become extinct within this century not because of language loss,

or language death, or even language suicide and that it is not a natural phenomenon, nor is it without agency. They believe this phenomenon is a direct consequence of linguicism (the unequal division of power between linguistic groups) and linguicide (the killing or murder of languages) “wherein the agents involved are identifiable— the powerful economic, social, educational, political, and techno-military systems of the world” (Nicholas, 2005, p. 1).

The linguicide of Indigenous languages was always a part of the “civilizing” and “Christianizing” campaigns of the United States and Canada. Wazyatawin (2005) stated that the missionaries and traders learned the Indigenous languages for the purposes of conversion and commerce, not because they loved or respected the Indigenous languages. As soon as Indigenous people were converted to Christianity, they were expected to learn the language of the colonizers. The “Euro-Americans and Euro-Canadians saw their own languages and ways as superior and considered all aspects of Indigenous cultures and ways of life as inferior” (pp. 113-114).

Many reasons for this linguicide are related to colonization. The federal government’s policies of genocide, taking the land, removal, and relocation had devastating effects on the lives and lands of the people. The policies of assimilation, Christianization and termination were instituted once the lands were taken and people were forced unto the reservations. Transformation of native economic, cultural, and social systems was brought about by contact with the Whites (Deloria & Lytle, 1984: McCarty, 2003). Many people lost their spirit, initiative, and drive under the reservation system. When they tried to do something, regulations increased, the outside government

interfered, and it often stopped or punished them. There was too much control and too little freedom. Their native religions were forbidden, their children were taken away from them, and they were made to be dependent on government rations for survival (Peacock & Wisuri, 2002). Just as the lives of the adults were being controlled by the government and its policies, so were the educational lives of the children.

#### Educational Policies Linked with Assimilation

After attempts of extermination failed, assimilation was forced upon American Indian nations. Educational policies toward Indigenous people are intimately linked with the problematic goal of assimilation (Brayboy, 2001). One way that this was done was through the boarding school system run by the government and the churches. Forced assimilation was considered to be less expensive and more humane than military action (Cleary & Peacock, 1998; Benham & Stein, 2003, Reyhner & Eder, 2004). Crawford (1992) stated that the boarding schools were established in 1879, with Pratt's strategy of 'killing the Indian and saving the man'. Crawford added that only-English rules and physical and psychological punishment for speaking one's native tongue were implemented systematically for many generations. Many measures were used to force the children to speak English and Waziyatawin (2003, p. 114) identified "shaming, humiliating, beating, swatting, kneeling for hours on end on marbles or broom handles, solitary confinement, and washing children's mouths out with lye" as some of them. Foucault (1975) stated that the aim of disciplinary technology is to forge a "docile body that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (p. 198). For many who attended boarding schools, this experience left scars of shame, self-hatred and doubt



about the value of the Ojibwe language and culture. Jim Clark (Naawigiizis), recently deceased, recognized the shame of being Indian in others and believed that was how the Indian was losing his language (Treuer, 2000).

Colonial education was unnatural and had a negative impact. Lowawaima (1999) stated that there was nothing natural or true about the tenets of colonial education: (1) that Native Americans were savages and had to be civilized; (2) that civilization required Christian conversion; (3) that civilization required subordination of Native communities, frequently achieved through resettlement efforts; and (4) that Native people had mental, moral, physical or cultural deficiencies that made certain pedagogical methods necessary for their education (p. 3). Dehyle and Swisher (1997), in their study of sixty years of educational research on American Indian education, reinforced the negative impact of colonial education. They stated that most studies reported that American Indian students were suffering from cultural and intellectual deficits and that cultural assimilation into the mainstream was the solution to the Indian problem. Studies mostly ignored the effects of colonization, discrimination, and racism.

However, there were some graduates of the boarding school system who were able to resist. Luther Standing Bear, born in the 1860s, attended Carlisle Boarding School and returned home to South Dakota after being gone for many years. He wrote four books about the Lakota culture, so that the Lakota children would never forget their ways. He believed that Indian children needed to be “doubly” educated and that they needed to be taught the truth about their history and culture. He also believed and demonstrated that children need to be taught in their first language first in order to

understand English better. He loved his Lakota culture, language, and ways, and the boarding school could not kill the “Indian” in him. His book, *Land of the Spotted Eagle*, begins by describing his tribal life, then his school life, and ends with his philosophy. He deeply felt that the White people were blinded by their superiority complex and greed and did not understand or appreciate the civilizations and cultures already in America:

The white man does not understand the Indian for the same reason he does not understand America. He is too far removed from its formative processes. The roots of the tree of his life have not yet grasped the rock and the soil. The white man is still troubled with primitive fears...the man from Europe is still a foreigner and an alien. And he still hates the man that questioned his path across the continent.

But in the Indian the spirit of the land is still vested; it will be until other men are able to divine and meet its rhythms. Men must be born and reborn to belong. Their bodies must be formed of the dust of their forefather’s bones. (1933, p. 248)

Luther Standing Bear was an exception. Eighty years have passed since his book was published and yet it has not received the attention it deserves.

Many children were not so strong and many died in these schools. According to Waziyatawin (2005), the Truth Commission into Genocide in Canada estimated that 50,000 Indigenous children in Canada died as a consequence of this federally mandated “education.” She further stated that “the estimates for the loss of life among Indigenous children in the U.S. boarding schools have not yet been realistically calculated” (p. 114). On September 8, 2000, Kevin Gover, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, included the following remarks in a speech observing the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the BIA:

This agency forbade the speaking of Indian languages, prohibited the conduct of traditional religious activities, outlawed traditional government, and made people ashamed of who they were. Worst of all, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, committed these acts against the children entrusted to its boarding schools, brutalizing them emotionally,

psychologically, physically, and spiritually... The trauma of shame, fear, and anger has passed from one generation to the next, and manifests itself in the rampant alcoholism, drug abuse, and domestic violence that plague Indian country... Poverty, ignorance, and disease have been the product of this agency's work (LaFortune, 2003).

Almost all Native people in the Americas have experienced some kind of historical trauma.

### Historical Trauma

The coming of Europeans to North America touched nearly every aspect of Ojibwe culture. Cleary and Peacock (1998) stated that "the language, ways of being and knowing, values, spiritual ways, and family, social, institutional, and governmental structures" were all affected. Ojibwe people still suffer from the effects of that period of history, from its oppression and its accompanying depression, and dysfunction. There are" high student drop-out rates and low academic achievement, a mistrust of formal schooling, high rates of adolescent pregnancy, poverty, and high rates of crime in Indian country." They address how Indigenous people have internalized their oppression and how they may destroy themselves "through acts of self-destruction: alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide, and all of the other vestiges of internalized oppression" (p. 63).

Today's Ojibwe people are survivors, descendents of a strong people, and even though serious problems exist in the Indigenous communities in America and Canada, the solutions lie in the strength of the people and the culture. Peacock and Wisuri (2002) stated that:

Even though these problems of substance abuse, manifestations of oppression, malfunctioning institutions, and communities in trouble still remain, what has changed is our collective consciousness, our sense that we have the solutions to these issues and that these solutions lie in the

tenacity of our culture. One of the tenants of our cultural beliefs are the need for harmony and balance within the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual parts of our being” (p. 88).

The government and the people have recognized the devastating effects of some of these policies and new policies are being implemented that are more culturally sensitive. One area in which this is happening is in language policies.

#### Language Policy- Too Little Too Late

Language policy has often been a tool for the oppression of Indigenous languages, but policy can also be a tool for its survival and public enhancement. Usually language policies have favored only the national language, but recently certain Indigenous nations have been able to affect policy in ways that increase protection of their languages. In 1990 and in 1992 Congress passed the Native American Languages Acts, stating that the United States has “the responsibility to act together with Native Americans to ensure the survival of these unique cultures and languages” and that “acts of suppression and extermination directed against Native American languages and cultures are in conflict with the United States policy of self-determination for Native Americans” (Waziyatawin, 2005, p. 214).

Self-determination for Native Americans has not always had positive consequences, especially when it involves the United States government. At times, it has led to the destruction of the Indigenous way of life. Phyllis Young, an American Indian Movement member involved in the “survival school” movement of the 1970s, criticized the government’s approach to Indian education and Indigenous leadership training. She stated that the government has spent several generations “educating” a sector of the

Indian population to identify its interests with those of the colonial status quo where they were trained to see themselves and their nations through the eyes of the colonizer. Young concluded, “It’s really a perfect system of colonization, convincing the colonized to colonize each other in the name of ‘self-determination’ and ‘liberation’” (Noriega, 1992, p. 387).

Some significant policies have been introduced recently. UNESCO (2003) urged language activists to advocate for and develop national language policy protecting linguistic diversity. It addressed five essential areas for sustaining endangered languages: the need to provide basic linguistic and pedagogical training in methods and techniques and curriculum development, literacy and local documentation skills and orthographies if needed, training speakers to study, document, produce, and archive their own language materials, language activists need to advocate for and develop national language policy protecting linguistic diversity and for education policy that is sensitive to ethno-linguistic communities.

In the Native American Language Acts of 1990 and 1992, the United States did not admit its systematic genocide or linguicide toward Native Americans. These acts excluded a national campaign or extensive government plan for funding and support to revive Indigenous languages. In 2006, however, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act became a law. It amended the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as part of the Native American languages grant program, to make three-year grants for educational Native American language nests, survival schools, and restoration programs.

## Schools as Partners

While education has helped create language warriors and taught others about the culture, too often the educational system has ignored, ridiculed, and shamed the Indian child and his culture. Progressive education has meant forgetting one's past, one's culture, and one's language. Immersion education challenges colonial education and assimilation. Some people feel that it is not the school's responsibility to teach and maintain the Indigenous language, but instead it is the responsibility of the family, the home, and the community. Because the schools systematically removed children from their communities and beat the language and culture out of the children, few family and community members know the language anymore. McCarty (1998) stated that the crisis for language loss cannot be resolved, if it is left to individuals or families working alone and that extra-familial institutions cannot assume the language-implanting and language-expansion functions of parents, other caretakers and communities. She felt that "the language, culture and politics of the school are key resources available to spearhead the collective, consensual and coordinated activity needed to heighten awareness about the stakes at risk and to organize individual, family, and community action on behalf of threatened indigenous languages" (p. 210).

New approaches to educating Ojibwe children are being explored. A number of delegations have visited and examined the exemplary educational models of the Maori and Native Hawaiians. The Maori and Native Hawaiians began with language nests and continued to create more advanced programs to meet their learners' needs. Today immersion programs from pre-school to university level exist in Hawaii and New

Zealand and serve as models to other Indigenous communities (Hinton, 2001). Ojibwe language warriors are incorporating these programs in their own communities (LaFortune, 2000).

#### Immersion- “Hailed as the Most Effective Method”

Immersion is being adopted as the most effective method to increase fluency in indigenous languages worldwide. Pease-Pretty on Top (2003) advocated for this methodology and examined the big picture in Native education and Native language preservation by looking at projects and models. She gave several reasons for language immersion. Language activists recognize the serious rate of language loss and have made a lifetime commitment to tribal language restoration, for the vitality of the tribal nation and its future. Native American youth have among the poorest achievement of all American ethnic groups and Native language immersion has increased participants’ educational achievement. Immersion ensures a greater cultural and language preservation or revitalization effort that strengthens and rebuilds the Native community. Culture and language teaching and participation positively correlate with Native student retention rates. Native leaders pursue a world in urgent need of Native perspectives on world-view in areas including child-rearing, natural resource management, and family and community development. There are those who are motivated by the political potential to allay the centuries old history and subjugation of Native people. Martinez (2005) confirms these conclusions.

Federal legislation has overlooked the beneficial effects of immersion education. Little & McCarty (2006) pointed out how heritage-language immersion conflicts with the

federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which provides no provisions for instruction or assessment in tribal or other non-English languages. They concluded that alternative routes to English proficiency are effective and that time spent learning the heritage language does not impede English language learning and has salutary academic effects. Acquiring a heritage language as a second language takes several years. They found that heritage language immersion programs strengthened relationships between children, adults, and the community. Other findings are that the transfer of literacy skills is complex, additive bilingualism enhances achievement and equity and the success of language planning and policy efforts is integrally tied to tribal sovereignty, the right to self-education, and to cultural and linguistic expression according to local languages and norms.

A policy that has affected many tribes has been the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. For many schools that received funding, it was the first time that Indigenous languages were being taught in the schools. It was the first time that Native Americans were recruited to become teachers, and although formal teacher training was limited and all materials needed to be created, it was a beginning. The Bilingual Education Act provided for some language maintenance. Federal money helped to hire native teachers to teach native languages and to develop instructional materials in the various indigenous languages. Funding was not used for native language immersion, but instead the design was transitional with the primary goal being the acquisition of English. Crawford (1996) argued that bilingual education in the past has emphasized the acquisition of English over



the maintenance of the native language and that many reservation schools are viewed as outside institutions dependent on federal dollars, rather than local control.

In the 1980s and 1990s there has been an English-Only movement, which has killed bilingual education in some states and suppressed language choice. Schechter & Bayley (2002) argued that for members of linguistic minority groups “mother tongue maintenance represents a theoretically coherent and historically situated means for the expression and affirmation of lived experience” and that support for bilingual initiatives is grounded in a rich tradition of research that documents the “many empowering and emancipatory effects that the mastery of two or more languages can have and has had for individuals and societies” (p. 200).

There are many benefits in being bilingual. One Ojibwe author and teacher, Patricia Ningewance (1993), stated how learning two languages so different like Ojibwe and English is like “owning two pairs of magic glasses”, the lenses of each pair allowing you to see the world in a different way. She felt that by learning Ojibwe one will learn the literal meaning of words and absorb some “old Ojibwe knowledge and culture”, the “comic appearance of the world”, and “a cultural setting where humor is so central”, and the “humility” inherent in Ojibwe with its use of disclaimers. Bringing the native language and culture into the classroom helps students feel proud. They learn that it is acceptable to be bilingual and bicultural (Hinton & Hale, 2001). Schools, which punished children for using native languages, can become places where youth and families can come together to learn to become bilingual and bicultural again.

## Language Planning- Linguists as Partners

Three rubrics of language planning are status planning (how it will be regarded and where it will be used), acquisition and cultivation planning (how it will be learned and taught), and corpus planning (how the language will be developed, written, and standardized). Some linguists who have shown leadership in the area of Indigenous language planning are Crawford, Fishman, Hale, Hinton, Hornberger, Krauss and McCarty. Some linguists who have worked closely with the Ojibwe language are Bloomfield, Jones, Nichols, Rhodes, and Valentine.

Research has identified at least five characteristics of successful language revitalization programs. Anonby (1999) mentioned that a community must focus on more than language alone. He mentioned the need for a societal change like the one mentioned by Crawford (1996) that would reinforce solidarity. Hebrew in Israel, the French in Quebec, the Catalan in Spain, and the Maori in New Zealand are models of language revitalization. Literacy helps give a language permanence. Indigenous examples of this literary tradition are Cherokee and Mohawk. Both have had a long history of contact with European-Americans. The Basque language, which has been only oral, has been publishing more and more newspapers and now has a university. Anonby advocated for immersion and noted how the philosophy of immersion went beyond the schools and spread to all levels of society in Israel. The Maori and Hawaiian language nests are producing a new generation of speakers and now have immersion classrooms from birth through university. He also addressed the importance of media and how radio programs have helped keep Irish and Navajo alive and how computers and videos are

tools that can be used effectively when they focus on home, family, child, and youth material (Fishman, 1991). Finally, Anonby emphasized the importance of a larger population, which many North American Indigenous nations do not have, but he also stated how large an impact a few activists can have on a small community.

The call to action was reinforced by Kipp (2000) who urged other language warriors not to ask permission nor to debate the issues, but to go ahead and get started. The results would speak for themselves. He went back home and started a K-8 immersion school on the Blackfoot Reservation in Montana that is serving as a model to many other Indigenous nations. He believed that tribal languages can be revitalized “to soothe our children’s hearts again” and “produce healthy kids with choices.” He believes that language revitalization and healing are interconnected.

Self-determination was identified as a key element in the leadership of the revitalization movement. Crawford (1996) advocated that the reversal of language shift could only happen with “a change in values, a radical change, a religious conversion, a social movement.” (p. 63) This movement can speak directly to long-suppressed needs and aspirations, in the context of a “struggle for self-determination- cultural, economic, political, and spiritual.” He believed that language preservation efforts must be led by indigenous organizations and activists. Leadership within the language revitalization movement is complex. It has the structural task of increasing the domains in which the Indigenous language is being spoken. Hinton (2001) stated that any language that is not a language of government, education, commerce, or wider education is a language whose very existence is threatened in the modern world (p. 3).

There are several factors required to teach the Indigenous language to the younger generations. Parks (1999) identified the following variables: the number of speakers, the degree of community interest, and the talents and interests of those who develop and implement the program, their educational background and skills, and the level of their knowledge of the language. He also emphasized the importance of documenting the language to preserve it for the future in a variety of ways using the latest technology and a multidisciplinary approach to produce the most effective teaching tools.

Research confirmed that language is always changing and that new languages arise. Fettes (1997) stated that stabilizing indigenous languages forms part of a broader movement of re-establishing societies on a human scale and in balance with nature. In the reweaving of the language braid, a new language will arise, one with deep roots in the traditional, but equally reliant on the urge of its speakers to use it in everyday contexts. He stated that to those who see the old language as something sacred, a rock of stability in a sea of confusion, this change can be disappointing, but use is more important than form. His triple braid approach stated that one approach is never enough and only when woven together can the strands endure.

Research demonstrated that the image of minority languages needed to be improved on all levels. Grin (1990) believed that the first goal of a language policy should be to improve the image of a minority language and emphasized the importance of public relations. Language revitalization leadership has the public relations task of promoting the urgency and value of the language and culture within tribal society and within the society at large, especially among the policy makers. There is a need for

charismatic leadership to energize the entire community. This has happened in New Zealand, where families are returning to and learning the language and traditions through community-based instruction (King, 2001). Many Maori are dedicating their time to the efforts of teaching and learning their indigenous language before it is too late.

Involving the community is central to successful revitalization movements. Sims (1996) described a Karuk Language Restoration Committee that was formed in 1988 and formulated five strategies. Besides recording the elders and developing new fluent speakers, they identified the need to educate the community about language restoration and cultural preservation, involving the community in designing and evaluating a language restoration program and promoting community participation in activities where the language can be used. The language warriors wear many hats and perform many tasks. A team-approach seems to be the most effective. Silverthorne (1997) identified the following roles needed in language revitalization: administrator, evaluator, human development report manager, career development advisor, instructor, marketer, materials developer, needs analyst, change agent, program designer and researcher. The work is too overwhelming to be done alone. Linn, Berardo, and Yamamoto (1998) emphasized the importance of a team and the need to recruit native speakers into the team, speak the language without interruption and continually plan, implement and evaluate.

### The Importance of Indigenous Leadership

Some linguists have identified the importance of Indigenous leadership in the revitalization of Indigenous languages. Burnaby (1997) stated that “the most important factor in successful language stabilization activities in Canada over the past thirty years

has been leadership and that each exceptional program or movement has begun with a vision of what could be done.” She stated that “these leaders were able to inspire others, understand the community well, know the resources, and serve as role models”. She believed that “through healing practices pain could be soothed, negativity could be counteracted, and talent, skills, leadership, and wisdom could be supported” (pp. 298-99).

Recognizing the historical and structural constraints of English imperialism, the assimilative roles of schools, the boarding school legacy, political and economic marginalization, restrictive national policies, and federal paternalism, McCarty (2002) identified the possibilities of local and tribal self-determination, tribal and national policy development, employment and economic development, the development of local leadership, schools as community centers, public valorization for Native languages, and ideological clarification and commitment and the role that they have in status planning. She recognized the constraints of language attrition, societal privileging of English, and inadequate school and program funding and identified the possibilities of language revitalization and maintenance, identify affirmation, Indigenous teacher preparation, national networking of language educators and activists, enhanced educational achievement and cultural and linguistic pride, and immersion education and the role that they have in acquisition planning. She also identified the conflicts surrounding authenticity and pressures for “accountability” and standardization while emphasizing the possibilities for new literatures, privileging Indigenous voices, affirming sovereignty and

local education control, curriculum planning and development, elaboration and modernization and their role in corpus planning (p. 300).

Research has shown that the issues of language loss are complex, the work of revitalization is not easy, and the importance of the development of language warriors is central. Crawford (1996) listed seven hypotheses on language loss and some causes and cures: (1) Language shift is very difficult to impose from without; (2) Language shift is determined primarily by changes internal to language communities themselves; (3) If language choices reflect social and cultural values, language shift reflects a change in those values; (4) If language shift reflects a change in values, so too must efforts to reverse language shift; (5) Language shift cannot be reversed by outsiders, however well-meaning; (6) Successful strategies for reversing language shift demand an understanding of the stage we are currently in, (7) At this stage in the United States, the key task is to develop indigenous leadership. It is this last hypothesis that encouraged the researcher to study indigenous leadership, in general, and “languages warriors”, in particular. (see Appendix F);

### An Indigenous Lens

Although it is important to recognize the harm that the government, the mission and government boarding schools, the media, and public schools have done to kill the Indigenous languages in America and Canada, Littlebear (1997, p. xv) reminded the people to get beyond the self-victimization stage. He says that “they are not going to help us restore, revive, or preserve our languages. They have no stake in these efforts.” Cleary and Peacock (1998, p. 61) stated that “to lay all the blame for the ills of American

Indian education on European colonialism is simplistic and wrong, but to ignore history, however, is also wrong.”

There are many tasks that are healing, transforming and mobilizing Indigenous communities. The Maori have been working hard in bringing their Indigenous language back in New Zealand. Smith (2005, p. 142) identified 25 different projects or activities concerned with the survival of peoples, cultures, and languages and the struggle to become self-determining, the need for Indigenous communities to take back control of their destinies. One action she addressed is claiming and reclaiming what rightfully belongs to one's people. Besides claiming what rights one should rightfully have like the right to exist as a people, the right to practice one's religion and to speak one's own language, part of claiming is teaching the non-indigenous audience and the new generations of Indigenous people a true account of history. Too often history has been told and controlled by the colonizers. Another leadership task is protecting a way of life, a language, and the right to make one's own history linked to the survival of Indigenous people. Much information can be shared and learned by listening to the testimonies, memories, and stories of Indigenous people, especially the elders. To solve problems in the community, one needs to reframe the problem and consider the impact of the history of colonization and the lack of collective self-determination. The power of Indigenous peoples to change their own lives and set new directions speaks to the politics of resistance and the ability to dream new dreams and set new visions.

Research states that those who wish to intervene on behalf of Indigenous people need to change institutions that deal with them instead of changing Indigenous people to



fit the structures. The latter has been the past educational policy and practice toward American Indian students. Research suggests that part of the work of language warriors is to indigenize educational settings and curriculum. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2004, pp. 142-1610) notes that Paulo Freire's saying "name the word, name the world" in an Indigenous setting has come to mean renaming the landscape using the original Indigenous names. The revitalization of the language encompasses education, broadcasting, publishing, and community-based programs. Other research tasks that Smith identified include connecting (establishing good relations), reading (using a critical approach), writing (sharing one's Indigenous perspective), networking (building relationships and disseminating knowledge), creating (developing one's imaginative spirit), negotiating (thinking and acting strategically), discovering (engaging with what's relevant), and sharing knowledge.

There is a great revival of traditional knowledge and practices in many tribes being led by the young people. Leonard (2007) in her study of her father's Indigenous language, Deg Xinag, has reinforced the idea that "humans have specific responsibilities in maintaining balanced physical, psychological, and spiritual systems in all parts of the environment" (p. 38). Deloria (1999) stated that the young people are bringing back crafts, songs and dances, and religious ceremonies to make them the center of their lives. He felt that personal example was more important than professional expertise in bringing order and stability to Indian communities. Some Indigenous research supports the use of the word and concept of warrior, which has encouraged the researcher to use the term.

In the following passage Regnier (1995) helped define the work of a warrior based on the Mohawk standoff in Canada in 1990:

Warriors act to reveal contradictions between dominant ideologies and aboriginal subjugation, act out the world as it could be, inspire the subjugated to oppose their subjugation, and call upon the public to support aboriginal struggles for mutual survival and justice. They address long-standing oppression. They seek preservation and restoration of language, customs, and culture; recognition of sovereignty; return of surrendered and illegally dispossessed lands; the granting of promised but never transferred land; recognition of aboriginal rights; and improvement of social and economic conditions. Pedagogues as warriors criticize racial injustice and enact the possibility of a reconstructed order within school (p. 5).

Regnier (1995) confirmed that among the tasks of warriors today is to preserve and restore language, customs, and culture. Warriors reveal contradictions, fight for justice, inspire the subjugated, and address oppression. Warriors are leaders who serve the people.

Becoming a servant to others begins by one's willingness to change oneself.

Alfred (2004) in his article on warrior scholarship emphasized the need to find the warrior within:

The first challenge is to regenerate ourselves and then our societies, and indeed to do our part to transform the powerful and arrogant exploitative mentality that is on the verge of destroying the earth. But to do so, we will need to discover the warrior within ourselves and begin to act on the ethic of courage that sustained our ancestors for many generations of struggle. We will begin to make meaningful change in the lives of our people as a whole only when we first focus on making real change in the lives of our people as individuals... We need to rebel against what we've become and start remembering and acting on who our ancestors were, what they were like, and the things they believed in. This is the spiritual revolution that will ensure our survival (p. 97).

For many Indigenous people the strength that is needed to live in today's society as an Indigenous person comes from following the traditional way of life. Reyhner (1999) had found a description of Inupiaq values on a card which read:

With guidance and support from Elders, we must teach our children Inupiaq values, the knowledge of language, sharing, respect for others, cooperation, respect for elders, love for children, hard work, knowledge of family tree, avoidance of conflict, respect for nature, spirituality, humor, family roles, hunter success, domestic skills, humility, and responsibility to the tribe. It concluded that our understanding of our universe and our place in it is a belief in God and respect for all his creations.

These values may differ slightly from Indigenous nation to Indigenous nation, but they help define a world view of what it means to be Indigenous and helps describe the traditional way of life within a modern world that many of today's warriors are fighting for.

Internalized oppression has sometimes resulted in self-hatred and negativity. Littlebear (1999), a Cheyenne educator, mentioned the need for community members to be positive and proactive. Many language warriors and potential language warriors have college educations and need to be welcomed back into their communities. Elders need to be more accepting of those who are just beginning to learn. He felt that a sense of belonging, importance, and identity can be found within the language and the culture. Some youth are looking for these things in gangs, which are a problem in both urban and reservation Indigenous communities.

#### A Call for Indigenous Leadership

Reversing attitudes and raising awareness of the importance and utility of Indigenous languages calls upon leaders to be change agents in their communities.

Johnson (1997) focused on leaders as “weavers of change” in his *Osah gan gio* model for leadership. The leader is a basket weaver who facilitates the building of a basket which is both functional and beautiful and carries in its designs respect for tribal history and culture. “Leaders emerged from the interplay of values and commitments, cultural, social and historical influences, and personal events that motivated and mobilized their actions” (Johnson, Benham & VanAlstine, 2003, p. 153). According to this model there are five themes that guide the Native leader’s ways of living and leadership:

First, there is a commitment to serve the community, to do something for the people. Each leader was able to mention an elder or a mentor who continued to give them advice and encouragement and helped to make them loving and resilient.

Second, the theme of loss of culture and language as well as native identity pervades Indian country and has caused many leaders to carry the torch for cultural revitalization and healing. Some believe that one’s culture and language are already inside one’s genetic memory and that it only needs to be tapped. Some leaders spoke about their personal journey of learning their cultural ways. Claiming one’s native voice meant developing the skills and knowledge required to challenge the status quo. These skills include community mobilization, conflict resolution, communication, problem-solving, and advocacy, as well as sustaining hope and inspiring action.

The third theme was that education can be the key to cultural survival and self-determination, but it is community service, not a degree, that makes a person a leader.

The fourth theme was traveling and networking, building relationships with other communities (native and non-native) that foster successful, new educational programs,

protection of tribal sovereignty, and the perpetuation of language and culture. Their research stated that there will be a greater demand for leaders who can work across boundaries of race, culture, and faith to foster change by mobilizing communities to take action.

The fifth theme is that the soul of native leadership is grounded on principles that reflect an inner strength, a meaning and purpose in one's life to make a difference in one's native community (pp. 153-159).

Robbins and Tippeconnic (Benham & Stein, 2003, p. 159) identified seven characteristics of effective Indian educational leaders. They are similar to the principles of *Oсах ган gio*: (1) There is a need to recognize that differences exist between native and non-natives and are often incompatible. An effective leader shares information with both the native and non-native communities in a way that respects cultural differences. (2) A leader must be skilled in cross-cultural communication. (3) Leaders must translate what they have learned formally into ideas and practices that are culturally appropriate. (4) A leader must maintain a positive attitude toward and a deep commitment to the education of, by, and for American Indians. They must respect native heritage, cultures and values. (5) They must have a vision and creative approaches to making things better and not be easily discouraged. (6) It takes patience to deal with bureaucracy and community members who are resistant to change. (7) A leader must possess self-confidence and pride in being a Native American and show concern and care for the tribal community.

According to Benham and Mann (2003, p. 177), educational policies and practices that enhance learning and student success must be built on “a native epistemological model of mother-tongue language and native culture and must include bilingual teacher training, leadership of tribal and community elders, thoughtful planning and dissemination of effective teaching tools, critical development of evaluation and assessment tools, and a community learning model.” Benham & Mann (2003, p. 190) concluded that native and non-native communities must do everything possible to avert the loss of language and cultural wealth and protect global diversity. Because language embraces the spiritual, intellectual, historical and cultural competencies and capacities of people who use it, language must be taught in safe places. Finally, “by safeguarding languages and cultures, the diversity and worth of unique intellectual traditions and the roles they might play in contemporary human intellectual life are appreciated.” In summary, Kipp (2009, p. 2) stated that the promise that language revitalization offers is reconciliation, a renegotiation of reality, and a restoration of an intellectual beauty possible in the oceans of tomorrow.”

### Ojibwe Perspectives on Leadership

One of the most important civil rights movements in recent times was the American Indian Movement. AIM relates closely to this study because it began in Minneapolis in 1968 and most of its founding leaders were Ojibwe. One of its founders, Dennis Banks, was asked what he felt the occupation of Wounded Knee accomplished. He responded that “We were the prophets, the messengers, the fire-starters. Wounded Knee awakened not only the conscience of all Native Americans but also of white

Americans nationwide” (Banks & Erdoes, 2004, p. 360). Old ideas and ways of life were resurrected and blended with the demands of modern life and survival. A new culture was created that wiped out old stereotypes. Alternative schools were created to teach Native language and history accurately. Indigenous writers, poets, artists, actors, and filmmakers came forth and Whites were no longer needed to “interpret” Indigenous culture. He also mentioned how important spirituality was and is to AIM.

The role of spirituality is central to Ojibwe leadership and to Ojibwe language revitalization efforts. Flocken, Goggeye and Smith (2002) interviewed Ojibwe elders in Ojibwe and identified the following themes about why one needs to learn Ojibwe: (1) we were gifted by the Creator with the language, (2) Ojibwe holds our ceremonial knowledge, (3) it is our spiritual connection, (4) our values are in our language, (5) our way of thinking comes from our language, and (6) our power and strength come from our language (7) our Indianness comes from our language. There was also the belief that Ojibwe Indians are different today in the way they believe and behave. They don’t listen like they’re supposed to. They don’t value the language and are missing out on everything that is contained in the language. The elders stated that first we need to know our Indian language and then we need to know our Indian ways.

Much about leadership can be learned by studying the values of the spiritual leaders. Within the Ojibwe culture, leadership attributes were identified by Christensen (1999). She emphasized in her dissertation that medicine leaders are the ones who translate traditional teachings from elders into group action. They know and live the teachings and teach the Spirit Code. They are inclusive. They live, work, and act in

culturally defined conditions. They persuade through charisma and they use the Ojibwe language. She emphasized that “to be a healthy, balanced person one must walk the good road, living always in the sacred present, augmented and enhanced by ceremony” (p. 173). A community is made up of individuals, each with different gifts. Each individual is expected to contribute to society to make it stronger. Edward Benton-Banai, an Ojibwe spiritual leader, stated: “A native leader is not known for what he has done for himself, but rather what he has done for his people” (1975, p. 1).

Survival as a people may depend upon clinging to the traditional way of life and part of that means knowing one’s indigenous language. One Ojibwe elder, a tribal council member from Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation in Wisconsin, Eugene Begay, now deceased, was asked in 1997 to comment on tribal sovereignty and American Indian leadership. He asserted that “when all is said and done, maybe we will lose our land. But, people who will survive are those who cling to the traditions and the way of life” (Poupart, 1997).

There is a strong tradition that supports that learning Ojibwe as a second language is a life-long task, a spiritual journey. Those who follow the Ojibwe traditions believe that the spirits of this area, of this land, understand Ojibwe and need to be spoken to in Ojibwe. When the Creator placed the Ojibwe people on Turtle Island (America), the people were given a language and a way of life. When a person dies and makes the journey to the spirit world, the person will be addressed in Ojibwe and will need to know it. They believe that the language will help them in this life and in the next (Peacock & Wisuri, 2001).



## Theoretical Framework

Three components that make up the theoretical framework of this study are hegemony, tribal critical race theory, and survivance.

### Hegemony: The Influence of Dominant Society

The first component of the theoretical framework is a recognition that hegemony exists and that for many tribal people there is an ongoing tension between competing cultural systems. Schools, churches, media, pop culture, and the government have used the English language and promoted the Euro-American way of life as the norm in dominant society. Ideological domination has historically engineered the consent to status quo structures and practices (Gramsci, 1971). Ideologies were forced upon Indigenous children through the government and mission boarding school system that has caused historical trauma for generations. Those who learned the lessons of their schooling began to accept the dominance of the Euro-American culture, Christian religion, and the English language as the norm in urban and reservation tribal communities. Some who were strongly influenced became sub-oppressors.

Language warriors are challenging the status quo of both dominant society and tribal society by helping others recover the traditional spirituality and the Ojibwe language and culture. Discourse has the capacity to produce and sustain hegemonic power and there are counter- discourses among the Indigenous people that have been marginalized or unrecognized that challenge the way things are. It criticizes the White, male, Western-European, Judeo-Christian perspective as being the only one that matters or makes sense (Diamond & Quinby, 1988).

Foucault believed that the body is the site of power and domination. The colonial languages served the hegemonic function of capturing the mental universe of the colonized trying to make the colonized into compliant, docile bodies (Foucault, 1991). This may explain how the boarding schools had such a powerful impact on the youth.

Education is a political act and if people do not resist the status quo, they are supporting it or at least allowing it to persist. Cook (1993) in her study of Foucault stated that “resistance makes emancipation possible” (p. 137) and that the task of resistance is “extended to everyone” and “everyone has a stake in transforming its repressive and oppressive institutions, techniques, practices, and norms” (p.141). Resisting subjects need to respond to problems related to disempowerment, to the marginalization of certain forms of knowledge, and to prevailing moral and social practices. Individual and group action has the potential for radical social and political change and decolonization is an example of this kind of action. Foucault (1974) believed that the real political task in a society is to “criticize the working of institutions so that the political violence will be unmasked, so that we can fight against them” (p. 171).

Cook (1993) explaining Foucault’s idea of the power/knowledge matrix stated that “the colonizers taught the colonized the idea that their languages, cultures, and knowledge were inferior, useless, or backward.” This message was preached in the churches and in the schools. The message was that the old days are gone and the sooner one forgot the old ways, the sooner they would be saved and be able to make progress. Colonization taught that the more one accepted the colonized ways, the “better” person one became (Fanon, 1967, p.18). Truth about the colonized emphasized their cultural

“otherness” and racial inferiority (Foucault, 1980). The power and knowledge discourses were controlled by the colonizers.

Those in power “could maintain and justify their dominance and win the consent of those dominated through subtle forms of hegemonic controls within and through institutions, intellectuals, and mass media” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 408). Imperialism is a process of homogenization. Regenerating culture through the revival of Indigenous languages is anti-imperial (Gramsci, 1971; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

Foucault believed that the essential problem for the intellectuals is constituting a new politics of truth and detaching the power of truth from the social, economic, and cultural hegemony at the present time (Rabinow, 1984, p. 74). One example of a counter-hegemonic discourse is antiracism. bell hooks (2003) has been a strong advocate for anti-racist education and emphasizes the need to work for justice, changing the educational system so that schooling is not indoctrinating students to support the “imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy” or any other ideology, but rather a site where students can learn to open their minds, to engage in rigorous study, and to think critically” (p. 3). She believed that teaching is a vocation and has a sacred aspect to it and “that teachers should not just share information with their students, but should share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of their students and teach in a manner that respects their souls.” In the researcher’s opinion this is what the Ojibwe language warriors are doing in Ojibwe immersion and culturally-based instruction. They are teaching to the souls of the Ojibwe children.

Another example of counter-hegemonic discourse is multicultural education. Because American Indians make up less than two percent of the total U.S. population, they are often overlooked. Multicultural education recognizes that there are many groups of people within our nation, each with their own cultures, their truths, and their histories. The inclusion of American Indians in U.S. history has usually been limited to a few pages of mainstream history books. Multicultural education recognizes the need to include much more accurate information about American Indians in the curriculum as well as hiring American Indian staff in the schools. Banks and Banks (1995) defined multicultural education in this way:

It is a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. One of its important goals is to help all students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with peoples from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good" (p. xi).

Howard (1999) summarized the important objectives of multicultural education as knowing who we are racially and culturally, learning about and valuing cultures different from our own, viewing social reality through multiple perspectives, understanding the history and dynamics of dominance, and nurturing in ourselves and our students a passion for justice and the skills for social action. By viewing schools as political and cultural sites as well as instructional institutions, Giroux has tried to help educators to become more critical in their pedagogies and more visionary in their purposes. According to Giroux (2006), schools need to become models of critical learning, civic courage, and active citizenship. Ramirez and Castañeda (1974) advocated for "cultural democracy,"

which states that “a person has a legal and moral right to remain identified with his own ethnic group, values, language, home and community, as he learns of and accepts “mainstream” values” (p. xi). These counter-hegemonic approaches in education, which do not fully address the unique situation of Indigenous people in this nation, have given birth to critical race theory and, more specifically, tribal critical race theory.

### Tribal Critical Race Theory

The second component of this dissertation’s framework is tribal critical race theory. Critical pedagogy demands that leaders reflect on their actions and act on their reflections. Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970) emphasized the importance of praxis. Praxis is reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it. Subjugated human beings become liberated by actively working toward their own freedom to transform their lives and the world around them. They become makers of history instead of victims of it. Critical race theory suggests that racism is endemic to society (Cole, 2009).

Brayboy modified critical race theory in 2001 to include the unique status of American Indians as being both racial and legal/political groups and individuals. The tenets of tribal critical race theory (Brayboy, 2006, pp. 429-430) include:

1. Colonization is endemic to society.
2. U.S. policies toward Indigenous peoples are rooted in imperialism, White supremacy, and a desire for material gain.
3. Indigenous peoples occupy a liminal space that accounts for both the political and racialized natures of our identities.
4. Indigenous peoples have a desire to obtain and forge tribal sovereignty, tribal autonomy, self-determination, and self-identification.
5. The concepts of culture, knowledge, and power take on a new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens.
6. Governmental policies and educational policies towards Indigenous peoples are intimately linked around the problematic goal of assimilation.

7. Tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to the understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups.
8. Stories are not separate from theory, they make up theory, and are therefore, real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being.
9. Theory and practice are connected in deep and explicit ways such that scholars must work towards social change.

Brayboy (2005) argued that TribalCrit provides a theoretical lens to address many of the issues facing American Indian communities today including language shift and language loss. The final component of TribalCrit must include praxis. He believes that researchers must deconstruct structural inequalities and assimilatory processes moving away from colonization and assimilation. Swisher (1998) stated that “what is being written about Indian education must focus on what makes the Indigenous people of this country different from other Americans. The background, histories, traditions, cultural ways, languages, and government-to-government relationships are unique” and “only insiders could really understand the struggle for the preservation of language and culture” (p. 194).

#### Survivance: “Native Resistance of Dominance”

The third component of this framework is survivance, popularized by an Ojibwe author, Gerald Vizenor. He stated that survivance is “native resistance of dominance” and “an undeniable trace of presence over absence, nihility, and victimry” (2008, p. 17). Survivance reminds us that there are several stories that are not often told. One story is that there are no Indians. Indians are a creation of dominant society, just as noble and ignoble savages are. Instead there are many Indigenous nations within the Americas, each with their own name, their spiritual beliefs, languages, and customs. Many of these

nations, languages, and ways of life have been destroyed; yet, others remain as viable alternatives to the hegemony of dominant society. The countless contributions and sacrifices of Indigenous nations in the Americas often go unreported. The United States representative government was modeled by the founding fathers after the Iroquois Confederacy, which still exists today. Half the world's foods are indigenous to America. The contributions of individuals in the military are not often remembered. Native languages served as codes during wartime that the enemy could not break. Although many Indigenous people have died too young and too violently, there are many examples of resilience and healing within communities. Revitalizing Indigenous language is an act of resistance to dominance. Language warriors are seeking for meaning and truth in Ojibwe spirituality and the traditional way of life. Yet, they are living and working in the twenty-first century. The emphasis of survivance is on renewal. It is concerned about the future; not only the survival of the people. Steiner (1998, p. xiv) said:

When a language dies, a possible world dies with it. There is no survival of the fittest. Even where it is spoken by a handful, by the harried remnants of destroyed communities, a language contains within itself the boundless potential of discovery, or re-compositions of reality, of articulate dreams, which are known to us as myths, as poetry, as metaphysical conjecture and the discourse of law.

Kroeber (2008) commented on how Vizenor uses a trickster to portray survivance as a comic holotrope directed specifically against the manifest manners of white colonialism (p. 29). The trickster heals and balances the world. He does not deny the horrors of history, but he does not get destroyed by them either. Madsen (2008) noted that “the balance of opposites is a healthy response and the only therapeutic strategy that permits a postindian subject to survive” (p. 81). He further stated:

The preservation of difference not sameness, of provisionality not stability, and of balance not resolution and Freudian “wholeness: emerges as a desirable condition for Native people who must live every moment with the evidence of their traumatic history and with the everyday assaults on their integrity and personal safety that are ongoing sources of psychic trauma...How not to live in sadness, “sorry for themselves”, but rather how to live in a condition of resistance and survival, of Native survivance, beyond tragedy, victimry, and simulations of the indian, apart from false healing in the culture of dominance. (p. 83)

Breinig (2008) wrote about how survivance combines remembrance with resistance as an active presence in life and in literature. Atalay (2006, p. 609) writes:

The concept of survivance is not about avoiding or minimizing the horrors and tragedy of colonization. It includes agency and Native presence that does not refuse stories of struggle, particularly those that create a context of understanding and appreciating the creative methods of resistance and survival in the face of such unimaginable turmoil.

The Ojibwe term, *biskaabiiyang* [we are making a round trip], describes the journey that many Ojibwe people are taking today in their lives. They are going back and picking up what has been left along the way, the language and the culture, in order to become healthy and whole to survive and thrive in the future.

### Summary

Research shows us that there are many threats to the existence of Ojibwe language and culture and many reasons for caring about its revitalization. Historical trauma and linguicide have been caused by colonization. Education has often been linked with assimilation, but today it can be a context for revitalizing the language and the culture. Recent language policies have recognized the need to act together with Native Americans to assure the survival of Indigenous languages and cultures and this has been reinforced in world organizations. Immersion has been identified by researchers as being



the most effective method of instruction. Bilingualism is seen as an asset and necessary for survival as a people.

Various layers of leadership were then presented. The linguistic layer identified several components and models of successful language revitalization programs world-wide and within America. Community involvement and native leadership were emphasized. Language and culture revitalization were linked closely with self-determination and survival as a people. Young people who were learning the traditions were bringing them back to their people and leading by example and service. Negative attitudes need to be replaced by positive ones. Indigenous leadership models were explained and compared. Spirituality within Ojibwe leadership is very important.

Then, a theoretical framework which guides this study was discussed. The first component is hegemony. Hegemony exists in every corner of America and there is a tension in tribal communities between competing cultural systems. Ideological domination has engineered the consent to status quo. Multiculturalism recognizes that there is more than one truth and that knowledge does not just belong to the colonizers, or more specifically the White, male, Western-European, Judeo-Christian, who has controlled the power and knowledge discourses. Decoloni-zation, critical pedagogy, anti-racism, and multicultural education all provide counter-hegemonic discourses. The second component includes the nine points of Tribal Critical Theory developed by Brayboy. This theory maintains that colonization is endemic to tribal society. Policies toward Indigenous people are rooted in imperialism, White supremacy, and greed and are assimilationist. Culture, knowledge, and power have different meanings in Indigenous

communities. Tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions are central to the understanding of lived realities of Indigenous peoples. Theory and practice are connected in deep and explicit ways, scholars must work toward social change, and stories make up theory. The third component is survivance, which is native resistance to dominance. It advocates for an active presence and balance.

This literature review indicated that information about the lives and strategies, successes and failures, and reflections of the Native language warriors was missing. Further research may help communities, teams, and individuals that work with language and culture revitalization and it may help develop Indigenous leadership. The next chapter discusses the methodology that was used and the reasons for it.

## CHAPTER NISWI: METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study examined the language warriors and their experiences, actions, and reflections within the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. The project was then designed as an interview study. The researcher considered the experiences of the participants with regard to the subject being studied as important in understanding the subject. Geertz (1973) stated that “phenomenologists attempt to gain entry into the conceptual world of their subjects” in order to understand how and what meaning they construct around events in their daily lives. Greene (1978) added that multiple ways of interpreting experiences are available through interacting with others and that it is the “meaning of our experiences” that constitutes reality.

There were three meetings with each interviewee. At the first meeting the interviewees were given a handful of tobacco and asked to be a part of the study. This is Ojibwe protocol for asking for a favor. Each participant was told about the study and encouraged to ask questions. Then the participant was asked to provide some demographic information and some available times and locations for the next interview session. The second session consisted of asking the interview questions. The third session provided an opportunity to check for accuracy and agreement and to change anything that had been misinterpreted. The time in between interviews allowed the participants and researcher to reflect on their own experiences and make sense of them. The data are the words of the participants (Seidman, 1991). The data generated are not inclusive, but are limited to the interpretations and understandings chosen during the

interview sessions. Finally, a final version of the dissertation was e-mailed to each participant to provide another opportunity for member checking to check for further accuracy.

### A Qualitative Approach

A qualitative approach was selected meeting the following criteria. Creswell (2003) stated that qualitative research takes place in natural settings allowing the researcher to develop more details about the individuals and to be involved in actual experiences of the participants. Qualitative research uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic. It is emergent in design rather than tightly prefigured and meanings and interpretations are negotiated with human data sources because it is the subjects' realities that the researcher attempts to construct. It is fundamentally interpretative, developing descriptions, analyzing data and drawing conclusions. It views social phenomena holistically. It calls on the researcher to reflect who he is and how it shapes the study. It uses complex reasoning that is multifaceted, iterative, and simultaneous.

### Research Questions

The research questions focus on three aspects of the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. [REDACTED]

What perspectives are held by Ojibwes and non-Ojibwes regarding the Ojibwe language? What conditions have inspired the Ojibwe language revitalization movement? What has the impact of the movement been?

What are the backgrounds and educational paths of the language warriors? What's been relevant in their education to the work they do now? What are their sources of inspiration and why do they care about the language? What approaches have been helpful to the language warriors in learning Ojibwe? What resources have been helpful to them? What are their experiences like, their opportunities, barriers sacrifices? What are their hopes and plans? Where do they see the next language warriors coming from and what advice do they have for them?

How do they develop other language warriors, what advice do they have for other language warriors, and how do they motivate others to speak Ojibwe? What are their leadership styles? What are their perspectives on knowledge, success, and power? What differences do they perceive there are in Ojibwe and non-Native leadership? What are their leadership strategies, challenges, and future tasks?

#### Participant Selection and Site Selection

Because Ojibwe country extends from Hudson Bay to Minneapolis and from the borders of Quebec to British Columbia and contains various dialects, the researcher chose to narrow this study of the Ojibwe revitalization movement to Minnesota and Wisconsin, which is the home of the Southwestern dialect of Ojibwe (Appendix K). I speak this dialect and have written texts in it. Because the Ojibwe population is half urban and half rural, the sample reflected this by choosing half of the language warriors from the reservations and half from the urban areas within this region of Ojibwe country. The researcher also decided to ensure a cross-sampling of gender and age representative of the movement. Presently there are two immersion programs on the reservations in this

region and two immersion programs in urban areas. There are several institutions of higher learning where language warriors are being trained. The participants were chosen because they are known in this region of Ojibwe Country because of the work that they do, the examples that they are to others, and their persistence over time. As I asked the participants to identify other language warriors, many of these same people were identified by their peers. The methodology literature clearly states that the goal of purposive sampling is to identify respondents who can bring information, have depth and breadth in their experiences, and share commonalities (Patton, 1990). The language warriors are referred to by their Ojibwe names and there is a chart in Appendix D that gives specific biographical data.

This study involved interviewing twenty-one language warriors. Sixteen of them are men and five are women. Seven are over fifty years old, and the rest are over twenty. All of these language warriors have had to work hard to learn Ojibwe as a second language.

Two language warriors, who spoke Ojibwe as a first language, but lost much of it through the trauma of boarding school, have also had to work hard to relearn it. They are twins, who were born in the woods far away from a hospital during trapping time. Their father was a monolingual speaker of Ojibwe and their mother is bilingual, but prefers Ojibwe. She taught it for twenty years and makes herself readily available to help anyone she can. She is one of the most well-known Ojibwe warriors in this region of Ojibwe Country.

Ten language warriors grew up on or near their home reservation. Most, who lived off the reservation, had close family ties on the reservation and got there often. Four were raised in Wisconsin, eleven were raised in Minnesota, one in Oklahoma, and one in Missouri. Three are Canadians. Two grew up in foster homes in Minnesota.

Some have lived in other countries and learned to speak another language. They told me how this has motivated them to study Ojibwe and helped them in their studies. Some language warriors are very artistic. Half of the language warriors play a musical instrument and some have been in a band. Research has shown a strong relationship between musical and linguistic ability.

Most language warriors have completed a four-year degree or an equivalency. Seven have their doctorates or are doctoral candidates and many are working on or have completed their master's degrees. Formal education, as well as Ojibwe cultural education, is important to all of them.

Although Christianity was a part of many of the language warriors' upbringing, many now live a traditional Ojibwe ceremonial life, are Mide, and belong to a ceremonial drum society. A few language warriors consider themselves Christians and a couple of them belong to a parish that includes both Christian and Indigenous traditional practices.

#### Role of the Researcher

I have been involved in Ojibwe language education for more than thirty years, teaching all levels from kindergarten to college in Minneapolis. I have co-authored ten bilingual texts and helped make accompanying CDs. I was a principal for several years on the Mille Lacs Reservation, where I was raised for part of my life. I have been

married to an Ojibwe educator for the past thirty-six years and I am a father, a grandfather, and I have been a foster-father of Ojibwe children. I have been a consultant for teacher training and immersion education. These experiences have given me a rich background for this study and an entry into the field.

I am aware of the decolonization literature that clearly expresses the disgust of Indigenous people for being over studied and misrepresented. Smith (2005) explained this stance well:

From the vantage point of the colonized, a position from which I write, and choose to privilege, the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European colonialism. The word itself, 'research', is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary. When mentioned in many indigenous contexts, it stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful. (p.1)

In this area of revitalization literature within the Ojibwe nation there is still a void. Much work has been done, but a lot has not been written down and analyzed, especially regarding its leaders.

Even though I have spoken, studied, and taught Ojibwe most of my life and have dedicated my life to its revitalization and therefore am an insider and advocate, I researched this topic as one who wants to know what has happened and is happening from the perspectives of other leaders in this movement in order to add to a pool of knowledge. I intended to do an honest and careful analysis of their perspectives, triangulating them with one another and other sources of data. Since I began this study I have been able to see this movement from both the inside and outside. Although I teach one Ojibwe course at the college level at the present time, I am presently teaching ESL to high school students in Eden Prairie, mostly Somali students. I have declined any



positions within the movement until I finish this study allowing me to have a more objective stance while completing it. Sunstein & Chiseri-Strater (2002, p. 9) addressed this dilemma in this way:

So it is not always objectivity or detachment that allows us to study culture, our own or that of others. Subjectivity - our inner feelings and belief systems - allows us to uncover some features of culture that are not always apparent. As a fieldworker, you will conduct an internal dialogue between your subjective and objective selves, listening to both, questioning both. You combine the viewpoints of an outsider “stepping in” and an insider “stepping out” of the culture you study.

I also recognize that the task of revitalizing the language rests on the shoulders of each local community, school and home, and that there are other competing priorities, values and experiences which have made and continue to make Ojibwe an endangered language.

#### Data Collection Procedures

The researcher conducted semi-structured one-to-one interviews with each of the twenty participants. With the permission of those interviewed, a tape recorder was used to record the interviews. The participants chose the interview settings. The participants initially were asked about a half dozen questions in an open manner- such as, “Tell me about your background.” The questions listed in Appendix C served as a checklist, so that all of the same information was solicited. This encouraged the interviewee to tell stories, a more cultural way of sharing information. The data added to the testimonial and narrative literature in the revitalization movement. The participants were asked follow-up and clarifying questions in the follow-up interviews.

Storytelling as a way of learning is well documented in Indigenous literature. Smith (2005, p. 144-45) stated, “For many indigenous writers stories are ways of passing

down the beliefs and values of a culture in the hope that the new generations will treasure them and pass the story down further. As a research tool, Russell Bishop suggested, storytelling is a useful and culturally appropriate way of representing the ‘diversities of truth’ within which the storyteller rather than the researcher retains control.’ Bishop also suggested that ‘the indigenous community becomes a story that is a collection of individual stories, ever unfolding, through the lives of the people who share the life of that community’ ...Their themes tell us about our cultures.” Brayboy (2001) in his eighth tenet of TribalCrit states that “stories are not separate from theory, they make up theory, and are therefore, real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being.” The researcher invited the participants to review the findings and interpretations upon completion. Johnson, Benham & VanAlstine (2003) also emphasized the importance of stories:

First, native scholars should continue to use native leaders’ life stories that can serve as a methodology for studying native ways of leadership. It is through the telling of a story that the wisdom of elders is best captured. And it is through the multiple and rich interpretations of these stories that we can better understand the synergistic interrelationships between the individual, the community, and the cultural / spiritual core that define living and leadership (p. 162).

#### Data Analysis Procedures

Data-analysis is the process of organizing and storing data in light of my meaning, finding interpretations that I learned to make about the shape of my dissertation. I was in a learning mode and with each effort of data analysis I enhanced my capacity to further analyze (Glesne, 1998, p. 132). Data-analysis was an on-going process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions and writing memos

throughout the study. After organizing and preparing some initial data for analysis and reading through the data, I began a coding process. Three questions I asked were “What surprised me? (tracking assumptions), What intrigued me? (tracking positions) and What disturbed me? (tracking tensions).. Glesne (1998, p. 134) talked about the 3 P’s: Progress, Problems, and Plans. Reflecting on the research process and the data collected helped me develop new questions, new hunches, and new ways of approaching the research.

Glesne (1998) described later data analysis as entering the code mines. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggested that the time to quit collecting data is when I reached redundancy and the data seemed complete and integrated. I needed to ask how the stories connected to each other? What was being illuminated? What themes and patterns gave shape to my data? The major codes were broken into subcodes and the various data clumps were placed in a meaningful sequence. The description and themes were represented in a narrative conveying the findings. The data were then interpreted and flexible to convey personal, research-based and action meanings (Creswell, 2003, pp. 191-195).

### Credibility and Reliability

According to Merriam (1998), there are six basic strategies to enhance internal validity. I used these: triangulation, member checking, long-term observation, peer examination, participatory or collaborative models of research, and I stated my biases. Similar questions were asked in the same interview in order to check the internal validity of certain concepts of the interview itself. Miles and Huberman (1994) stated that

triangulation is not so much a tactic as a way of life. “If you self-consciously set out to collect and double-check findings, use multiple sources and modes of evidence, the verification process will largely be built into the data collection as you go. In effect, triangulation is a way to get to the finding in the first place- by seeing or hearing multiple instances of it from different sources by using different methods” (p.267). Member checking also took place before submitting this study to the committee.

In summary, I employed the following strategies, mentioned by Creswell (2003, p. 196) to check the accuracy of the findings: “triangulation of different data sources, especially an extensive literature review, to build coherent justification for the themes, member-checking to determine accuracy, rich, thick description to give the discussion an element of shared experiences, clarify bias by self-reflection, present negative or discrepant information that runs counter to the themes documenting other perspectives, spend prolonged time in the field and provide detail about the people and the site, and use peer debriefing and external auditing to review the study.”

#### Generalizability

Although every reservation and urban setting in Indian country is unique and each Indigenous language has its own culture, language and history, there are many experiences of forced assimilation and colonization that are similar and therefore findings in this study could be somewhat generalizable. Because the history of language loss and the reasons for caring are similar to the experiences of other Indigenous nations, leaders can learn from each other about strategies that are working. Many of the language warriors throughout Indian country have had to learn the Indigenous language as a

second language and have made their best progress by a combination of learning in school and working closely in a master-apprentice relationship.

### Delimitations

Delimitations address how a study is limited in scope (Creswell, 1994). This study confined itself to interviewing language warriors, who are second-language learners of Ojibwe or first-language speakers who have had to relearn Ojibwe due to the trauma of boarding schools. They reside within reservation and urban settings in Minnesota and Wisconsin, usually have college educations, and have been identified as starting programs or are actively involved in the leadership of a program at the time of the dissertation. There are many potential first-language speakers of Ojibwe who could be called language warriors because of their leadership, their work, their teaching, and their example, but they already have the fluency that only the most dedicated and hard-working second-language speakers can hope to attain. Their challenges are different. Four of the first language speakers whom I have worked closely with, learned from, and developed learning materials and books with have passed away since I began my dissertation.

Ojibwe culture, language or religion were not discussed in length. This study focused on the Ojibwe language and culture revitalization movement and its leaders. It does not represent other areas of Ojibwe country or all language warriors. This study's usefulness may be limited to this region of Ojibwe country. The researcher had to work full-time while conducting this research and had limited financial resources. Those who

were interviewed were not paid for their time. Their time was also limited, because most of the language warriors are extremely busy and in high demand.

### Limitations

Limitations are identified by Creswell (1994) as the potential weaknesses of the study. The purposive sampling procedure decreases the generalizability of findings. It might not be generalizable to all areas of Ojibwe Country. This research describes the Ojibwe language revitalization movement, life experiences of language warriors, and leadership styles and tasks that lie ahead for a small sample, twenty-one, in the linguistic region of Southwestern Ojibwe. As the movement grows and the number of language warriors increases, and as those in the movement continue to work, the perspectives will continue to change. The researcher attempted to counter balance those perceptions with an extensive literature review.

Ideally, more language warriors could be interviewed in more communities, and more time could be spent as a participant observer in each site. Other stakeholders could also be interviewed. More quantifiable data from surveys and questionnaires could be administered to increase the sample size and input and check interpretations.

In this qualitative study, the findings could be subject to other interpretations. This study reflects the experiences of those interviewed. The researcher's own bias is supportive of the Ojibwe revitalization movement and its leaders and he has a life-time involvement and familiarity with the topic. The researcher hopes that sufficient detail is presented so that the reader may judge whether certain interpretations may be transferable to other language warrior groups or language revitalization movements.

## CHAPTER NIIWIN

### THE OJIBWE LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION MOVEMENT: CONTEXTS, CHALLENGES, AND CONSIDERATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter explores multiple dimensions of the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement. First, the language warriors express how they think other Ojibwes and non-Ojibwes feel about the Ojibwe language. Next, the language warriors identify conditions that helped create the movement. Finally, they consider the impact of the movement and how the movement may differ on reservations and in urban areas.

#### Ojibwe Perspectives toward *Ojibwemowin*: The Ojibwe Language

In this section the language warriors express what they think other Ojibwe people feel about the Ojibwe language. Some language warriors believe that the interest in learning Ojibwe as a second language is increasing and more Ojibwe people are going to places where Ojibwe is being spoken. Many Ojibwes feel that language is a part of their identity, yet many are unsure of its place in today's world. Finally, the language warriors speculate that pressures of everyday life and other distractions are preventing some people from learning *Ojibwemowin*, while others have become almost totally assimilated.

#### Most Ojibwes Want to Learn Ojibwe, But...

Many of the language warriors believe that the major reason for not being fluent is not having the time to learn Ojibwe, that people are too busy making a living, or that they choose to spend their free time on other things. Chi-makwa commented:

Sometimes people have to work all day just to make a living and then they're too tired to commit time for it especially because of television. I

think television has some good benefits. I think it is fun to watch football games or remodeling home shows. Our young kids just watch MTV and whatever shows they watch are all in English. It's all Anglo culture. It's about money and being a certain size. You got to wear this kind of makeup. It's so invasive and pervasive that the kids gets swallowed up in that stuff and they don't have time to do Ojibwe anymore. (1/24/2010)

In his opinion one of the problems with television is that everything is in English.

Dominant society's culture is presented on television and is pervasive as it invades our homes and our minds. Giniwgiizhig, a doctoral candidate in education, a director, a former principal and teacher, emphasized the connection of the language to one's identity, but also asserted how easy it is to get distracted in today's world.

Most of us have that in our blood to be connected to it. Yes, it's important, but we're distracted by "Do I have enough gas in my tank to make it to the next gas station? Am I going too fast? Am I going to get a speeding ticket? What radio station and song do I want to listen to?" It's like white noise and it's hard to focus, to slow down and look at the language. Why is it important? And to sit down long enough to develop a thought of why it is important we don't have time to slow down and evaluate where we're going (1/16/2010).

He believes that Ojibwe people need to slow down and take time to think about the value of the Ojibwe language and to evaluate the direction and purpose in their lives.

Some language warriors state other reasons why Ojibwe is not being learned.

Migizi, a graduate student in linguistics, said, "I think most people care or at least they say they care, but don't have the drive to do it or don't know how to do it. It's different where you go or who you ask." Others said because "they may not have the time, the resources, or the money" or they may not have a personal commitment to it, and because of the amount of work it takes to learn Ojibwe, they may choose to follow the path of



least resistance. Waagosh, a ceremonial leader, a professor, and author, who has his doctorate in history, stated:

I think most Ojibwe people wish they were speakers. They think it is cool and are glad somebody knows it, but are not committed to making it a central component of their own lives. It's so much work and people follow the course of least resistance and there are many shining examples to the contrary. There is a big contest over identity. We only have 10% fluency, if that, and people are going to latch onto the things they have and use those as the defining features of their Indianness, rather than the things that they feel are unattainable, so they'll say skin color, blood quantum, enrollment, participation in powwows, or just descent. (1/16/2010)

Some Ojibwe people feel that learning Ojibwe is not attainable and they identify their Indianness in other ways. Also, as long as somebody knows the language, it seems that some Ojibwe people feel less obligated to learn it themselves. He also noted that there are shining examples of people who are becoming fluent. According to Waabishkimakwa, also a ceremonial helper, a doctor of education, and a professor, the idea of letting someone else do it, like learn Ojibwe, may stem from a long history of colonization:

Almost all would rate it as a high priority for all communities, even if it's not important for themselves. Maybe that's a disconnect we picked up from our history of colonization, "Someone else will do it- *Mii go maanoo*- It will happen." We need to develop an active sense of ownership of our language. Every Anishinaabe, everyone, has a responsibility, not just five people in the community. That's what our community needs to generate. (1/15/2010).

He asserts that colonization has made people victims, taken away a drive and a sense of ownership and responsibility. He believes that every Anishinaabe has the responsibility to learn Ojibwe and Ojibwe communities need to generate this awareness.

Some language warriors believe there are many reasons why some Ojibwe people are not aware of the importance of learning Ojibwe language.

Awanigaabaw a doctor in linguistics and Ojibwe language professor at the U of M, stated:

It's not on their radar. A lot of people want to learn it, but for most it is not a priority. They see it maybe as unattainable. Some think it is too hard or it's learning another language and a lot of people worry about other things. Then, there are excuses, too. They can go party on Friday night. (1/7/2010)

He stated that it comes down to priorities, and for many Ojibwe is not that important.

Maybe they've had negative experiences trying to learn Ojibwe and now feel that it is too hard. Chi-binesi, an author, an elder, and a marine veteran of the Viet Nam War, noted:

I think some people have lost the spirit of what being an Anishinaabe means, perhaps we could call them Per Cap Indians. They believe the war is over and assimilation has won. Because the language is hard to learn and relearn it is easier to sit on the couch and watch a movie about Indians than it is to be one. With that lost spirit most people look for the easy way out. (1/2/2011)

He suggests that some Ojibwes have become so assimilated that they do not see that speaking the language is a part of what it means to be Anishinaabe. A number of reservations provide monthly per capita payments to their members from their casino or resource profits and he feels that some Indian people are willing to collect their payment, but are not working at learning or relearning the language or follow other Ojibwe traditional ways.

### “It’s Kind of Foggy:” The Uncertain Future of Ojibwe Language Use

Some language warriors noted that because of this time in history when the last generation of native speakers of Ojibwe language are dying, some Ojibwe people are not sure what the value of the Ojibwe language is now or what value it will have in the future. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe, director of Niigaane Ojibwemowin Immersion, stated that it is “a scary place” to be in, and that “there’s a large segment of our community that is ambivalent. We’re in the borderlands, a weird borderland, between having our language living and having our language gone... It’s kind of foggy.” Ombishkibines, an apprentice to ceremonial leaders and an undergraduate student, remembered when the communities “used to be tighter” and part of being a member of the community meant speaking the language, but today “people are more materialistic and are becoming more selfish,” and the community is taking a back seat.

### “What Have I Done with My Life? I Need to Learn the Language.”

Several language warriors commented that there is much interest among younger Ojibwe people and some are studying Ojibwe in college, but there are also some examples of Ojibwe people in their fifties and sixties, who have had time to reflect on their lives and realized what they were missing. Chi-makwa, who has shown a strong interest in learning Ojibwe and conducting ceremonies in the past decade, stated:

Most (Ojibwe people) feel real committed and when you get older and you’re not a fluent speaker, there is some shame to that because you know who you are on the inside, yet you don’t know the basic stuff about yourself, your own language. That is painful! There is frustration there! Everybody is proud of being Anishinaabe and having the language and at least knowing some of it. You have the option to turn to ceremonies for places to go, like drum ceremonies and sweat lodges and fasting and naming ceremonies and things like that. Some Ojibwe people got away

from it. They went to boarding schools. Something happened to them in boarding school and it made it painful for them to carry on with their language and as a result they weren't able to pass it on to the next generation, at least pass it on very usefully. It's tough to learn if you don't have someone speaking to you in the language. It's hard to learn. You can't read it from the book and get the right inflections on it, even though there are some good language books out there. You still need to hear it to know how to manipulate the prefixes and suffixes. It's difficult.  
(1/24/2010)

He believes that it is challenging to learn Ojibwe, but it is important in one's life. Ojibwe language is essential to one's Indianness and one feels bad, if one doesn't know the language, especially if one is older. Pebaamibines, an Ojibwe teacher at the U of M said, "I have students in the class who wake up at age fifty and say, 'What have I done with my life? I need to learn the language.'" Gaagigebines, also noticed how the type of college students has changed:

Many came who were not aware. Today there are people who are aware, students who sit at the drum and can sing songs, students who have had language all their lives in the classroom. It's getting instilled in them early. Ten to fifteen years ago, they didn't see the importance of it. Now they do. These professors are optimistic today about their students' interest in learning to speak Ojibwe. (6/24/2009)

He noted that many of his recent students have learned some Ojibwe language and culture before coming to his classes. Students who have studied Ojibwe all their lives have not learned it yet, so the quality of instruction may need to be evaluated.

### Section Summary

This section focused on what the Ojibwe language warriors felt about how Ojibwe people who are not speakers of Ojibwe perceive the language. There is a large number who want to learn Ojibwe. They see it as a part of their identity, as being cool, or unique. Some, however, are choosing not to learn Ojibwe. They are not working at learning it

because they are not making it a priority, are too busy to learn it, or are spending their free time watching television. Some have become totally assimilated. Some think it's too hard. Others who have studied it have not learned it and this may have implications on the quality of instruction. In addition, some are satisfied that others are learning it and therefore feel that they don't have to. Some Ojibwes live their lives without thinking about it and others are not certain about its value. On the other hand, there are more and more Ojibwe people who want to learn it. They are going to ceremonies where it is spoken or signing up for classes. Professors are optimistic about the interest that Ojibwe students have in learning Ojibwe.

#### How the Language Warriors Feel Non-Ojibwes Perceive the Language

In this section language warriors address their feelings toward non-Indians learning Ojibwe. On the one hand, a number of Ojibwe people believe that only Ojibwe people should speak and study Ojibwe, because historically some Non-Indians have learned Ojibwe and made money off of it or used it to convert Ojibwe people, taking them away from their Indian ways. On the other hand, other language warriors feel that Ojibwe is for everyone and the more people who learn it, the greater the critical mass of speakers will be. Some non-Indians have negative attitudes toward Ojibwe language and regard it as inferior, while others are unaware that it is still spoken or of the issues surrounding it.

#### "The Jury's Still Out"

Some language warriors noted several reasons why some Ojibwe people don't trust non-Indians. They have seen in history how non-Indian missionaries learned

Ojibwe in order to convert Anishinaabe people to Christianity and how they used Ojibwe to turn them against their own traditional ways. They have also seen how non-Indians have made money off of it, just like they have with other resources they have taken. One language warrior commented on that sentiment, “This isn’t for them. They’ll just make money off of it...They’re already in our powwows, they’re singing, they’re doing sweat lodges and baking people” and added that although he understood this feeling to a certain extent, he felt “that in order to learn the language, we need as many people as possible speaking it.” This shows that there are mixed feelings about non-Indians learning Ojibwe. [The reference to sweat lodges and baking people refers to a recent incident that happened in a New Age gathering where several non-Indians, who spent a lot of money, lost their lives because of the carelessness and lack of knowledge of the Non-Indian who was conducting the ceremony]. Giniwgiizhig, expressed a similar dilemma:

I have seen missionaries convert Ojibwes with the language and take them away from their Indian ways. That was the purpose- to find a medium to help save the Indians. I’ve heard elders say, ‘Don’t teach Whites. It’s a sacred language. It belongs to us. They are only going to use it against you.’ I’ve seen it happen. For me the jury is still out. If it weren’t for non-Indians taking Ojibwe at universities, the programs would fold. There wouldn’t be enough Indians to justify a professor’s salary. It’s good that non-Indians are taking those classes. Then, it’s also cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity. Maybe someday they’ll be legislators and say, “Yes, language is good.” The elders say we need to be open with our knowledge. (1/16/2010)

He pointed out how the Ojibwe language has been used by missionaries to convert the Indian people and turn the Ojibwe people against their own traditional ways. Some elders say that Ojibwe language belongs only to the Ojibwe, while others say that Ojibwe needs to be open to everyone. He added that the non-

Ojibwe students who sign up for Ojibwe language classes increase the enrollment justifying paying for a teacher.

Connected to this idea that Ojibwe is for everyone is the idea of respectable use. Ogimaabinesiikwe, an Ojibwe language teacher who has taught at Waadookodaading on the reservation at Lac Courte Oreilles and Anishinaabe Academy in Minneapolis, said, “I think Ojibwe language is for everyone as long as you have a respect for it. I think anybody can help out with the language movement. It really doesn’t matter what color your skin is. If you have a talent for it and a passion for it, you definitely have a place in it.” Another language warrior spoke about how hurtful identity politics can be in Indian country and was concerned about how others perceive her because she is not Ojibwe. When I asked another language warrior if he felt the language was for everyone, he responded, “Yea, for the most part as long as they are going to do good things with it. Then again, it’s our language and some people are exclusive with it.”

Several language warriors commented that the more people who learn to speak Ojibwe the more the critical mass of speakers will increase and how essential this critical mass is for language maintenance. Gaagigebines, reinforced this sentiment by saying that his mother and his father said that “Anishinaabemowin (the Ojibwe language) is a gift from the Creator and we should share it with whoever wants to have it. It’s a gift that I was given to share, Indian and non-Indian, it doesn’t really make a difference.”

### Changing One Heart at a Time

Some language warriors stated that some non-Indians think that the money going to Ojibwe language revitalization is a waste of money and ought to be spent

on special education. Waabishkimakwa, who recently received his doctorate in education and is an assistant professor of education and a director of Enigikendaasoyang, noted:

The enlightened community, who actually give a damn about Indians, know that this has not necessarily been a fair experience they've always had. I hear a lot of people say it's a wonderful thing that language revitalization is happening and at UMD we named one of our buildings Endazhi-gikinoo'amaading, our education building (It means where teaching and learning take place) (1/15/2010).

He then told a follow-up story about three students trying to find that building on University of Minnesota, Duluth's campus with an Ojibwe name and not being able to pronounce it:

I've seen mixed responses. Some people are really positive about it. The two were very positive, but one did not want to say it. She got flustered, red, angry. I said, "I'll help you say it" and she said, "I'd rather you not." Then, I explained to her, "It's a language near and dear to me and I speak Ojibwe. It's an important language to us and I'm happy this university has honored it." You have to make an intentional decision not to be pissed off and to say "the hell with you and go find it yourself" and walk away. I had no obligation to help her and go into educator mode and try to let her know why. She looked like she wasn't so pissed off about it. An important move I made that day. (1/15/2010)

In this story he felt that it was worthwhile taking the time to teach someone how to pronounce the building's name and to explain why Ojibwe was important to him. It may have paid off by helping to change her attitude. He also expressed how he could have handled that same situation differently by getting angry, but chose not to.

Migizi pointed out how non-Indians in urban areas are more open to learning Ojibwe, "Most people are fascinated by it. Most are amazed that people still speak it.



Most of your rednecks could care less, your typical rural Chimookomaanag (long knives-White people) could care less about the language either way, but the people who are into language or into education are real supportive, kind of fascinated by it.” This reinforces that idea that the more education non-Indians have, the more likely they are to be supportive of keeping Ojibwe alive.

“They Don’t Have a Clue”: Many Non-Indians Don’t Value Ojibwe

Some language warriors noted that some non-Indians felt that the Ojibwe language was “inferior” and that “the children should be learning English.” Some non-Indians think Ojibwe “doesn’t exist anymore,” that “it doesn’t have any importance in the world today”, and that “it doesn’t provide careers.” One language warrior pointed out that “non-Indians ask what would you ever do with that and don’t realize what it means to us.” A director of an immersion program felt that “there is a very large language negative community and that there are a lot of folks who don’t feel that our language is necessary or worthwhile or can contribute in any positive manner.” Waagosh had also heard this sentiment voiced and stated that “seventy-five percent of the people in the United States favor English-Only laws.” He feels that it is a reaction to illegal immigration. Thirty states have adopted English as their official language. Two states overturned their English-only policies, Massachusetts and Alaska.

Giniwgiizhig, said “All languages are important. The general public is globally moving toward English. Some of the legislators in the state felt it was important and voted for it [funding for Indigenous language revitalization].”

Other in Minnesota are pushing for “English-Only” legislation and in response to this movement, most of the Ojibwe reservations have declared Ojibwe their official language, Red Lake being the first Ojibwe reservation in Minnesota to do this.

*Ojibwemotaadidaa! Let’s Speak Ojibwe to Each Other!*

A majority of the language warriors expressed positive feelings about non-Indians learning Ojibwe. They believe that increasing the number of speakers would help the movement. One of the critical aspects of language maintenance is to have a critical mass of speakers. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe stated, “Anybody who can learn Ojibwe and speak it should. It’s the same as any other language spoken in the world. I really hope to hear our own Ojibwe people learning it and speaking it and our non-Anishinaabe relatives that wish to learn our language, great!”

Pebaamibines noted that there are people from other parts of the world who are learning Ojibwe, “I’m really inspired by non-Indians who want to learn Ojibwe and I have one person in the Netherlands, one in Sweden and one in Germany. They’ve learned the language and taken it home.” Naabekwa, an Ojibwe immersion teacher at Niigaane said, “I hear they speak it over in Germany. They have Ojibwe clubs. Go ahead, I’ll talk to you when I get over there.”

It was also noted that some non-Indians who take Ojibwe classes are married to Ojibwe people or have Ojibwe children. Gaagigebines said, “I’m exposed to people that give nothing but support for it. I have non-Indians and I ask them why they are taking the class and they say ‘because my wife is Indian, my husband is Indian, my kids are

Indian.’ I want them to learn the language.” I tell them, “I respect who you are, why you are doing it. They are honorable things to try to achieve.” Gaagigegaabaw, a public school Ojibwe language teacher in Minneapolis, said “ I am pro non-Indians learning Ojibwe, especially if they live close to Ojibwes in Minnesota, Manitoba, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Ontario or Michigan. If you take a friends and neighbors approach, more are doing it. It should have happened long ago.” (1/6/2010). Waagosh commented on local businesses in Bemidji adopting the good neighbor approach:

Most non-Native people think it’s neat, interesting, I think a lot of them in this area might be supportive. That’s different than what I saw when I was growing up when I thought that a lot of people were just happy to see it die. I guess I work in a circle in a university. We had over seventy-five area businesses that agreed to put all their signs up in Ojibwe, so if you walked into Harmony Foods, all of their signs are in Ojibwe for all of their food types and I think that that is their view, that it is neat, and they’re happy to make a contribution and cater to their native constituents where fifty per cent of their business comes from, but their contributions are going to be limited to their knowledge and their connection, They’re not going to stand in the way. (1/16/2010)

He noted that the interest in and positive attitudes toward the language are increasing. This effort demonstrates the cooperation that is possible between Indian and non-Indian communities and shows how big things start with little steps. However, this support is not taken for granted. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe addressed the importance of the support from non-Natives, “There’s a small community of folks who are supportive and we reach out for that and we look for them to support us.” One professor, Pebaamibines, pointed out that sometimes when non-Indians study Ojibwe, it inspires the Native students to want to try even harder:

If I bring a non-Native student up to Canada, someone will say she's learning Ojibwe and s/he's not even Ojibwe, maybe I should do the same. How about in the class? Only one time there was a clash between the two and the one person was having problems in their own life and brought it into the classroom. I set the precedent right away and it fulfills language requirements. I add a cultural component to it, an awareness for everyone to feel. If everyone thought the way Ojibwe people think, it would help to save the environment, it would save the world. They get a new perspective on how to look at life. Non-Native students are drifting from their own spirituality and see Ojibwe spirituality as a viable way to look at the world. (1/6/2010)

One emerging theme states that learning the Ojibwe language changes one's perspective toward the world and that the Ojibwe world view offers a viable way to look at the world.

Ojibwe is an Indigenous language of this land, and perhaps if the immigrants to this country would have learned an Indigenous language, maybe history would have been different. Perhaps the environment would be better off. Perhaps there would have been more equality, respect, and cooperation. Waabishkimakwa explained his thoughts on non-Indians learning Ojibwe:

I don't see why not. It is a first language of this land. I think anyone coming to this land should have to honor that as they should be honoring the people who are here. A lot of ethnic groups come here and have no concern for Indians or awareness of them. That's a big failure on the part of our immigration and homeland security. There's nothing you have to learn about Indians or show any respect for the first people of this earth. Sometimes they're bringing in more people just to exploit it. (1/15/2010).

He expressed the need to educate the newcomers about Native people. Then he spoke about his feeling of non-Indians learning Ojibwe in his immersion program, which is a part of UMD:

I think it's great. In the immersion program we have almost half of our kids are non-Indian and they're pretty good. I think it's a good thing. There were shopkeepers who learned Ojibwe to do business with the local tribal groups and I wish more people were more open to more than one

language in the U.S .and wouldn't it be something if everyone learned an Indigenous language? (1/15/2010).

He then finished with the thought of a multilingual United States, resistance to it, and the need for everyone to learn an Indigenous language. Long ago there were some non-Indians who learned Ojibwe to do business with them. The language warriors agree that what Bemidji businesses have done with signs, menus, and lists of words translated into Ojibwe raises an awareness that Ojibwe is still around, it is educational, and it is welcoming to their Ojibwe customers. It is good for business and relationship building. One language teacher added, "The more languages we learn the richer we become as a person."

#### Section Summary

The feelings expressed by the language warriors about how they felt non-Indians perceived the language varied considerably. Many felt that most non-Indians don't care or are even aware of the Ojibwe language. However, Non-Indians, who are in higher education and are working at tribal colleges, have been very supportive of Ojibwe language revitalization. Some non-Indians think that speaking Ojibwe is neat and some are learning to speak it, even in Europe. However, other non-Indians think that it is a waste of money or a misuse of money and that the Ojibwe language has no value in today's world. Some language warriors expressed that some Ojibwe people believe that it belongs only to Ojibwes and that non-Indians who learn it will use it against the people or will make money off of it. Others felt that the more people who learn Ojibwe, the better chance it has to survive and that the Ojibwe language is a gift to be shared with the world.

## Language and Spirituality Go Together: Conditions That Have Inspired the Movement

This section explores how the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement is primarily a spiritual movement. It explains why many people don't speak Ojibwe anymore, but it also shows that some people have resisted and kept the language and culture alive. It then addresses the significance of the American Indian Movement and its influence on Ojibwe language warriors. Finally, it asserts that the language warriors still need to fight and it acknowledges help from the spirits.

### Historical Trauma

Another theme that emerged was that many Ojibwe elders did not speak or teach Ojibwe to their children. Ombishkibines stated, "It's almost like they were ashamed or they were protecting their children or for whatever reason they had to hide it. In this day and age we are able to be Indian and be proud of it." Giniwgiizhig stated that a lot of that pain and shame came from the boarding school era and the influence of Christianity:

The hurt, the pain, that was associated with the boarding school, the brainwash of years and years saying that Indian stuff was dumb and wasting your time knowing Indian knowledge, Indian culture, you know the boarding school teachers telling you that elder's knowledge is primitive and that you're wasting your time and hearing this daily in boarding schools. They brainwash you that you have to be Christian, otherwise you're going to hell and to hear that for years and years and years- that brainwash over time you believe that. Some people actually believe and it stays with them. (8/2/2009)

He summarized how the teachers and missionaries tried to brainwash the Ojibwe children telling them that their culture and beliefs were inferior.

## Connecting to a Spiritual Life

Some language warriors noted that not all Ojibwe people gave up or gave in. Giniwgiizhig noted however that some people did resist and that the traditions and spirituality are still here because of their strength and courage. He noted:

Some of them resisted. Underneath all that is the spirit of who we are and that's kind of built into our DNA. It's innate. It's within us and our spirit, who our spirit is. It's there, even in ceremonies when they're done in Ojibwe. (1/16/2010)

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe , who has her son in an Ojibwe immersion school, noted that “people are reaching out for a connection to our Ojibwe spiritual life. We have some pretty unhealthy things going on in our communities and we hope we can address them through raising our kids to be proud little Anishinaabe people. We hope that we can build up their self-esteem and tell them that they can do anything.” She hopes that the immersion schools will help students and their families connect with the traditional ways and that will restore health, pride, and empowerment.

Ojibwe ceremonies are conducted in the Ojibwe language. Some language warriors noted that to participate more fully in the ceremonies, people have become more motivated to learn more Ojibwe and the more people learn the Ojibwe language, the more they want to learn about their identity and their traditions as Ojibwe people. According to an Ojibwe spiritual leader, Eddie Benton-Banai, Ojibwe prophecies foretold a time when the people would lose almost everything and that a generation would come along, the seventh generation, and pick up what's been left by the trail. He predicted that “this younger generation would search for their native language, seek out elders who had not forgotten the old ways, go back to the ceremonies, and take control over their lives and

the destinies of their children” (1988, 111-112). Many language warriors believe that this is what is happening now.

### The Influence of the American Indian Movement

Several language warriors stated that the American Indian Movement helped instill that pride of being an American Indian. Bezhig-giizhig, a radio announcer for more than forty years, a regular student at the Minneapolis language table, and an eighty-two year old White Earth enrollee, spoke about how this pride encouraged people to get to know themselves better, “With the idea of Indian pride came a desire to know more about one’s roots.” Ajidamok shared how the AIM leaders influenced her, “I was moved by just listening to their pride and their calling the people to wake up and take a look at themselves and to feel good about themselves and their culture and language.” Gaagigeaabaw mentioned how AIM inspired him as a youth, “American Indian Movement were the first people I thought to really stand up to the system in a social way and in a very public way as well and begin demanding that culture and language be taught in school and that we are a sovereign people maintaining our idea of sovereignty as well as our spiritual ways.” Giniwgiizhig felt that both confrontation and working within the system are important, “We need somebody to throw bricks and grab the microphone and we need somebody in the trenches creating change.” He also emphasized the hard work that the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement has ahead of itself:

The spirits will work together to create the opportunities, but we have to get up to fight that fight, to be those language warriors, to be in the position of power to immerse yourself and get up and eavesdrop to whoever’s speaking the language, to get up in there and listen, and to take



ridicule when you mess up, and when someone is making fun of you, you have to withstand those pains and keep the battle going. That's it right there- its spirits- its destiny- its people getting up and fighting, learning our history, learning our prophecies, learning what needs to be done, and it's happening. (8/2/2009)

He summarized the learning that needs to be done and the battle that the language warriors must be willing to fight to keep the language alive and he gives credit to the spirits.

### Section Summary

This section showed how and why people lost the language and the culture. It also explained how some people resisted and kept the language and culture alive. It quoted a prophecy retold by an Ojibwe elder that spoke about a generation that would go back to the language and the traditions. It mentioned how the American Indian Movement has influenced the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement and how change happens both by confrontation and working within the system. Finally, the work of the language warriors was described and it was noted that it is being done with the help of the spirits.

### The Impact That the Movement Has Had and Is Having

This section explores the impact that the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement is having in Ojibwe country and on the state government of Minnesota. It also shows the impact that immersion schools are having on their families and their communities and it shows that immersion is working.

### Awareness of Immersion Is Growing

Many language warriors advocated for the language tables and immersion schools that have started in reservation and urban communities. Chi-makwa observed that people are becoming more and more active in the region and that it is a growing movement. Awareness of immersion and confidence in it are growing, as Waawaakeyaash, a co-founder and teacher at Waadookodaading Immersion School on Lac Court Oreilles Reservation in Wisconsin, noted:

I think more people are aware of immersion and they're understanding what we're trying to do. We're not just a language program. They've realized that teaching children through another language, their own language really, doesn't screw up their academics. It doesn't goof them up as people. It's not going to damage them in any way and it has potential to make them better and stronger and to be more connected with who they are as Anishinaabe. (4/3/2009)

Research has stated that there was a belief that had been drilled into many Native children who attended boarding schools that the Native languages needed to be eradicated in order to speed up the civilization process. "Kill the Indian, save the man" was the approach. It seems that the few speakers, who kept their language, did not pass it onto their children. Many Native parents felt that if they taught the Native language to their children, it would impede their learning and that they would be punished or ridiculed for it. They did not want their children to experience that same shame, abuse, and humiliation that they had experienced when they went to boarding schools. Recent research, however, has shown that immersion and culturally-based education have been very effective educational approaches and more parents are beginning to choose immersion and culturally-based schools for their children.

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe has observed the impact that the immersion school that she is director of has had on her reservation:

We're making a really small impact if you just look at quantitative numbers. We have twenty-six kids in our school. They each have a parent or two. They have brothers and sisters and aunts and uncles. So far those families are so darn proud of them. We have heightened awareness of Ojibwemowin. We've got more first speakers in our communities that are speaking Ojibwe. We've got a little more awareness of Ojibwe in our community. The first speakers will come up to our kids. They get to know our students and our families. They'll just elicit Ojibwemowin from us now whereas we'd have to take them down to talk Ojibwe. We're making small efforts. We're making small movements towards recognizing the importance of culturally-based education settings. We're collecting data on our kids' academic and social achievement for longitudinal studies. We'll see what we can show from that. How did those kids do dating back five years or ten years or however long? I think the best part has just been raising awareness in our local communities (9/19/2009).

She mentioned that her program is collecting longitudinal data that will be useful in supporting culturally-based programs. Her school is making a positive impact, her students are making their families proud of them, and the community is more aware of Ojibwemowin, the Ojibwe language.

Naabekwa, an immersion teacher at Niigaane agreed that people in the community are becoming aware:

I think here in the Leech Lake area I think it has piqued people's curiosity. I don't think it's had a huge impact right now. I think there are ripples forming right now. Because as our little ones go out and hear people start talking about them, 'Wow, they really do understand. They really are speaking. We should go in there and check it out.' And they'll hear it. But it hasn't had the big 'Wow! Let's do it' effect that I was hoping for. Maybe, I don't know how that happens. I think that people are still busy with day to day life that the language just doesn't come in the top five when they are trying to put bread on the table. (8/24/2009)

He mentioned that although the movement hasn't had as large an impact as he had hoped for, it has piqued people's curiosity. He also stated that many people are more concerned about their own personal survival than the language. Ajidamok, a former teacher and director of Waadookodaading commented on how Waadookodaading has impacted different age groups on that reservation:

Well, since 2001, ...they've created like dozens of children with Ojibwe language proficiency. Some of them are at a higher level than maybe a mediocre level, but you know, it's alive. Other impact has been on parents. Our family language night that we hold every week, maybe our highest was forty-four people. It has been dwindling off now as the weather gets warmer. But we get about twenty people. Half of those people are parents. We kind of like assess them and we've seen growth in them, especially in the female population – the mothers. There is a high level of growth in that population of people. Then we see a lot of the elders coming back. They say they don't remember a lot of stuff and they were told not to speak the language. They look deeply inside themselves. We see a lot of them coming in and out. Another thing we've seen in the last couple of years is the rise of teenagers coming, especially teenage girls. It's just amazing. Every time we see teenagers there we whisper to each other, "Huh, teenagers! There is another teenager." So I think we're trying to instill self-esteem in everybody. (4/13/2009)

She addressed the success of the family language night and noted how elders are beginning to speak again and women and teenagers seem to be showing the most interest. It seems that for some people who are in the field it is hard to measure the impact as addressed by Bebaamaashkiikwe, a teacher in the Ojibwe immersion school at Waadookodaading:

I feel sometimes that our work is so intense and so consuming that we don't get out in the community very much. We're kind of living in our own little bubble. From time to time though I hear people make comments like, "Wow, do you realize the impact that you have on these kids and what it is saying to the people?" The people are like, "Oh, my gosh! Did you hear those two little kids talking in Ojibwe just now?" They can't believe it. They can't believe that kids are speaking in Ojibwe

because it has been gone for so long...It's really not out in the public. It's not very visible. It's not heard. I guess I don't really know what the impact is on the community. (9/19/2009)

Her statement shows that people are commenting on how the Ojibwe immersion students are speaking Ojibwe to each other and how they are bringing the language back. The immersion schools have been inspirational to other language warriors, too. Pebaamibines commented on how the movement "has created jobs for students and shown them that teaching Ojibwe is a viable career." Migizi reflected on how the Ojibwe-speaking students have given him hope:

I think Waadookodaading up there turned a lot of doubters into believers. The kids can talk. My friend's kids go there and if you say something to them, they'll respond. They'll look at you like 'Is that all you got? You want more?' I'd get frustrated a lot, especially when I was living at LCO trying to learn, speakers passing away, feeling that pressure, time running out, just want to give up, sometimes drive around, stop in over there, go to one of their events. I'd go to their Christmas concert and be recharged. It's possible that the immersion school is a pretty important place. There's a lot of strength there. (1/6/2010)

He reinforced what the other language warriors have said about the impact that the immersion schools are making on their communities. The language is still alive.

#### Impact on the State of Minnesota

The language warriors overwhelmingly feel that the Ojibwe and Dakota language revitalization movements are making an impact on the state of Minnesota.

Gaagigeaabaw commented on this impact:

I think a huge impact would be that we're actually getting the state to recognize our Indigenous languages. We're getting them to acknowledge that we need help with our Indigenous language and that they undoubtedly contributed to its loss with the residential and boarding school era- and for

them to actually acknowledge that we are a sovereign people- that we have a distinct and unique culture as well as a language it is really important as well as in the school system, too. I think a lot of people as we move into this new age when we get past monolingualism and people are always pushing for a second language the most important part we can teach Ojibwe as well as Spanish and in Minnesota now even the same as Chinese and Spanish which have a lot of funding and have immersion programs here in Minnesota, so that people are acknowledging that OK we can do with that Dakota we can do that with Ojibwe is really, really important. (5/5/2009)

He believes that the state is recognizing the importance of the Ojibwe and Dakota languages, their place in the schools, and the need for financial support. In addition, the state is beginning to recognize its historic role in contributing to the death of the Dakota and Ojibwe language and culture.

Some language warriors noted that the awareness of the importance of Ojibwe has increased in recent times, but there is still a disconnect. Waabishkimakwa stated that “I think it’s essential to begin to identify who we are. I’d like it to see if we could somehow connect action to that point. Regionally, I guess, the broader Minnesota community, I think it’s helped. I’d like to think it’s helped to bring us together as a people.” On the other hand, he also has witnessed disagreement over dialects and has seen how divisive it can be. He believes, “It’s not a different language. *Mii go geget Anishinaabemowin*. (It is truly the Indian language). This is still our Anishinaabe language. I know you sometimes use “a’aw” and I might use “awe” but that’s okay. *Ginisidotaadimin* (We understand each other).” He recognized how dialect battles pull people apart and weakens the movement.

## Section Summary

In conclusion, the Ojibwe language revitalization movement is having an impact. Language tables, language camps, and immersion schools have begun to emerge in Ojibwe country in the past decade, but they are few in number. There is an awareness of immersion and academic measurements of immersion students have shown success. Positive attitudes about the language and culture are increasing in both Indian and non-Indian communities, and the state government of Minnesota is making a financial commitment to the revitalization of Ojibwe and Dakota. Immersion education has created jobs for learners of Ojibwe. One issue that has been divisive is dialect and several of the language warriors have pointed out that this negativity is not helping the movement.

### Reservation and Urban Differences and Similarities in the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement

This section compares the Ojibwe language revitalization movements on the reservations with the movement in the Twin Cities and Duluth. On the one hand, more first language speakers reside on the reservations and Ojibwe language and culture are taken more for granted. On the other hand, in urban areas there seems to be a strong drive to seek after those things that have been lost. This passion may inspire others and it is in this context that American Indian Movement began. It is important to note that both the reservations and urban areas have a lot of potential, a lot can be shared, and a lot can be learned from each other.

### “People Take It for Granted”

Some language warriors note that on the reservations, as long as there are still first language speakers of Ojibwe, there seems to be an attitude that the Ojibwe language and culture will always be around. Migizi, a graduate student in linguistics at the University of Minnesota and a life-time resident of Lac Court Oreilles Reservation in Wisconsin, expressed how people on the reservation seem to take it for granted and how many people in urban areas are seeking for what they are lacking:

The reservation community has a lot to learn from the city. The big thing there is people take for granted the Indian stuff, but when they come to the city, you miss that, you seek that. A few friends of mine that grew up around here are like sponges for culture and language. They want to learn it, because they were deprived of that. At LCO (Lac Court Oreilles Reservation near Hayward, Wisconsin), we had that our whole life, so people take it for granted. (1/6/2010)

Many Native people in the urban area are seeking what they miss and this motivates them to want to learn everything they can about the language and culture. The interest shown in the urban areas may motivate those on the reservation, who may be taking the language and culture for granted. Pebaamibines reinforced a similar attitude:

On the rez (reservation), people believe that the language will always be here and that the revitalization is really not that important...In the city you are more apt to lose your language and your cultural ways, so in the city it seems to me that there is more of a movement for it to be revitalized and to maintain the language. Most of the people that are motivated to learn language I find are in the city. The hardest place to motivate people to use Ojibwe is on the rez [reservation]. (8/15/2009)

He addressed how hard it is to motivate others on the reservation to learn the language, because of the attitude that the language and culture will always be around. Although it



may be easier to lose one's language and culture, language and culture loss are happening on the reservations, too.

“We Need to Get Our Act Together”

Because of a sense of loss and a strong craving for the language and the culture in urban areas, some language warriors reflected on how urban areas have become seats of cultural and language activism. Giniwgiizhig who spent half of his life in the city and now half of his life up north, identified some strengths in urban areas:

I think transportation and mobility is easier down there to have large organizations- to have unification. The activists up in the reservation areas are paying attention to what's going on in the cities. I'll talk to other people in the language field up here and they're being kept abreast by the Minnesota Indian list serve about what's going on through the grapevine and through their travels. We don't have the state organization to get together and put our minds together to have a uniform plan- a template that institutes can use, education, social services or what have you. We need to get our act together. (8/2/2009).

Transportation is better in the city and it is easier for people to gather together. The Twin Cities also have easier access to state organizations and legislation.

Communication exists between the urban area and the reservation and people stay in contact with each other and learn from each other. The Minnesota Indian List Serve, made available through the University of Minnesota American Indian Studies Department, has helped people stay in touch with each other. Those on the reservation watch what is going on in the Cities.

“Time with Speakers”: It's Not Easily Accomplished in Urban Areas

One language warrior observed that even though the motivation to learn Ojibwe may be stronger in the city, it may be harder for those in the city to make good progress

in Ojibwe because most first language speakers of Ojibwe are living on the reservations.

Awanigaabaw emphasized the need for face time with a native speaker:

It's very valuable to be able to speak to a first language speaker, it really is. You can really accelerate your knowledge of the language, your acquisition of it. I think that in the inner city movement you might not have time with the speakers because many of them are on the reservation yet, of course, some speakers live in Minneapolis, but by ratio there are considerably less than there are on the reservation. So the hard part with the city movement is that there are a lot of people who are gung-ho about learning the language, which is inspiring, which is very exciting, but they may not have the face time with a native speaker, and if they do, it's usually in the classroom. (5/9/2009)

Awanigaabaw commuted from the Twin Cities to meet with Mille Lacs elders at their language table weekly over a course of five years while working on his doctorate in linguistics and his own fluency in Ojibwe. He confirmed how important it has been for his own language acquisition to learn Ojibwe from first language speakers of Ojibwe. He spoke about the enthusiasm that exists in the city for learning language, but also the problem of not having first language speakers teaching the language in urban areas. One of the few places that Ojibwe is spoken in urban areas is in the classroom.

“Reservation Communities Have the Potential to Be the Very Best Programs”

Research has indicated that there is good work that is happening in the movement in reservation communities, especially when they use their first language speakers in a good way. Waabishki-Makwa confirmed this and cautioned against ignoring the elders:

There are certainly people in the reservation communities who are I think doing incredible language work because there are often so many good, good speakers in the communities. Sometimes the language programs are done in isolation of those speakers. So I think the reservation communities that are using those good speaker resources they have, have the potential to be the very best programs. But the ones that kind of just

ignore their elders and just sort of teach a program in a community college miss the boat. (8/5/2009)

Waabishkimakwa outreached to several reservations and managed an on-line program in Ojibwe working with future language teachers. He spoke about the potential for excellence of using first language speakers in a good way and that some programs are not as good as they can be. It's important to work closely with the first language speakers, while they are still around.

Some language warriors assert that people on the reservation are waking up and realizing that they, too, are losing their first language speakers and that there is a sense of urgency there, as well. Chi-Makwa noted that this urgency is being felt in both places:

Years ago I used to see a difference. It seemed to me that the urban population was more active with cultural and spiritual activities than the people on the reservation. That was because they were farther removed from their elders and their teachings and things and their homeland, so they kind of needed it more. Nowadays, I see the people that are active in these revitalization efforts are active on the reservation, too, now because when elders pass away they are left out there, too, with nobody. They need it now, too. They realize they need it as much as we do in the urban areas. (8/24/ 2009)

This language warrior lives and works in Bemidji, but also has a home in St. Paul. He is old enough to remember the American Indian Movement in its earlier years and its activism and how it really woke people up in the city. He seems to be saying that people on the reservation were not as actively involved in language revitalization and that they took the language and culture for granted. However, they are realizing now how much they need these cultural and spiritual ways as the elders pass away.

Some of the language warriors believe that both reservations and urban areas have strengths. Some of the strengths of the reservations are that each reservation, generally,

has its own dialect, but some may have two or more. People may know each other on the reservations better because of the smaller communities. There is also access there to the natural environment. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe stated:

I've talked to some of my friends in the urban areas that are doing this and they've said, "It's so hard. They're fighting over whose dialect to teach." I go, "Wow, that's kind of nice because here we just have to stick to Leech Lake dialect." We just have to say that we're going to do this in a Leech Lake dialect. We don't have to argue and make that decision. I suppose that is different. Resources are different. I find that we have more of an access to first language speakers here. That is something that I've heard, too, from the second language learners in the Twin Cities. I've heard there is somebody living here that can talk Ojibwe, but I don't know who it is and I don't know where they live. I think we have an access because we've got the community here. Maybe that is a difference between urban and the rural areas. Also, we've got access to our natural world. When you're in an urban area you can't just step out your back door and have a hundred acres of pine forests and a lake behind you. You have to go look for it in an urban area. Maybe it is easier to hear what they're saying here without all the distractions and disruptions of an urban environment. It is really important for us to have access to the natural environment. Our big brothers are here to teach us and we have to be able to be there to listen to them. (9/19/2009)

As I interviewed her on her front steps outside her home, the breeze was gently blowing through the beautiful pine trees. She emphasized the importance of the natural environment and how the trees, our big brothers, have a lot to teach us. They speak to us, if we listen. It is not always easy in the cities with all its distractions and cement to have that closeness to nature. She also pointed out that there are arguments that occur in urban areas because people come from so many different reservations, each having its own dialect(s), and each person prefers his own. She also stated that although there are first language speakers in the cities, people

frequently do not know each other. In contrast, people often know each other on the reservation and a greater sense of community exists.

Several language warriors noted that a sense of one's homeland and belongingness exists on the reservation. Children grow up knowing who they are and who their people are. They are exposed to ceremonies and attend feasts. Many times Native children in urban areas do not share this reality. Ogimaabinesiikwe, an Ojibwe immersion teacher at Waadookodaading and then a culture teacher at Anishinaabe Academy in Minneapolis, highlighted some of these differences:

There are huge differences. The kids in the city don't have a strong tie to their clan system or where they're enrolled. When I talk to them about that and when they are questioned about that they have no idea what I'm talking about. On the reservation it's a smaller community that's getting together and doing the feasts and the ceremonies and I just see a lot more midewiwin ceremonies taking place and big drums, whereas, when I talk about that in the city, the kids don't know what I'm talking about. So you have to approach these kids with an urban twist- all your lessons- what's going on in pop culture- what's going on in their community- their neighborhood- what is popular on the street. Versus on the reservation they're a little more grounded because they've just seen it more and been exposed to it more. (1/20/2010)

Ogimaabinesiikwe noticed that children in the cities often have not been to their home reservations. Some have never left the cities. Some are not enrolled. Their parents may be from different reservations or have intermarried with non-Indians and may not have enough Indian blood to meet the enrollment requirements of their reservation. To reach and teach city Indians an Ojibwe language and culture teacher often has to give their lessons an urban twist. I would add that children on the reservation are also strongly influenced by pop culture, are not necessarily more interested or connected to their language and culture, and do not necessarily learn

Ojibwe any better. It is best not to generalize. Also, it is important to consider individual students and individual families, because everyone's story is unique.

### Looking North of the Border

Even though the reservation and urban communities in this region of Ojibwe Country can learn a lot from each other, several language warriors pointed out the need to learn from other communities outside of Minnesota and Wisconsin. Some language warriors noted that some Canadian Ojibwes have been doing a lot in the area of language and culture revitalization and that they have not lost as much as we have in the United States, especially in the more isolated areas of Canada.

Waawaakeyaash suggested that we look to Canada for more ideas about what can be done here:

I think in the United States here, we're really behind. I feel like the things that I see and hear about in Canada, what they're doing, whole books written in their language. You see it everywhere...on posters, you see it up on street signs. Their language is existing. It is part of their communities. Our language has become almost a classroom language these days. The only other time you'll hear it is in ceremonies and once in a while on a street you'll hear it. You don't hear it too much. (4/3/2009)

In Canada, there are some communities that are still using Ojibwe in more domains than ceremonies and the classroom, especially those in more isolated areas.

According to research one of the key points in successful language revitalization programs is to have literacy and it seems that Canada is ahead in that area, especially among the Northern Ojibwe, where syllabics are used widely. Two other factors for success in keeping Ojibwe alive are having a mass of speakers and using Ojibwe in more domains.

### Section Summary

Both the reservation and the urban areas have strengths contributing to the Ojibwe language revitalization program and people in each place can learn a lot from each other. People on the reservations have been slower to respond to the urgency of revitalizing the Ojibwe language and culture, because there has been an assumption that the language and culture would always be around, as long as there were first language speakers. Most speakers reside on the reservation. In those areas people know each other better. First language speakers can enrich a language revitalization program, if used well. Many language warriors' fluency in Ojibwe language has become possible by attaching themselves to a first language speaker. Children who grow up on the reservation are often more grounded in their identity, culture, and language than their urban relatives, but it is important not to generalize. In order to expand the use of Ojibwe beyond the domains of ceremony and the classroom, it was suggested to look to certain communities in Canada for examples of Ojibwe literacy and community use.

### Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a focus on how the Ojibwe language warriors thought other Ojibwe people felt about Ojibwe. Although most Ojibwe people see how interconnected the language is with one's identity, there is an ambivalence about its importance in their daily life and are choosing not to learn it. They also pointed out the number who are trying to learn Ojibwe and who are returning to Ojibwe traditions and spirituality.

The language warriors then discussed how they thought non-Ojibwes felt about Ojibwe. Some language warriors spoke about how historically certain non-Ojibwes have learned Ojibwe to turn the people away from their traditional beliefs, such as missionaries, and how others have made money off the language. Some language warriors mentioned that most non-Ojibwes don't care, are oblivious about its existence or its endangerment, or feel its maintenance is a waste of time and money. They mentioned support they felt among their non-Ojibwe peers in their educational setting and also how the more people who learn Ojibwe, the better chance it has for survival.

Then, the chapter showed how and why Ojibwe people lost the language and culture, but it also showed that some people were able to retain the language and culture. This reminded me of what my mother-in-law, Rose Geshick, Bebaaminobinesiikweban, who is now passed away, told me long ago about her boarding school years. She remembered:

They tried to make brown White people out of us. When I finished school, I felt like a real dummy. I didn't know how to pick the medicines in the woods that would keep my children healthy that my mother had tried to teach me. The teachers told me that times were changing and that I wouldn't need to know that old-fashioned stuff anymore.

Life on the reservation at that time still depended on knowing how to survive in a traditional way. Stores, jobs, and clinics were not close by and nobody had any money. Her schooling did not prepare her for the life that she would live on the reservation. She was removed from her family and the teachings that she would need for survival.

The American Indian Movement inspired the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. It encouraged Indian pride and all that that meant culturally and spiritually.



Change happens both by confrontation and by working within the system. The Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement is having an impact on the reservations, in urban areas, and on the state. Language tables, language camps, and immersion schools have begun to emerge in Ojibwe country. Academic measurements of immersion students have shown success. Positive attitudes about the language and culture are increasing in both Indian and non-Indian communities. For example, the state of Minnesota is making a financial commitment to the revitalization of Ojibwe and Dakota. People who are becoming fluent in Ojibwe are being given employment opportunities.

Both the reservation and the urban areas have strengths contributing to the Ojibwe language revitalization program and people in each place can learn a lot from each other. People on the reservations have generally felt that the language and culture would always be around, as long as there were first language speakers. Most Ojibwe speakers still reside on the reservation. Consequently, the revitalization efforts on reservations can be stronger, if the first speakers are used effectively. Many language warriors' fluency in Ojibwe language has become possible by the language warriors attaching themselves to first language speakers. Children who grow up on the reservation are often more grounded in their identity, culture, and language than their urban relatives. In order to expand the use of Ojibwe beyond the domains of ceremony and the classroom, it was suggested to look to certain communities in Canada as an example.

## CHAPTER NAANAN

### LANGUAGE WARRIORS, EXPERIENCES, MOTIVATIONS, AND ASPIRATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the experiences, motivations, and aspirations of the language warriors. First, the backgrounds of the language warriors are summarized and compared. Then, a few language warriors describe their educational paths and what was relevant. The language warriors speak about their sources of inspiration and why they are so dedicated. Next, they discuss why they care about the language. They describe learning Ojibwe as a healing act. Then, they identify helpful approaches to and resources for learning Ojibwe. They describe what it is like for them to be language warriors and speculate where future language warriors will come from.

#### Language Warriors' Educational Paths: What's Been Relevant?

Each of the language warriors has a unique story, but some aspects of their experiences are similar. All of them at some point on their journey fell in love with the language and the culture. Some were always around the language, but for most second language speakers of Ojibwe their parents were not Ojibwe speakers. However, many of the language warriors had a close relationship with Ojibwe speaking elders at an early age. Bebaamaashiikwe used to spend her summers with her grandparents on the reservation and they were speakers. She recalled:

I didn't speak any Ojibwe at all. It was one of those things in life where you realize WOW. I'm Ojibwe and I hear it, but I don't know what it means. But, I know that is part of me and that is something I really want. I want to know what they're saying, what they're laughing about. It seemed so fun, and a lot of humor, the jokes, and there was a lot of laughing going on. Good things. (9/19/2009)

She reflected on how fun it was to hear the laughter that goes with Ojibwe, that it was a part of her, and that it was something that she wanted. Ajidamok reflected:

I was lucky that I was born into a family that spoke Ojibwe, although my grandparents always felt that if I learned Ojibwe, I might not make it in school. They tried to say, 'You should really learn English.' Any way, I used to go to bed at night and hear them speaking Ojibwe. That was the most comforting thing for me. (4/13/2009)

She articulated how comforting it was for her to hear Ojibwe. Naabekwa thought about his growing up years in the Twin Cities and how an Anishinaabe elder in one of his foster homes had a profound effect on him. He recalled:

I'm a Leech Lake enrollee. I pretty much grew up down in the Cities until I was in my early twenties, when I moved back up north here. I lived in a whole bunch of different foster homes growing up, one of which was Anishinaabe. I heard a little bit of the language there for five years. That old man, Pete Waukezo, used to talk to me all the time in Ojibwe. He kind of planted the seed and I've always had a hunger for the language. When I got out of my wild stage in my teens and early twenties, I started crashing classes, like yours, and back with Margaret Sayers and Jim Clark. I don't know if you remember, but I used to sneak into different classes around town, Don Pawaush's class and just start learning as I could. I've been studying the language for over twenty years now and I still feel like a youngster in the language. I'm forty-four now. My language development has been slow, but steady, and it's at the point now where I'm working in the Niigaane Immersion Program at Bug-O-Nay-Gee-Shig, and I know just enough to be able to function in there. I have to rely on my elders a lot in there. (8/24/2009)

He commented on how it's been a lifelong process learning Ojibwe, and how he used to audit different Ojibwe classes that were offered in the community in the Twin Cities. He now teaches at Niigaane, an immersion program at the Bug-O-Nay-Gee-Shig School on the Leech Lake reservation.

Some language warriors reflected on their journey and how they learned Ojibwe both in the classroom and outside of it by spending time with Ojibwe speakers. Waagosh recalled:

I would say that I felt very blessed to have some kind of formal training in learning patterns in language that I had with Earl (Nyholm) and also to have the immersion experience that I had with Archie (Mosay). Um, I would say that one could become pretty advanced doing either one of those things, but to be a really effective second language learner I think that you eventually need to wrap your head around both. You need to be able to flow in the language and you need to understand the deeper concepts... For me, I needed both and I had many, many teachers, you know, um, I didn't learn the language from a book, but books helped me with my learning um and so I would say all those parts ended up being very important. (1/25/2009)

He believes that to become fluent, it is helpful for a second language learner to use Ojibwe both inside and outside of the classroom. Some language warriors are able to transfer skills they learned in learning another language to their learning of Ojibwe.

Awanigaabaw recalled:

I served a LDS (Latter Day Saints) mission from '92-94- of which I had to learn Japanese. I went to a mission training center for nine weeks. They pretty much drilled us on the basics of Japanese. You kind of leave the missionary training center thinking you're pretty fluent in Japanese, but then you get to Japan and you realize you don't know anything. The partners that I worked with, you always had to be in a companionship, the first companion was a Japanese guy. I was pretty fortunate because not everyone gets a Japanese companion, but I got a Japanese companion. I struggled when I first got to Japan. I didn't understand anything and my companion spoke very little English, but enough to help me out. I did a lot of studying, so the first three months of just being immersed in Japanese and my own self study, waking up early in the morning to study, within three months I was conversational. I could handle my own. I could talk to people and after two years ...you're just so damn fluent you don't have to think about it. You're constantly in the language. Nobody speaks any English, but I developed these skills for learning Japanese that I use for learning Ojibwe and those skills that really influenced me the way I approach the language now. In college I first majored in Japanese. I was

more interested in my own languages and I started going to linguistics, so my bachelor's was in linguistics. Studying linguistics also helped me to hone those skills, language learning skills, but linguistics is not about learning language. People think that linguistics is about learning language but it's not. It's about describing linguistic phenomena in any language, even languages you're not familiar with, languages you can't even speak, um so being able to learn about different concepts about languages in general helped me. After that, I decided to do a PhD program in linguistics in 2002. And I've been doing that since to this day. It's been seven years now that I've been doing graduate work in linguistics. I use linguistics. It's given me skills to be able to do research and I use those skills to research the Ojibwe language to figure out what we don't know or what we poorly understand and stuff like that. Mainly my two years in Japan gave me the most experience to learn another language.(5/9/2009)

Awanigaabaw, served in an LDS mission for two years in Japan and recalled how the skills he learned in learning Japanese and the skills he has learned in his studies in linguistics has enabled him to apply those in learning and researching Ojibwe. He has since completed his doctorate in linguistics from the University of Minnesota. Just as Awanigaabaw found his other studies relevant, Waabishkimakwa stated that while working on his master's thesis in science, he was able to sharpen his Ojibwe language skills interviewing Ojibwe elders in Ojibwe about their relationship to the earth. He reflected:

I think while I certainly am a teacher, so I have a bachelor's in education as well in addition to my first degree. And I did a secondary master's degree in environmental science from York University and that was a neat degree because even though it was science focused, I studied people's interaction with land and landscape and how people could know land, nature, and environment through their language. So that was a very powerful study because I did all of my field work in Ojibwe and really got to explore the language from that aspect of it. So I think the skills I gained as a researcher coupled with my skills as a teacher and someone who had a pretty good comprehension of Ojibwe and speaking capacity I think kind of empowered me to then go forth and I worked in Fort Frances for a couple of years as a community-based researcher interacting with elders and communities doing similar work. I think as a teacher, and now as a

teacher educator, I think they've all been foundational skills to moving Ojibwe to a new place. (8/5/2009)

He also worked as an Ojibwe language immersion teacher at Waadookodaading, the first Ojibwe immersion school in this region of Ojibwe country. He recently received his doctorate in education. He mentioned that all of his coursework and experiences helped him in his work that he does now as a teacher educator at UMD.

In conclusion, most language warriors felt that their former schooling had been relevant or helpful. Some focused on Ojibwe culture, history or language as they worked on advanced degrees.

#### Sources of Inspiration: What Made Them So Passionate?

This section identifies sources of inspiration for the language warriors and how they became so dedicated that they became leaders in the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. Although most language warriors identify other people as sources of inspiration, one language warrior felt that inspiration and motivation come from within.

#### Families and Elders

Of those language warriors who spoke about their families and elders in the community, several examples stand out. Naabekwa spoke about that same elder whom he lived with at one of his foster homes who prayed with tobacco in Ojibwe to talk to the bears:

I really think it was that old man, Pete Waukezo, honestly. I remember one time we were over by Naytauwash and there was a dump one time and we used to camp there all the time. I remember he pulled his bag out and looked at the side of the road because there was a bunch of bears in the dump. He took out some tobacco and started talking to them in Ojibwemowin. They all stood up and looked at him. He talked for a long time and I was just amazed that grandpa talks to bears. When he got done,

he put that tobacco down and as soon as he got done, they all got back down on all fours and got back to their business. It was the most amazing thing that I had ever seen. That really set the hook. I wanted to be able to talk to bears. (8/24/2009)

Naabekwa mentioned how talking to the bears set the hook and that he has always wanted to be able to do that himself someday. This exemplifies the power of tobacco and power of the Ojibwe language, the closeness of traditional ways to nature, and the belief that the animals of this land understand the Indigenous languages of this land.

Another language warrior spoke about the role models of change agents that her family had been to her. Saagajiwegaabawik said, “They were really bold. They were really smart. They didn’t let anybody hold them back.” And then she mentioned how becoming pregnant was an eye-opener to her:

My son is an incredible inspiration to me. I’ve been working on my own Ojibwemowin for ten years and I sure should be better at it by now. I think I really geared up and got working a lot harder when I realized I was going to have a baby, it really hit home. What the heck are you going to teach this kid? What are you going to leave for this kid? Holy socks, I really gotta get my butt in gear and get on it. (9/19/2009)

Several language warriors reflected on the wisdom that the elders have. Waagosh told about a teaching he had heard from Joe Auginaush, who said, “We’re not losing our language, it’s still here, but our language is losing us. It’s losing its speakers and if we can change that pattern of losing our speakers, then our language will always be here.” This points out that although Ojibwe is endangered, it is still being spoken, and challenges the first speakers and the language warriors to do something to increase the critical mass of speakers. Waagosh mentioned that this elder’s words impressed him:

We were not down to just a list of vocabulary words to teach kids. We have a whole language that is still here. It’s very much alive and I’m not

the speaker that my teachers were and are, but I can say at least the amount of language that I have learned will never die as long as I live and I couldn't say that before. And I feel that anything I can teach anybody else will have that same impact. We all have something to learn and we all have something to teach, too. (1/25/2009)

He mentioned how the language was not going to die with him and how everyone is both a teacher and a learner. Another language warrior spoke about how the elders pushed him into teaching the young people, even though he personally felt he was too young. They gave him the permission to go out and teach. They said, "*Aaniin wenji-gikino'amaagesiwan Ojibwemowin?*" (Why don't you teach Ojibwe?) And he answered, "That's something I'm not ready for, I'm not finished with my learning." And they just said "*Haa, gego debwewendangen i'iw!* (Don't believe that for a minute!) *Mii zhigwa ge-ni-maajii-giikino'amaageyan.* (Now is the time for you to start teaching!) *Booch igo ozhiitaayan, maajaan ge-ni-izhichigeyan ge-ni-wiidokawadwaa igiw oshki-anishinaabeg.* (You need to be ready, leave, get going, help the young Indians!) He concluded, "And those were their words to me." This exchange of words shows how elders can give permission and if someone questions him or before he does anything, he can acknowledge them and their words. In the Ojibwe tradition, it is proper to credit those who have taught you something or given you permission to do something.

### Spirituality

Some language warriors acknowledged how spirituality has been a source of inspiration. Chi-Makwa mentioned the importance of elders and family in his life and the values they gave him:

My elders were my inspiration. My parents, my grandparents, and my aunts and uncles always made me feel proud that I was a Shinnob (slang for Anishinaabe, Indian) and that our language is important and our



ceremonies are important to us, and our Indian way of life (spirituality), *Anishinaabe izhitwaawin*, is important to us. That's the way of life that we were given, *mii iwe gaa-miingoziyaang*, and that we should maintain these practices and traditions so that we can have a good life. The older I get the more I believe that and I try to make that happen. (8/24/2009)

He addressed how parents and family can help build a positive self-image. He noted that his family made him proud of his identity, his language and his traditional ceremonies. He also stated how he is has grown in his faith and practice of his traditional ways.

### Educators as Role Models

Some language warriors addressed the importance of Indigenous educators as role models. Gaagigebines spoke about how his boss had confidence in him and taught him how to treat others.

He had the vision to really see the potential in me. Not only so much in me, but in our people and our program... He basically taught me how to treat people, you know. Treat people professionally, tactfully, always support them, even if they argue with you. They are your students and your students are always right. You live and die with the students' opinion of you. If you were to treat a student rough or bad, all the students, the word gets out. And if you are trying to be a support person, it doesn't really help, if you have that negative image out there. He showed me and taught me how to be a Native American person working in a dominant culture college. The vision that he had was to see the potential in creating a Native American Studies program. (6/24/2009)\

Leaders need to have vision, validate their students, be tactful, and be good role-models. Waawaakeyaash confirmed the importance of role-models:

Pebaamibines played a big role initially getting me started into language stuff and then an expanding network from there and then as my interests intensified in that, people like you and people who have been completely supportive and optimistic about my language development, um, Jim, you know Jim Clark, my grandma, just my attitude about acceptance of other people, kind of a generosity about caring and that you never give up on what you're doing. You've always got stuff to learn and always got room to improve. You never can learn it all. You always just keep going. Now

what feeds my inspiration, my family. We try to support each other and fellow employees. (4/3/2009)

He credits his parents for his positive attitude and his willingness to share knowledge.

His father had been a college professor and author. He then spoke about his Ojibwe teacher, who he was a teacher assistant for, and then concluded with the support that his wife and children and fellow employees have been to him. Their children are among the most fluent in Ojibwe today in this region of Ojibwe country.

### Section Summary

The language warriors named various people who inspired them. Some spoke about family members, relatives, and elders in the community. One told a story about an elder who used his tobacco and spoke to the bears. Another elder reminded a language warrior that the Ojibwe language is still here and that the language is losing us. Several spoke about Ojibwe language teachers that had inspired them and particular qualities that they had and in many cases the Ojibwe language teacher was the only Indian or first Indian that they had had as their teacher. Some spoke about the importance of ceremonies in their lives and the spiritual teachers that they have had. One language warrior spoke about his boss, the president of a college that hired him and the leadership that he modeled. One pointed out that no one inspired him and that he motivated himself. He really felt that one's success in learning language comes down to one's personal motivation.

## Why the Language Warriors Care about the Language

### Introduction

The language warriors identify some of their own reasons for caring about the Ojibwe language and their own sources of motivation. They express several arguments for learning Ojibwe. They believe in the contribution that the Ojibwe language and culture can make to the world. It is a part of the larger puzzle. Language warriors explain how language helps to define a people, how it is essential to sovereignty and how it can restore health. Learning the language helps Ojibwe people know who they are, it helps them connect, and it encourages them to help keep the language alive and to make a contribution.

### The Language Is a Gift from the Creator

For many language warriors one reason for caring is that it is spiritual, that the Ojibwe language is a gift from the Creator. Gaagigebines stated, “The Creator gave the Ojibwe this language and that as long as it is spoken, the world will continue.” Some felt that the loss of language leads to the death of culture, a way of life, because they are so intertwined. Gaagigebines added, “Together my students and I are saving the world by learning Ojibwe.” There is a spiritual connection to Ojibwe and many Ojibwe people believe that it is a sacred language, it is used in ceremonies, and that “if you don’t care about it, you will let your soul go and without your soul, you are kind of wandering about.” Chi-makwa said this about Ojibwe:

That’s the language that was given to us by the Creator and the spirit helpers. That’s the way we were taught to communicate with our Creator. Those are the teachings that we live by. If we don’t have those, then we’re not Indians anymore, we’re just descendants. That’s the end of the

world for Indians. The Anishinaabeg (Indigenous People) have such a great history and such a great way of life and great culture and a great ceremonial and spiritual relationship to the Creator and all the things in this world and universe. It would be a shame if that wasn't there anymore. (1/24/2010).

He emphasized that the language is regarded as a gift from the Creator to be used to communicate with the Creator and the spirit helpers. There are teachings to live by that also make the Anishinaabe people unique. If the language is lost, there is a belief that the Ojibwe people will no longer be Ojibwe, but rather descendants of the Ojibwe. The language connects the Anishinaabe people to each other and to a place in the universe. Giniwgiizhig added

First there is love between us and the spirit world. The Creator loves to hear us. Second, the love between us as Anishinaabe and that language binds us. If we don't have the language, then we have nothing that connects us as Anishinaabe. We could be connected to any Indian, every human on the western hemisphere. We could all just say we're Indian, but what does it take away? It takes away our history, our stories, our way of looking at the world. So without that language, we're not connected to that history, to the Adizookaanag- the spirits that are talked about in all directions. We're not connected to that place in the universe. (1/16/2010)

I saw this gentle love, especially in the words and actions of the elders. There is a strong belief that the Creator put the Anishinaabe people on this island and gifted them with a language and a way of life. The Creator and the spirits love to hear the language of that place. Another emerging theme from the interviews is specificity of place.

### The Language Makes the People Unique

Another argument is that the Ojibwe language is what makes the Ojibwe people unique. Migizi said: "We do the same thing everybody else does. It's the one thing that

keeps us unique. It's the one thing that keeps us separate." Some say, "When the language is lost, we'll just be descendents of the Ojibwe." Awanigaaabaw, who was reinforcing the relationship of the language to identity, said, "We would lose our distinctive sound of our people. That's the biggest reason- identity." Ogimaabinesiikwe remarked:

I just had that conversation with one of my students today. I asked him what made him Native American and he said the color of his skin and the fact the he was enrolled at a certain reservation. If we live in the city and have Black people and Asian people and Mexican people and Indian people and White people and we all shop at Target and we all go see the Black Eyed Peas at the Energy Center and we all go to McDonalds afterwards for dinner, what makes us different? Our language. If you don't know that, we aren't any different. I was instilling that pride and that identity in our people again. If we lose that, then we aren't any different than anybody else. We just become part of the melting pot and so much has been lost so far. When I talk about it to the kids, I tell them so much has been lost so far. How much more do you want to lose? And none of them want to lose anymore; they want to keep what they have and learn what they can (1/20./2010).

She mentioned how speaking the language is a way of being unique and that there has been so much pressure to assimilate. The students seemed to understand that there is value in being who they are and that being unique is a good thing. They were motivated to keep what they have, learn what they can, and not lose anymore.

Many language warriors mentioned how the Ojibwe language was central to being Ojibwe. Giniw-ogichidaa stated:

Our language is who we are- if we lose our language we allowed ourselves to be totally assimilated into American society. If we only speak English, we'll never be able to revive our culture. We'll never be able to live the way the Creator intended us to live- all our stories. If we tell it in our language, it has more value and meaning. It's a whole different world view. If you understand the language, it has more relevance to life. If you don't care about preserving the language, then you don't care about this

way of life. The language has stories, customs, and traditions. We are cutting ourselves from everything that was put here to help us, our relationship to the animals and the spirit world. If the language isn't preserved, we lose that connection that helps us to be good, loving, positive human beings. Language is the essence of our being, the essence of our existence. (7/19/2009)

Giniw-ogichidaa articulated how language is the essence of one's being, one's very existence as an Anishinaabe. Preserving the language is preserving the Ojibwe way of life and world view. By not learning the language, one is cutting themselves off from everything that has been put here to help the Ojibwe people.

"It Is the Base of Our Knowledge: A 10,000 Year Investment"

Another argument that one language warrior gives for learning Ojibwe is that it is so old and has knowledge and understandings about the Ojibwe people and life in North America. Gaagigegaabaw noted that, "The language is the base of our knowledge and our continual existence, a ten thousand year investment. They embedded it in the language. Human beings talk –it will be here." Saagajigaabawiikwe said:

Because it contains millenniums of knowledge and understandings about our people- we were given our language. (It's the first language) We can express ourselves beautifully and concisely and Ojibwemowin is funny and expressive; all the cool ways you can put things together to talk about ideas in Ojibwe. It has some pretty sophisticated patterns in it. You can put them together. There are some higher order thinking skills going on. There is some really powerful cognitive stuff going on in your brain. Put different parts together and make them work well. It will make a really creative person." (1/16/2010).

Ojibwe is filled with humor, creativity, and sophisticated patterns. By design it can aid in higher order thinking skills.

### “It’s Another Window in the World”

The language warriors also argued that the Ojibwe people and the Ojibwe language have something that they can offer the world. Naabekwa said:

Because it is something that the Creator put on this earth and it’s important, we have a part in this world that no one else has. We have a different perspective, even other people who are more land-based. We were gifted in a different way and it’s valuable and we have something that the world can learn from, so eventually when we all come together, we have a part of the puzzle that the world needs. And our own people desperately need it, but they don’t know it. I just think that everyone that was put here- that was gifted life. I look at it as a color spectrum and each gift has a different hue and we have ours, and if any part of it is lost, this world is less than it could be. (1/16/2010).

He stated that the language connects him to something greater. It is a different perspective, a part of the puzzle that the world needs. He mentioned that a lot of Ojibwe people don’t realize the importance of Ojibwe or appreciate the gift. Speaking Ojibwe is a way of keeping the interconnectedness of all living things in this world and in the spiritual world. Waawaakeyaash reflected:

It’s another window in the world- another way of seeing the world. Like when you hunt, you need to say something and do something for the benefit of the deer spirit. Ojibwe is grounded in the interconnectedness of all living things in this world and in the spiritual world. What we do and what we say, the actual air we put into motion, when we speak Ojibwe, makes the world and we exist in the world in a different way. It would not occur the same way. The air you breathe in and the way you breathe it out, it is put into motion differently. (1/17/2010)

What intrigues me about this reflection is the incredible sensitivity to everything in creation and how each one’s breath shapes the world.

### “It Is a Critical Attribute of Sovereignty”

Another argument expressed by the language warriors is that language is central to sovereignty. In defining what makes a nation sovereign, a government, a land base, a culture, and a language go hand in hand. It helps keep a people united and strong.

Waagosh asserted:

If we were to lose our language, we would just be descendants of Native people, much of what happened to many of the people of Mexico whose only language is Spanish and obviously their brown skin comes from their native side rather than their Spanish side, but they don't identify with that as much. There are lots of Native people down there, too. That's where we're headed, if we don't have a language. At the same time, it is the language that we use for ceremonial function. To lose that is to lose what is the most critical dimension of our culture. In addition, there is so much meaning in the words that are embedded in our language. If we were to lose our language, we would lose our unique way of looking at the world, like our word for drum, *dewe'igan* (the sound of the heart). It explains so much. There is so much meaning built into our words that we would lose the understanding of ourselves. And then, it is a critical attribute of sovereignty. It's how we function and who we are. It's really the most successful tool we have to revitalize basic community health. I couldn't imagine anything more important than keeping our language alive.  
(1/16/2010)

He identified the language as being central to sovereignty. Language helps define a people and learning and relearning it is key to the health of the nation. The ceremonial function of Ojibwe is the most critical dimension of the culture. He pointed out how descriptive the language is and its unique way of looking at the world.

### “Opening a Window or a Number of Windows to Who We Are”

Many language warriors spoke about how identity was a big part of wanting to learn Ojibwe. Ogimaabinesikwe commented:



I'm the first person in two or three generations in my family that has tried to rekindle that part of our heritage and it is hard to explain. My life changed completely. I gave up a lot of my bad habits, I found a lot of new friends and a lot of good times. Truly, when I'm speaking the Ojibwe language and doing cultural activities, I am a happy person. (1/20/2010)

She spoke about how learning Ojibwe gave her good times and a good direction.

Waabishki-makwa, speaking about the relationship of Ojibwe language to identity and spirituality, stated, "I think we know how important it is to our identity, to our heart, but also to our spiritual connection. Without that I would hate to think of the loss that our nation would face, irrevocably. So I just have this passion for our future that we always have that sacred connection that keeps us sane and also keeps us who we are." Chi-makwa stated:

I just feel that we are very, very fortunate as Indian people that we have been given this language by the Creator and the spirit helpers. It would be a cultural crime if we would let it go away. It has always been something that has been on my mind that needs to be done and something that I could never ignore. It's a part of me and I'm a part of it as well. Ignoring the language would be like ignoring a part of me. (9/24/2009)

He spoke about how Ojibwe is central to the core of his being and that it would be a cultural crime, if he did not try to learn it. Naabekwa added:

The more that I learn, I think the more solid I feel. You have to understand that I'm still learning and I still have to learn, but the little bit that I do understand has really helped me understand who I am as an Anishinaabe person, who my grandpas and grandmas were, and where we belong in this world, and how strong and beautiful we are as a people... We have seen the real beauty and strength of who we are. It is intangible. Those are the gifts that we bring to the world and I think it is very important that we remain here. I don't think that we're the greatest race that ever walked the earth, but I think that we have something to offer the rest of the world. I guess that's why. I know it's changed my life. I feel more of a person than I ever had in coming to understand the little bit that I do know. (8/24/2009)

He mentioned how learning Ojibwe has strengthened his identity and changed his life. He also pointed out that he does not feel that Ojibwe is superior to others, but rather that it has something to offer the rest of the world. Awanigaabaw agreed:

It has so much to do with identity. I want to understand. That language is how that people, that culture, see the world and I want to understand that perspective. It has to do with identity for me. The language is the culture. To me it doesn't matter if you know how to skin a beaver or skin a deer or anything like that, Boy Scouts know how to do that. I know Boy Scouts who know how to do everything an Indian does, but they don't have one thing that the Indian has and that's the language. The language is how you see the world and that's the most important thing. That's why I'm so much into it. Plus, I just want to know what they're saying. (5/9/2009)

He emphasized how the world view is tied into the language and how he wants to understand that perspective. He also mentioned how wanting to know what others are saying is key to his motivation for learning Ojibwe. Bebaamaashiikwe reflected on her childhood, growing up away from the language and traditions, and trying to fit into the mainstream, and how she did not want that for her children. She said, "I want them to have that strong awareness of who we are and never have to doubt that this is where we're from and this is who we are." Gaagigegaabaw reflected on his own journey with the language and said, "The more I learned about the language I found cultural teachings. I found our people's history. I found our ethics and morality in the language." He notices what's happening with today's American Indian youth and felt the language could strengthen them:

As I've gotten a little older, I felt a real mandate to teach the language because lots of our children have turned to a more socio-economic, if you will, ghetto lifestyle, where a lot have chosen to be gangsters. Some have chosen to be thugs, to live a life-style imbued with drugs, alcohol, with promiscuous behavior. And I think that most of the students haven't studied Ojibwe and I don't know if they know that they have a culture

that's existed here on Turtle Island for at least ten thousand years that was set aside for them to show them how to lead a good life- *mino-bimaadiziwin*, *minwaadiziwin*. And as I'm starting to see these kids, I feel that teaching them the language is giving them a choice, the life-style, the life they want to lead and how to be a good Anishinaabe person and how to search out the concept of *mino-bimaadiziwin* [ a good life]. They're learning the language and they're feeling the strength, the pride, the love that's in the language. It's something really important that they need to be exposed to at a young age when maybe what's surrounding them is not their exclusive choice. That culture is pervasive. It's on reservations, just as much as it's at Little Earth or north Minneapolis, so it's really important that they know the language so that they understand who they are as people. (5/5/2009)

He felt that the youth today are living in poor conditions, but they do not have to be victims and they do not have to become part of a gang. They need to know they have alternatives and one of them is the Ojibwe language and culture, which can become a source of strength, pride, and love. Giniwiizhig emphasized the intricate relationship of the Ojibwe language, identity, and spirituality:

We're losing the language and the culture. That was the message that was instilled in my mind and the culture and our ceremonies are at a critical point. If we lose them, are we Indians anymore or are we descendants? The question then is what is Indian? That starts to get thin if you make a list. Who do you talk to when you pray? Do you talk to the angels, do you talk to the spirits, do you talk to Buddha? What is that thread? When the Creator gave us our midewiwin, our tobacco, our stories, our history, and all of that is in the language, the thread from what the Creator gave us from the beginning of time, the evolution of our language, to where we are today. So, if we're displaced from that thread and attached to another language, a different displacement, through space and time, a psychic displacement, I don't know if we'll be Indians anymore. We'll be the ugly ducklings. So those are the kinds of things that drive me for the language and the culture, everything that the elders say. (8/2/2009)

He spoke about a thread that ties the Ojibwe people to the beginning of time and how if the Ojibwe people become displaced from that thread are they Ojibwes anymore, or are they descendants?

Waagosh, Ojibwe professor at Bemidji State University, ceremonial leader, and author, spoke about how he has fallen in love with every aspect of the language and the culture:

Well, you know, I have completely fallen in love with our culture. I have never been so deeply moved and appreciative of um anything. You know everything from the core teachings, principles, the philosophy, the ceremonies themselves and the people around them. It's so special and I know that for our religious ceremonies and for our daily culture to survive, the language is an essential element to that and it really is one of my greatest motivations for the importance of our language. Understanding the importance of language on many levels continues to motivate me to work for its survival. (1/25/2009)

Gaagigebines reflected on how speaking and teaching Ojibwe has strengthened his positive sense of self:

That nun that hit me and said, 'You will never amount to anything.' Well, making a career of teaching Ojibwe stems from self-identity. I think when I decided to stop abusing and using drugs and alcohol my search for identity always stemmed back to the language. With the language I could self-identify from a positive sober aspect who I was, who I am, and who I could be. Not just so much just personally, but who we are. It's always about who we are as people. So that dedication I put towards it is something I want to share with potential students that are walking into classroom. They want to learn this language, these customs, culture, because what it did for me, not only gave me a career, but it gave me a positive self-image of who I am, what I am, and even why I am. My dedication to it stems from wanting to share that with the next student, every student that walks in. It also happens in when I classes and students who are non-Indians. They see that humor is a very good tool to use and so the non-Indians see probably for the first time in their careers a Native American instructor; something I never had. So I share with the non-Indian student who we are, what we are, from a non-threatening perspective. We're not pushing our language or our culture on anybody. We're making it available for anybody that wants it. So we never ever say, we never ever become what is termed cultural bullies. You should do this, you can't do this. That's not how we were raised and that's not how we share it. So my dedication towards the language is because of appreciation, of how I got here, and kind of keeping it going. I suppose the bottom line is that we are told, "If there is no Anishinaabe language

spoken, the creator will decide that's when the world will end." So I jokingly tell my students, "You know what we're doing here you guys? We're saving the world by learning Anishinaabe language." *Mii gaa-ikidod gimanidoominaan mewinzha, mii wenji-izhichigeyaang.* (That's what our Spirit (God) said long ago, that's why we do it). (6/24/2009)

He pointed out the mandate that Ojibwe needs to be spoken so that the world does not end. Ojibwe has helped him in his life and he wants to share the language and culture with all of his students. He is a role model, the first Anishinaabe teacher that many of his students will have had. Some Ojibwes are cultural bullies and do not want the language and culture shared with non-Indians.

Waawaakeyaash mentioned how learning Ojibwe has opened a door to understanding himself better and that it is never ending:

Um, well the more you learn about the language the more you realize how little you know, but the more you do to begin to understand and the more you really try to strive to use to carry it with you and live by speaking. It's an eye opener and an educator and a stabilizer in your whole life in a whole number of ways. You have no idea until you're doing it, but I think it encapsulates in more or less like a sprouting bed and a foundation of who Ojibwe people are. Your understanding of history and everything that's done completely transforms if you can speak the language, if you can comprehend the language. I think it's much more rich and there's much more depth to it, who you are and what you're doing and why you're doing it. Um and without it you're left with translated interpretations or other people's interpretations of what they think it is and how you relate to them in a foreign language which is English. So, if you can understand it fully and if you keep going it's a never ending exploration and a self-realization and identity realization about who you are and where you fit in all this stuff of it all. So it's a really unique window or a number of windows of what it is to be Ojibwe. (4/3/2009)

Learning Ojibwe has been an educator and a stabilizer for him, a window or a number of windows of what it means to be Ojibwe.

### “Like A Bird Who Can’t Sing Its Own Song”

Several language warriors stated that learning Ojibwe connects oneself to oneself, to one’s people, one’s history, and one’s identity. Waabishkimakwa pointed out that “there is no better way to connect than by learning one’s language. An Ojibwe who can’t speak Ojibwe is like a bird who can’t sing its own song.” Giniwgiizhig said, “Self-identity, confidence in yourself, feeling good about who you are, and wanting to belong are all basic human needs. If your basic needs aren’t met, then you’re lacking or hurting. It’s a spiritual vacuum that wants to be filled. So there’s social, emotional, and spiritual healing.” Migizi spoke about connecting, “People reconnect with their childhood, with their roots, maybe some other ways. You feel more connected. People can get more out of going to ceremonies. People who don’t grow up with their Indian side, it helps connect them back to the people.” Naabekwa stated what it was like growing up away from his people:

I know what it is like to not know. I remember the emptiness and I used to tell people I had a big hole in me that I was filling with all kinds of stuff, music, martial arts, anything else I could find to try fill it and nothing would work. When I started learning the language and started learning the culture that comes through learning the language, I was definitely strengthened without a doubt. It heals your spirit. It’s an inherent thing. There’s such love in there, such a feeling of belonging. (1/16/2010)

Naabekwa was raised in foster homes and remembered what it was like to not know his culture and language. Learning the language and culture has made him feel loved, stronger, and given him a sense of belonging. Waagosh adds:

Through no fault of their own, most of our people have not grown up with their language and feel something aching and missing deep within them. Honestly, most people of most races feel this too... I think native and non-Native people ache for a deeper sense of connection to place, culture and

knowledge of self. Who am I? And people of all races feel they have a pretty meaningless existence. Connecting to the language is a perfect remedy to get to know oneself, to get to know the deeper meaning of Ojibwe thought- so powerful, so uplifting, so healing- and the ceremonies that are directly connected to the language and the culture... Those things are really amazing and eye-opening. I've seen a lot of people just moved to tears through the process of connecting with those things. (1/16/2010).

Waagosh stated that many people have lost the feeling of being connected to place, culture, and self and how good, happy, and healthy they feel when they experience this connection.

“Reawakening the Anishinaabe Within”

The language warriors perceived that learning Ojibwe is a healing act. It is an act of decolonization. The Ojibwe language revitalization movement has helped make being Anishinaabe and being a speaker of Ojibwe worthwhile and positive. Some language warriors believe that learning the language has brought about profound changes in their lives and given them a meaning and a purpose in life. By learning the language, a person has an opportunity to connect with one's history, one's people, and one's culture. Some language warriors reflected on how learning Ojibwe must be healing for those who went to boarding school, who were punished, ridiculed, and shamed for speaking Ojibwe, and are able to learn back what they were forced to give up. Pebaamibines, a survivor of the boarding school experiences said,

When an Anishinaabe learns about himself and his spiritual identity, it adds to his spirituality and to his sense of who he is. In our history we were beaten for speaking the language. So, now as we learn the language or relearn it, it's a way of reawakening the Anishinaabe within and letting that Anishinaabe flourish. So it is a spiritual movement. (1/6/2010)

He explained how learning Ojibwe is reawakening the Anishinaabe and how it is a healing and a spiritual act. Ojibwe language warriors believe that the Ojibwe language revitalization movement is resisting the negativity that's been a result of colonization.

Saagajigaabawiikwe stated

One of the things that has been very difficult is seeing the amount of hurt and the amount of pain and the negative feelings that our own people have about ourselves. Here I am walking through the world as an Ojibwe person in a community filled with Ojibwe people. We're all brown and all handsome and we all look like each other and we all kind of sound the same and we know who are relatives are and then there's all this negative stuff about all that, that we know about ourselves. There are years, and years, and years of negativity piled on that and that's been one of the hardest things to see, because we can't change who we are, we can't go change our DNA and prove to be someone else, so the Ojibwe language revitalization movement is saying that it's worthwhile and it's a safe place to be and learning what all the spirits do for us, learning what our clans do for us, and how we are taken care of- when we learn our language. It is very relational. It's very dependent on where you are in relation to something else. You start to realize those connections and how interdependent we are with one another, with all those other manidoog (spirits) who stood up for us, and we realize that we are a part of something larger. It's more than just me, the sad, little, hurt, broken person here, but we have all these other people to rely on and it really brings things together and I think that's how it's been healing in a lot of places. (1/16/2010)

She believes that because of the Ojibwe language revitalization movement being Indian, speaking Ojibwe, and learning the culture and the language are worthwhile and safe again. Giniw-ogichidaa, a tribal council member from Grand Portage and a co-founder of Oshki-ogimaag, a charter school on the reservation based on Ojibwe language and culture, added:

Kids and adults drink, get into pills, drugs. They don't feel good about themselves because they've been beaten down by a dominant society, dominant culture, probably all their life, and so there has been a lot of multigenerational pain passed down through generations of negative



experiences with education, social institutions, learning institutions, that stripped away our identity or attempted to strip away our identity and who we are. It's through the language that we learn our true way of life, how we're supposed to be living. If we all became fluent in our language, I think we'd all become much better people, much better human beings, how we treat each other and how we work together and that's a healing process. I still experience that. I'm still trying to feel good about myself, sixty years old, but there are so many traumatic things that have happened to me. I always think back about what would have happened if my mother wouldn't have died. She would have always been there to support me and instill pride in who I was. (7/19/2009)

Giniw-ogichidaa expressed how there has been generational trauma caused by educational and social institutions trying to strip away Indian identity and it's through the language that the true way of life as Ojibwe will be relearned, recovered. He reflected on how his own life might have been different if his mother had not died when he was nine.

“It Brings a New Spirit to My Life”: Learning Ojibwe Has Been Life-giving

Two language warriors stated how learning the language has been life-giving. One said, “It gave me a reason to live. In my craziness, I never thought I'd see tomorrow. I was in prison before I ever turned twenty-one. It gave me life. I'll give my life for it.” At times, this language warrior is called on to speak to the young Ojibwe people today who are having a hard time growing up, struggling with their identity and feeling the pressures of gangs. Another language warrior said,

It gave me ties to my family. It helped me forget a lot of things that happened to me in the past that have hurt me or changed my views on things or people. It has helped me give up dependencies. It has helped me have more patience with my children. It brings a new spirit to my life. It provides a lot of happiness and rewarding moments. It has been really healing me. Eight years ago I was a totally different person. (1/20/2010)

She spoke about how her life has changed in different ways since she has learned Ojibwe.

### Making a Contribution

Language warriors identified the need to become involved, do something and to show gratitude for all the blessings of the Creator. This idea of giving back and of giving thanks was expressed by many of the language warriors. Migizi addressed the urgency of now, losing two speakers from his reservation recently, and his personal sense of responsibility, “If we don’t do anything, it’s going to die. It’s up to us and I feel that responsibility through being a parent, being a young man, and an active member of traditional ceremony, drum stuff, and for me, seeing all the good speakers pass away and nobody stepping up, nobody coming in to take their place.” Waabishkimiigwan summed it up this way, “I guess I would get into the bigger picture of how can I use my talents to do something that makes a contribution. Learning the language felt good and you know, it drew me in, and like they say, ‘the language chooses you.’” She hopes to use her language, administrative, and university skills to work with the language. She is working with others to develop software to make learning Ojibwe more accessible, enjoyable, and precise. Ajidamok said, “No matter how far I get away from it, somehow I always get drawn back to it. I feel the need to be around the language.” Saagajiwegaabawiikwe explained:

We’re also at a time historically where it’s becoming safe to think about our language again and to think about our lives as Anishinaabe people. For awhile it wasn’t a real safe place for people to be using our language and living our lives like we should. We turned the corner where it is once again being viewed as a positive aspect of our lives. So I think that I’m pretty fortunate that it’s okay to do this now. I don’t have to be afraid of a

lot of the issues that my parents or grandparents had. There is so much. There is so much that we're tied to. I like to travel and I like to go around and visit people and see what is going on. When I come home, I love that so much. I love to come home and see the pine trees and our cedar trees and see our lakes and I know this- this land, this is where I'm from. On the most basic level this is where I'm from and this is what my life is supposed to be and I'm connected to that and we get so much. We get so much life, the manidoog do so much for us to keep us living here. We sure owe them to do our best and to live our lives and to keep honoring them in that way. They've done so much for us to be living here. We need to do that. We have jobs as Anishinaabe people that we have to take care of what we've been given. (9/19/2009)

She does not take the gift of life for granted, nor the gift of being born an Anishinaabe or the gifts of lakes and trees, being surrounded by nature, and the need to be caretakers. A sense of urgency demands that Ojibwe be kept alive while there are still speakers of it, and that it is a safe time now to be using Ojibwe.

#### Section Summary

The language warriors identified some of their own reasons for caring about the Ojibwe language and their own sources of motivation. They expressed several arguments for learning Ojibwe. The first is a spiritual reason, basically that it is a gift from the Creator and that it is the language of ceremony. Another is its centrality to identity and how it makes a people unique. A third reason is that it has so much knowledge embedded within it. Consequently, it has a contribution to make to the world. It is a part of the larger puzzle. In addition, language is what defines a people and it is central to sovereignty and a tool to help restore the health of the community. It helps Ojibwe people know who they are, sing their own song, and to belong. It helps awaken and reawaken the Anishinaabe within. Learning Ojibwe is an act of decolonization. The boarding school experience and other acts of colonization have threatened the very

existence of the Ojibwe people, their language, and their culture. The Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement has made being Anishinaabe and speaking Ojibwe positive, beneficial, and safe. Learning Ojibwe has helped people connect and reconnect with their people, their history, their spirituality, and their identity. For some language warriors, learning Ojibwe has been a life-changing experience.

#### Helpful Approaches to Learning Ojibwe as a Second Language

The Ojibwe language warriors identify several approaches that have been helpful in their own learning of Ojibwe. Several speak about how learning Ojibwe is a spiritual activity. Some emphasize a strong grammatical base and others speak about the need to be surrounded by speakers. Besides being immersed in the language, several speak about how teaching in immersion classrooms has forced them to use what they know and to keep on growing. The master-apprentice model is very successful when it is well-structured. Finally, the need to be an active learner and the need to spend time studying on one's own are discussed.

#### Learning Ojibwe as a Spiritual Activity

Several language warriors identified how learning Ojibwe has been a spiritual activity. Pebaamibines pointed out how prayer has helped him and his students to learn Ojibwe. Each day he offers tobacco and asks for help. He added, "I bring my pipe into the classroom and have a feast for the spirit keeper of the language at the beginning of every semester. We gather the two language programs and have a feast, the spiritual aspect of it." He spoke about a spirit who takes care of the language and how learning

Ojibwe is a spiritual activity. Waagosh spoke about how tobacco has opened the door for him:

I believe in the power of tobacco in a practical and spiritual sense. Using tobacco has opened up doors for me with other people. I remember that with one gentleman, Scott Headbird, I was stumbling and bumbling with my words and saying *'Weweni gibi-naazikoon gegoo ji-gagwejiminaan sa noongom ji- wiidookawiyaa mii ji-nanda-gikendamaan Ojibwemowin'*. [Properly I come to you to ask you something that today you help me so that I can seek to learn Ojibwe]. He left the room, I was sitting in his house, I must have said something wrong to offend him and he came with tobacco and he said, *'Geget giga-wiidookoon. Mii o'o netamising ji mikwendamaan awiiaa ji-bi-biindaakoozhid ji-wiidookawag nanda-gikendang Ojibwemowin. Gibiindaakoonin gayegiin. gagwejiminaan mikwendaman gakina gegoo waa-wiidookoonaan niigaan.'* [Indeed I'll help you. This is the first time that I can remember that someone has come and offered me tobacco that I should help him to know Ojibwe. I offer tobacco to you, too, and ask that you remember all the things that I will help you with in the future.] The spiritual help has been a big part of it. (1/16/2010)

This story shows how Waagosh humbly approached an elder and offered him tobacco to ask for his help. It also showed how this moved the elder to offer tobacco back to the learner. Following traditional teachings can be helpful in learning Ojibwe. Waagosh said, "Teachings help open doors with people and the manidoog (spirits). I think Leonard Moose was telling me this. You can't do language without also doing culture and you can't be doing culture without also doing language. They're so connected to one another."

Chi-makwa explained how conducting ceremonies has helped him learn:

When I started, restarted the family sweat lodge I had to be responsible for it, be around the drum, do pipe ceremonies and naming ceremonies. It's one thing to study it in class in the abstract to see lists of words or pages of phrases. It's another thing when someone is depending on you to tell them what their Indian name is or to run a sweat for them in Ojibwe and to ask the Creator and spirit helpers to help heal them and take away their pain

and suffering. It makes it very relevant to know these things when you get involved in these activities. The need to know the language becomes so important. It's easier to learn. (1/24/2010)

Chi-makwa explained that becoming responsible for conducting ceremonies, which need to be conducted in Ojibwe, pushed him from the abstract to the real use of the language and made it easier for him to learn it.

### Having a Strong Grammatical Base

Some language warriors felt that grammar is essential to learn Ojibwe for second language speakers. Ogimaabinesiikwe stated that grammar really helped her figure out how the language worked and then kept adding more nouns and verbs, but added the idea of carrying a notebook, "Constantly having a notebook with me to write down anything- you might be having a cup of coffee with an elder and they might tell you something that you weren't expecting and you want to make sure that you record that, so always have something to record the language on and attend any kind of functions that are available and you never know what you're going to learn or who you're going to meet."

Awanigaabaw also believes that a strong grammatical base is essential to fluency:

I notice people who eventually become fluent have a strong grammatical base. Those who don't have a strong grammatical base are forever lost. So, the approach I'm taking now is largely in English how the verb works- the VTAs- how things work. The first step is knowing that it is there. Number two is understanding how it works and functions and what its pattern is. Number three is after you understood it, you upload it to your head, you start internalizing it- Fourth, then you have to use it. If you don't use it, it's pointless- we talk about grammar patterns- know that it is there... Grammar is torture. It's not fun. People want a song and a dance. (5/9/2009)

Awanigaabaw described several steps to learning grammar and then using the patterns that one learns. He also believes that a person who doesn't learn grammar will be lost forever.

“Surround Oneself with Speakers”

Gaagigebines spoke about how important it is to surround oneself with speakers:

I think the approach is to surround yourself with people that have a positive attitude about it. When you add that approach to it, it flourishes, you're feeding it. So anything that makes your language acquisition flourish which is immersion, camps, surrounding yourself with speakers. For me, I was fortunate to have my mother and my father. (6/24/2009)

Although his parents were speakers and his mother made a career out of teaching it, because of his negative boarding school experiences, he has had to learn the language back and work on his self-confidence to speak it. He recalled:

When I was forcibly pulled off the reservation and sent to boarding school, the language was receded into the back of my head. Only recently when I've seen how important it is, is it coming whole circle, coming around. I think that was what helped me gain that self confidence. One again with self confidence you can get into your mind and see what's there. I think for me, it laid dormant and I wanted to leave it dormant, because I didn't have the confidence to speak it. (6/24/2009)

He spoke about how the boarding school experience took away his language and his self-confidence and how the revitalization of language and culture is helping him regain his self-confidence.

Ombishkibines, who began learning Ojibwe by being with speakers first-hand and taking classes later, stated, “I think it's important for second language speakers to understand certain rules and reasons why things are the way they are, but at the same

time you need a natural speaker to work with to sound right, to sound normal.”

Waawaakeyaash added that recording and transcribing first speakers is very helpful:

Working with transcriptions, transcribe them, translate them, and then create activities or discussions based off of what you have done. The only thing that would have been more helpful to do I know once we come out of a certain number of classes we have a real minimum understanding of grammar and can say this or that, but we couldn't understand fluent speakers when they're speaking to me and I could not carry on a conversation when they were speaking to me. We should be recording conversation. (1/17/2010)

He identified the need for documenting real speech and conversational Ojibwe. He mentioned that college classes don't prepare the students well enough to understand spoken Ojibwe. Waagosh also spoke about the need to surround oneself with speakers:

I am fortunate. I am lucky. I've had a lot of opportunities, but every one of them I have made. Those guys didn't come to my house and pound my door down and say 'Can I hang out with you?' It was exactly the other way around. I was persistent, almost annoying, at times in pursuit of them and of the language- and they became some of the greatest friends I have ever had. From them and through them I've learned the language. In spite of the academic dimension of some of my work and learning, language is learned from people and it's a living language. (1/16/2010)

He emphasized that language is learned by interacting with people and that Ojibwe is still a living language. He mentioned all the opportunities that he had to work with wonderful speakers, but that these opportunities were ones he made himself. Then, he addressed his feeling about other language tools:

So, any tools, be they flashcards, labels, books, all serve a valuable purpose, but they're learned through people. Those are just tools that can make that learning stronger, faster, more efficient, or when you're away from those people to assist in filling holes. In a practical sense, too, everyone is a different type of learner. Some people are more audio, some are more visual, some more kinesthetic, and each has to find out what works best for you and I found that a varied approach helps a lot. Often



times I find speakers that are stronger in one dimension than another.  
(1/16/2010)

He spoke about how different tools help different learners depending on their learning styles. Migizi thought it might be easier if a person starts by listening first, but stated that he began by learning patterns and reading. He said, “I learned the verb patterns, then I went to reading- OJ, Portage Lake- reading out loud- listening to different speakers and fluent stories.”

### Teaching Immersion; “Being Forced to Talk”

Several language warriors who are involved with immersion have mentioned how immersion has forced them to use all the Ojibwe that they know and pushed them to continue to improve. Waabishkimakwa spoke about how being a part of an intentional speaking community helps: “Whether you join a language table or an immersion school, right now when we have such few places where they just speak the language on a daily basis, not only join them, but help make them, and honor those communities for what they need to be. Stay in the language!” Waawaakeyaash reflected on how immersion has helped him:

I think the biggest impact that I have felt has been the ability to teach or be in an environment where it demands that I speak the language the majority of the day every day and being supported by a first language speaker actively and having a good relationship with that first speaker who can support you not only when you’re in the act of speaking, but also in the development of your language by way of immersion teaching. (1/17/2010)

He emphasized how helpful it was to have a first speaker in the classroom with him during class where she could correct him, be available to develop lessons together, and to be able to spend time with in other settings. Naabekwa stated it this way:

What has really helped me a lot is this immersion. I knew basic structures and stuff and I could build sentences, but I was always really bashful to try and talk, but since I've been working in immersion and being forced to talk it's really helped a lot. I still have a long ways to go, but that's really done it. You have to use what you know. I'm an immersion dude. I'm totally on board with it, even in your hour long classes that people have everywhere, immersion style teaching cannot be beat. It is really effective. (1/16/2010)

He mentioned how immersion forced him to get over his shyness by needing to speak in Ojibwe and how effective it would be if other teachers would use more immersion in their classrooms.

#### Master-Apprentice Programs Work Best When They Are Well-Planned Out

The master-apprentice program is one language learning approach that my research has suggested be tried and there are programs in Ojibwe country using this approach.

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe spoke about her experience working in a master-apprentice program:

I got a good master-apprentice learning language time with Miss Josephine Dunn from Oak Point. That was about fourteen months of one on one language, structured language work that she and I did and we used a framework. We set personal goals for ourselves what we wanted to learn how to do. There were certain contexts that I wanted to learn to speak Ojibwe in. There were certain grammar forms I wanted to learn. There were always projects. It was very structured. We made sure it was efficient and to make it progress. That was one of the greatest opportunities of my life and that was where I saw the greatest leap in my ability to speak Ojibwe- to spend constant, consistent time with a first speaker of our language. There are lots of other stuff, too. I read documented materials, I listen to audio tapes and CDS, recordings looking for and listening for examples, going and visiting first speakers of our language, going and visiting other learners and just practicing, and don't wait. I have a few friends who want to wait until they're just perfect. You're never going to be there if you don't practice it. I have someone there to correct me. (1/16/2010)

She mentioned how important it is to have a structured master-apprentice program with specific goals and activities. She felt that it was one of the greatest experiences of her life. She talked later about several cases where this model didn't work because they were poorly structured. Finally, she spoke about the importance of speaking and practicing, listening and reading, and visiting first speakers and being open to being corrected. Later she spoke about trying to encourage passive speakers or closet speakers, those who are too shy to speak, to become active speakers, "First you try encouraging and then go after them and badger them and say ' We know you have the gift and we know you have something to contribute to our community.' There's a fine line too because you can't spend all your time trying to change peoples' minds either." She added, "There is a fine line between encouragement and chasing after windmills. There are going to be some people who are just not going to come around to it and we have so little time and so few language warriors that we need to put our energy and our efforts in the best places." The best use of the language warriors' time and energy was seldom mentioned by the language warriors, but I feel it is significant. At what point does a language warrior give up on others, especially those who seem like they do not care?

#### Other Approaches

Giniwgiizhig identified two approaches that he has used. The first is being aggressive about one's learning, "Getting out of the passive mode, I would get right up there and stick my head right next to the loudspeaker, if it's out in public, I'd go sit up right next to the one who is speaking. It appears arrogant, not humble or pious, but we need to take an aggressive approach, get up there and don't be afraid to learn!" He pointed out how it's

more important to be courageous and aggressive in learning Ojibwe and how one has to be an active instead of a passive learner in order to make progress. A second approach he spoke about is getting inside the word. “Now I’m looking in the words. I need to look inside myself. I can immerse myself by myself by spending more time with the language at home by myself. You need to look inside as well as outside for an answer.” He described a process to me of putting lists of words on a spreadsheet so that he can study the initial, medial and final word parts. Ojibwe is a language which combines word parts to create concepts, so it is helpful to take words apart and understand their underlying meanings. For example: *nookikweshin*, *nook* (soft) *ikwe* (head) *shin* (lie), means he lays his head on something soft.

#### Section Summary

In this section the language warriors discussed approaches that were helpful to them in their learning of Ojibwe. First, language warriors talked about using prayer, the pipe, and tobacco as being helpful ways to learn Ojibwe. Second, building a strong grammatical base was emphasized. Third, the language warriors discussed the need to be around speakers and to record, transcribe, and translate real speech and conversation. Fourthly, the language warriors spoke about how teaching in an immersion setting forced them to use what they know and to continue to grow. Finally, several other approaches were addressed. A couple of language warriors advocated for the master-apprentice approach and mentioned how helpful it was to have a first speaker in the classroom with you and how it was most effective to have a structured master-apprentice team with specific goals and activities. One language warrior mentioned how he was an active,

aggressive learner in the community, but also a dedicated student at home spending lots of time with self-study.

#### Resources: Helpful Ones and Suggestions for Improvement

In this section the language warriors identify helpful resources. They mention native speakers and suggest ways to work with them most effectively. One language warrior identifies the need to approach speakers with tobacco when asking for their help. Then the language warriors identify books that have been helpful to them. Books with audio are the most helpful for pronunciation and checking for accurate transcription. They also identify workshops and networking as being beneficial. Finally, they discuss that even though helpful resources exist, it still depends on the internal resources of the learner.

#### “You Can’t Beat a Real Flesh and Blood Native Speaker.”

Language warriors identified native speakers as their greatest resource. One language warrior said, “First and foremost, I’d say people. I study a lot by books, but the biggest resource is probably the elders.” Another said, “Of course, first language speakers in our community are our greatest resource.” Ombishkibines mentioned how he picks up the phone when he has a question, “I can call Lee Staples, you, Doug Sam, and Anna Gibbs, a lot of people I can just call.” Waawaakeyaash stated how you need to use your time with the speakers carefully, “You have to come up with your own strategies, how you best spend your time with those people in terms of how you see it affecting and impacting your language growth and development as a speaker and an active participant

or user of Ojibwe language.” Awanigaabaw mentioned that it’s important to ask questions and to find Native speakers who are willing to answer those questions,

Native speakers are the most useful. That’s the top of the list. Native speakers who are willing to answer your questions anytime you have them. That’s the best resource. Having some dictionaries, some grammar books help, self-study, but you can’t beat a real flesh and blood native speaker who doesn’t mind answering a million questions. (5/9/2009)

Awanigaabaw stated that asking questions is an important way to make progress as a language learner. Chi-makwa commented on elders who have been helpful to him:

I’m always amazed at some of my elders, my teachers, like Tommy J Stillday and Tobasonakwut, Anna Gibbs, and those folks who spend their whole lives doing this fulltime and are never paid for it. They somehow make ends meet but they are so dedicated to it, that they’ve always been an inspiration to me. I know there are foundations and maybe even some government programs now that are available to help revitalize the language and that’s good, a good start. I really don’t think it’s going to be money that saves our language; it’s going to be people who save our language. (9/24/2009)

Chi-makwa believes that people, not money will save Ojibwe.

Several language warriors noted that one of the ways that elders and speakers can help learners is by correcting them. Correcting others can be helpful or devastating depending on how it’s done. Naabekwa reflected:

The absolute biggest resource is working with any elders that I’ve ever worked with. Good ones are few and far between that are kind-hearted. One of the things that I always like to add, a lot of times our speakers like to laugh at us learners. There is a time and a place where that’s real appropriate. There are so many times when it is so hurtful because we are so fragile, we are like little babies in the language. It is so discouraging. The ones that have been helpful to me I get corrected and I never know it. Those are the people that embody everything about the language. You’re one of those people. Jim Clark was huge. He helped me a lot. Albert Churchill, I learned a lot from him. Amik, he’s not so gentle, but he’s really helped me a lot. Bob Jourdain at the Leech Lake Tribal College, he

was a huge one. I don't know it just seems that I've been really lucky. I've had a lot of good people. (8/24/2009)

He addressed how it's most helpful to be corrected in a gentle manner. Gaagigeabaw mentioned how helpful it has been to work with other Ojibwe teachers, "There's no website or no podcast or no e-log that can compare with another teacher that is committed and is interested in sharing the language with other people. Sometimes it's been incredibly valuable."

### Books in Print

The language warriors identified books in print, especially those that had accompanying audio, as being helpful to them, Ombishkibines said,

I started trying to do transcribing and breaking down word parts, inflections. I use your grammar book. It's pretty easy to use once you get the hang of it. I use Nichol's and Nyholm's Concise Dictionary, Rand Valentine's website, Baraga, Portage Lake. The back of that book has a lot of material in it. I try to collect as much as I can. When I get money, I buy all kinds of materials." (1/27/2010)

He mentioned how he has found books helpful and how he is building up his own library of Ojibwe language resource materials. Bebaamaashiikwe recalled some of the materials that she has found useful:

I think that Ojibwe Word Lists is one of my favorite books. I used that a lot as a beginner and I always direct people to that one. For me, that one worked really well. As of late, I've really been using the Baraga dictionary a lot to help me with curriculum. All of the books that I used as a beginner, I still go back to, like Portage Lake, the Oshkaabewis Native Journals, maybe not so much anymore, but I used to really enjoy listening to those and transcribing for exercises to do, and the materials that you've created specifically. (9/19/2009)

In addition to the materials already mentioned, Waabishkimakwa mentioned that he incorporated work from other dialects of Ojibwe and translated them into Southwestern Ojibwe. He said:

I also found myself having to create a lot of things, that notwithstanding, translating some materials from Canada, Pat Ningewance's materials from Manitoba and some Odawa texts. I change the Odawa stories to Ojibwe stories. Another example is the grammar work done by Rand Valentine.

Nagamo-inini, a retired professor from the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire with a doctorate in linguistics, added,

The Pimsleur tapes are useful for developing good pronunciation, though they work with a severely limited vocabulary. Rick Gresczyk's various printed and tape materials help to develop vocabulary and his grammar book, though it is not perfect, is accessible and useful. Stories in Oshkaabewis are good for developing reading skill, both lexical and grammatical. (1/5/2010)

Gaagigebines added, "Ojibwemowin, Volumes I and II by Vollums are the major ones I use in my classroom...but for my advanced language classes, people really thrive on the material produced by Eagle Works and done by Rick Gresczyk. In terms of advanced language stuff, the stuff you put together is more complete.

Migizi added how technology has been helpful:

All the written stuff was great when I first started studying the language, your grammar book, Nichols dictionary, all the written resources- all the ONJs, Ojibwe stuff in print, but when I really made the progress was when I had an IPOD. I started listening, put CDs on the IPODs, language CDs, everything from Traveling with Ojibwe, fluent stories for people speaking Ojibwe. Once I started hearing the language and hear myself say it, I started making more progress. I could understand and hearing different people speak, the combination of using the written resources for memorization and drilling yourself with language patterns, internet. You have different sites you can go to. You don't really need the books anymore, if you know where to click, (1/6/2010)



He emphasized the importance of hearing the language, even on the CDs, and pointed out

how much material is getting put on line. Books were an important step in his learning.

### Workshops and Networking

Some language warriors mentioned that workshops and classes have been helpful. Ajidamok, a former teacher and director at Waadookodaading stated, “It seems like your work is out there. I did a lot of reading on immersion. I took some classes with the CARLA Institute. I’m trying to find time to do more, but it’s a pretty demanding job.” Saagajiwegaabawiikwe spoke about making contact with Hawaiians to find out what they are doing with immersion,

I do a lot of self-study of second language acquisition, methods and ideas. We do a lot of internet searches. We do a lot of calling...They were so happy to hear from us. “Somebody else wants to do this? So if we can help you out, yeah!” So now we’re like best of friends with our cousins in Hawaii. We get a lot of help from them. CARLA Institute, CAL...there is tons of research out in the world on second language acquisition, on immersion. There is very little on Indigenous Immersion, but just finding people, and emailing them or calling them, and saying we’re doing this here, too. They will give a shout back. (9/19/2009)

There’s more material available on the internet all the time. Also, the contacts, courses, and networking have been helpful to the immersion programs. Bezhig-giizhig confirmed this when he said, “There are almost limitless resources on the Web and elsewhere. Of course, not many are so lucky as those close to a teacher or first language speaker. Nothing seems to match having a first language speaker close by.”

## Life-style Changes

The language warriors have identified a number of human and material resources, but it still comes down to what life-style changes a student is willing to make to learn the language. Giniwgiizhig pointed out strategies that he has used to work on the language:

Tony Treuer said if you want to learn the answer to language learning it's hard work, it's disciplining yourself, you have to be motivated, like I look at him he's an excellent role model. He'd go to the elders, he put himself in language situations. That's what I do, I eavesdrop, I put myself in that position as much as I can. It's internal, it's not external, uh, it's very important to do it, I've always been leisure, but now it's time to get working. Looking even larger that's the internal answer, it's the work, getting off your seat and the internal approach. The external approach is systems, language networks, language tables, getting up and going to language tables, and that becomes a system, getting the resources, getting the tools. Everyone looks outward for a cure. It's really you. You can build your own immersion in your house by yourself, hanging things up around your house, labeling everything. Get rid of your Saduko magazine in your bathroom and replace it with language books. Um, throw away your Waylon Jennings tapes in your car and put your Ojibwe language tapes in your car. On my cell phone I replaced the English names with Ojibwe names. (8/2/2009)

Giniwgiizhig mentioned how there are external resources out there, but a big part of learning the language has to do with internal resources and motivation. He mentioned several things he has done to immerse himself in Ojibwe.

## Section Summary

In the first part of this section language warriors identified native speakers as the best resources, especially those who like answering lots of questions. One language warrior mentioned how gentle correction is the most helpful type of correction to learners. Waagosh told a story about how tobacco opened the door for him, but how he was scared when the elder didn't return quickly from his room. Using tobacco to ask for

favors is an Ojibwe teaching. Dictionaries, grammar books, language learning books, journals, and bilingual collections were all helpful. One language warrior noted how important it is to be accurate and materials with audio are the most reliable. Directors spoke about helpful workshops and how networking with the Hawaiians and other successful immersion programs is beneficial. Finally, one's success in language learning depends on one's internal resources, one's effort and one's motivation.

### What's It Like to Be a Language Warrior?

In this section the language warriors speak about their battle to keep Ojibwe alive and how tiring and rewarding it is. They reflect on how it feels to serve others. The Ojibwe language revitalization movement has given the Ojibwe language warriors various opportunities to make connections. They have been able to connect with societal leaders within the Ojibwe nation, elders, and other language warriors. They have been able to learn Ojibwe through these connections and it has given them a sense of purpose. Two of the greatest barriers are the few speakers of Ojibwe and the few places where Ojibwe is spoken. Financial barriers have discouraged some language warriors. The lack of team-work is also discussed. The sacrifices involved in moving from the reservation to the city or the city to the reservation, the confinement of the classroom and demanding schedule, and the sacrifice in one's social life are also discussed

### “We're into the Battle of Our Lives to Keep Ojibwe Alive”

The language warriors believe that they have to fight to keep Ojibwe alive, Waagosh stated, “We're into the battle of our lives to keep Ojibwe alive, especially in the United States, and I still have a lot of hope for our language and for our people. We're

able to do something, kind of against all odds, and I see other people younger than me trying, making efforts that shows a lot of promise, too.” He believes that with the help of the language warriors the Ojibwe language will survive. Pebaamibines expressed it this way, “A language warrior is the defender of the language, perpetuating the language, fighting to keep it alive.” Waabishkimakwa added, “It’s an act of war because there is such historical pressure to not be positive. You have to be focused, you have to believe, you have to have hope, and you have to become a role model. Gaagigebines spoke about being a role model, “I’m very aware that I might be the first contact that students have with the Ojibwe language and I might be their only contact. I have to turn them on to it right way... It’s a responsibility that is bestowed upon me and I take it seriously.” Naabekwa said, “I feel I want it and I’ll share everything that I’m given generously because that’s what people have done for me. We say this language isn’t ours. We have to share it with everybody that wants it,” he continued, “I get to do what I love to do. I love kids and I love giving them our language and see them light up- I don’t feel nobility in what I’m doing- I love it- it’s fun.” Lots of the language warriors who are teaching Ojibwe love to do it. Some feel they were called to do it. Gaagigebines reflected, “I enjoy it and at the same time I believe was born into this, chosen to do this kind of work. Lots of my experiences have been really rewarding, not financially or for status, but in a spiritual way.”

#### “It’s Not about Us”

Some language warriors talked about being servant leaders. Waagosh commented, “I get to work with and for Native people. I get to avoid most tribal politics.

I get to advance something that I really believe in with my everyday work, in my ceremonial work, with everything and it feels fantastic, I don't feel like I'm wasting a second of my day. It's very fulfilling." Ombishkibines reflected, "Kind of like it has taken my life away, but at the same time it gave me life. It has given a lot of other people life. It's what I'm supposed to do, I believe, so I do it." Waawaakeyaash added, "It's not about us. It's about the survival of the language and the culture and the people...I think it's hard. It's the most challenging thing we have ever done." Saagajiwegaabawiikwe stated:

I work for other people. I work for the kids and I work for my family and I work for the first speakers of our community who are still here and who have passed on before us. You're working for the betterment or for the sustenance of your community. Everything I do is outside of me as long as I can keep myself strong enough to keep doing that for people.  
(1/16/2010)

She mentioned how everything that she does is for others and how it is important to keep strong in order to be of a service to others.

Other language warriors spoke about how the movement has given them a purpose. Ogimaabinesiikwe felt that if she had not started learning Ojibwe, her life would have been different. She said, "I still feel I would have been lost spiritually and emotionally." Saagajiwegaabawiikwe stated how it has helped to center her:

The movement has helped center me personally and focused me. I have this ten-year old son now and I have a purpose and I have something that I want to make sure he carries forward. I told you we were coming from a place in our communities where we were really on this borderland. Indian kids in an Indian community on the Leech Lake Res in a public school system that still didn't quite value and honor our contribution to the world as Anishinaabe people and there was a little bit of a reawakening of the idea that 'Oh, there could be something that your people could contribute to the world,' which is a big shift from, 'You don't know anything,

assimilate, change, be just like us.’ There’s a real shift from make yourself successful in this one defined, in an English monolingual way to there’s a big change in the last decade or two that says, ‘Oh, you could be successful in a couple of languages, you could bring your knowledge as an Ojibwe person in and still contribute to the world’ and that’s a huge thing for me to feel personally and to understand as an Ojibwe person that’s lived in this community within these institutions. (11/16/2010)

She stresses that the movement has made the surrounding community aware that Ojibwe people do have a contribution that they can make to the world. They don’t have to assimilate or change.

### Being an Ojibwe Language Warrior is Rough

Some language warriors acknowledged how rough it is to be a language warrior. Migizi reflected on how slow language learning is and said, “It’s really frustrating and slow. It’s rewarding when you pick it up and understand something from a speaker. So it’s hard, but it’s all worth it.” And then he addressed what it was like to be a language warrior, “Something that I’d do any way. It’s a responsibility or an obligation for all the ones that retained the language for us.” Ogimaabinesiikwe stated:

It can be grueling, it can be difficult, it can be stressful, it can be demanding. As many things as don’t sound happy, it can also be rewarding. It can be inspiring. It can be spiritual. I never wake up and say, “Darn, I wish I didn’t do this.” I might wake up and say “I’m tired, but I still go to work. Maybe I’m going to learn something new today.” For me it’s hard, but it’s rewarding at the same time and I don’t think I’ve really ever experienced anything like that in my life. (1/20/2010)

She expresses both the joys and the sorrows. Waawaakeyaash reflected,

It’s kind of relentless. It’s obvious that it’s a difficult thing to do because you’re trying to initiate change- widespread change that renews itself and expands and it grows. When what you do is tough, it’s easy to see the challenging side and be brought down by the stress and all the challenges you face. What’s most important is to focus on the optimistic aspects, the things that hold hope for what you’re doing. (1/17/2010)

He mentioned how important it is to be optimistic when you're initiating change.

### Opportunities

A central theme that emerged from the interview data pertaining to opportunities was the making of connections through language. Chi-makwa identified some of the "pillars of our Ojibwe society" and how he was able to meet them and learn from them. He also pointed out how the opportunities for using the language, places for teaching the language, and conferences to network have all been increasing during this past decade. He said, "We see more things on a daily basis done in Ojibwe." Waawaakeyaash spoke about how learning Ojibwe has connected him with the older generation:

I think one of the most profound things, is just personally connecting with the older generation of a different upbringing that I don't think I would have had a connection with had I not studied the language. You meet older people and if you speak the same language, you might get an idea of what it was like for them growing up. If they're not such a good English speaker, then you speak Ojibwe. You can tap into a whole other world that you can't even touch, if you can't speak Ojibwe. I think just having that experience, being enlightened by that has been incredible. But then again, that is a bit selfish. (1/17/2010)

He commented on how learning the language has connected him with the elderly and described this connection as incredibly beneficial. Later, he stated that his trip to New Zealand helped him to be connected to the world community of Indigenous people and learned that what the Ojibwe are going through now, the Maori went through twenty years ago. Migizi added, "I've had the honor of meeting people from all over the place with similar interests, networking, the things I've been able to understand about life and the world everything through the language." He mentioned that learning Ojibwe has also helped him participate more fully in the ceremonies and connected him to that spirituality. Pebaamibines mentioned how the language has helped create family, friends,

and a community of people and provided many rich experiences. Gaagigegaabaw reflected:

I had a chance to meet wonderful people, some of the best teachers I ever met...and people who taught me how to share our culture, its depth, its complexity, its richness with other people and I feel real privileged to use and live a lot of the knowledge I was learning at school and to be around a lot of mentors, Native leaders in the community, to share ideas and to pray. (5/5/2009)

He appreciates his language teachers and the role models that they have been to him. What he has learned has added meaning to his life. Some language warriors spoke about how the movement has helped them learn Ojibwe. Waawaakeyaash commented:

I can go to a ceremony. I can go somewhere. I can call an Ojibwe speaker. I can go talk to them, I can record them. I could go spend time with them. We have all that available to us. That's like gold. (4/3/2009)

This language warrior recognizes the golden opportunity that exists of spending time with first speakers of Ojibwe.

### Barriers

Some language warriors identified the barrier of too few speakers. Because of this problem, the language warriors face the challenge of how best to use their time and not to spread themselves too thin and language learners have had to work hard to learn Ojibwe. Waawaakeyaash suggested, "For me, my challenge is, I want to take on this, and I want to do that, and be a part of this, and I want to help this group do this and I want to help this program survive and I want to help with curriculum. I need to figure out where my energy and action would be most effective, for the bigger picture." He expressed the stress of being pulled in many directions and being spread thin and having to figure out



how he can be most effective. Migizi addressed the issue of too few speakers, “One frustration is the challenge of learning Ojibwe when there are few people to go to. A lot of people out there are busy. The people to go to are not right next door anymore, even on the res... There are not enough places to hear it.” Waagosh added, “There are a smaller number of speakers. Our elders, they have physical limitations. It’s hard for them to travel.”

Closely related to the barrier of too few speakers, language warriors cited the barrier of too few places to use Ojibwe. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe stated, “There is still a lack of use for Ojibwe in our communities. We started an Ojibwe language immersion school simply so there would be a place to use our language in a relevant, power function. And it still remains one of the few places where we can speak our language as a language of communication, a language of transaction, a language for meaning.”

The lack of finances is another barrier that language warriors face. Chi-makwa said, “Well, the big one, we have to be self-sufficient and support ourselves to have to have a good job where you get good results so you can support yourself and your family. That takes time away from doing the language stuff. I’ll be sixty-two this summer. I’ll be able to step off my career path, leave my vocation so that I can do my avocation, which is doing language things.” Saagajigaabawiikwe stated:

You don’t get rich working with our language in the community. It’s not seen as a necessity. I don’t need to have Ojibwe language to work in a job at the store, to work as a tribal judge, to work as an attorney, to work as a doctor, Sometimes there are financial barriers for people that want to take this one. We got to take care of our families. Sometimes people just don’t want to participate. We have these really great resources of our first speakers and some people don’t see the value in it. This can’t help us for anything. This will hold us back. (1/16/2010)

She stated that Ojibwe is not seen as a necessity, that it is not required for employment, and that it does not pay its speakers enough. Also, the first speakers of Ojibwe need to be valued more.

The lack of team-work was another barrier mentioned. One language warrior spoke about another language warrior who's isolating himself from others. He said, "Language warriors are few and far between and need to stay connected with each other. We need to be supportive and help each other not putting down and destroying what's being built." Waagosh reflected:

Some people are saboteurs without even wanting to be. I think people gravitate to the psychological atmosphere that they're used to when they are kids. If you grow up in an extremely dysfunctional home and that feels normal, some people sabotage their relationships or the programs they work with. Those personality issues are sometimes really difficult to deal with. (1/16/2010)

Naabekwa also commented on interpersonal barriers between elders who squabble and can't work together not respecting what each other knows.

One of the personal barriers mentioned was getting over the fear of making mistakes and being too shy to ask for help. Naabekwa stated, "My barriers have been personal, what I've thrown up out of fear not wanting to be embarrassed and try what I learned honestly, I don't think I have ever been turned away from anyone that I asked to learn from. They've always given me anything that they have had." He spoke about a wall of shyness that learners sometimes put up themselves which gets in their way of learning. He also addressed how no one has refused to help him when he has asked for help. Another personal barrier was the need to prove oneself. Ogimaabinesiikwe stated, "This is the only barrier that I face, letting people get to know who I am and getting to

know me and what it is I am passionate about.” She has worked in different communities and each time she has to start over building new relationships. Waagosh spoke about the personal barriers of time, money, and stamina.

### Sacrifices

A big sacrifice that a number of language warriors identified was a personal move from their home. Some have moved from the reservation to the city and others have moved from the city to the reservation. Waawaakeyaash noted that although you can’t snare rabbits in the city, the city does offer a great variety of food and groceries, and a lower cost of things. Pebaamibines stated, “My geographic move away from my home and my family has been a sacrifice, but it’s enhanced my life more than anything else. I don’t feel like I’ve given up anything.” I would add that he gets back to his home reserve, where his mother and siblings live, and to a peaceful cabin at the mouth of the river, as often as he can. He truly can enjoy the best that each world offers.

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe, who lived in the Twin Cities moved back to her home reservation, said:

This is where my heart is at. I had to sacrifice my ego and my sense of me, me, me, but I love living here with all my family around me. I miss independent movie theaters in the metro areas. I miss fancy world cuisine available in restaurants and grocery stores. There is not a lot here in rural northern Minnesota. There’s the internet, I can order groceries, I can go visit, and I can go to movie theaters if I want to. (1/16/2010)

She misses the fine things of the city, but loves being surrounded by her family. Being confined to a classroom and a full, demanding schedule are other sacrifices.

Waawaakeyaash spoke about how confining teaching can be. He specified:

My involvement has been mostly teaching, so I need to be in a classroom with children for the majority of the day starting early and ending mid-afternoon five days a week. I could have a different job where I would not have that kind of schedule, but I know that that is one of the most effective ways of ensuring language growth and development. (1/17/2010)

Although the schedule and the classroom are confining, he feels that the consistency and commitment to teaching are the best way to impact learning.

Another sacrifice mentioned is one's social life. Migizi stated:

I feel like I sacrifice a lot of social life. I've got three kids and I'm a graduate student, too, so it's not just the language that keeps me from being very social, it's the lifestyle that goes with it. I don't watch TV. Every time I watch TV or go out, I feel like I'm wasting time. Something more important could be learned tonight. (1/16/2010)

Ombishkibines also mentioned the sacrifice of time:

I'm not only doing language, I'm doing ceremonies and because Lee, the one that I work with, is one of the few that does a lot of them, especially the variety of ceremonies- he's in high demand- I pretty much have to give up everything for it. When I sit back and think if those were my relatives, I would expect the same, especially funerals, it's a priority. I don't have my life anymore. I love my life what it is. The only joy I ever get now is going out to dinner. I don't get to go to movies. I don't get to hang out. If I do have time off, I sleep. If I want to live in the city, I drive back to Mille Lacs two or three nights a week, just what I have to do. I made that commitment and I'm going to do it. (1/27/2010)

His involvement in his ceremonial life and his studies really impact his time:

### Section Summary

The Ojibwe language revitalization movement has given various opportunities to the language warriors. They discussed how the language has connected them to pillars of the Ojibwe society, to the elders, and to language warriors in New Zealand and at home. The movement has helped them to learn the language. It has also given the language warriors a purpose, a way to serve the people, and a way to help the surrounding

communities understand that the Ojibwe people can make a contribution to the world and that they don't need to assimilate to do it. They also shared barriers they have faced and discussed sacrifices that they have made.

### Language Warriors' Hopes and Plans

In this section the Ojibwe language warriors share their aspirations and dreams. Some mention that they would like to develop curriculum and build up a resource room or center. They hope to bring Ojibwe back into the community in a variety of ways. One dreams a year-round camp to be immersed in the language and culture. Developing more and different kinds of immersion opportunities is a high priority. Some talk about doing immersion within their families at home, have more time to spend at ceremonies or go back to school.

### Developing Curriculum and a Resource Center

Some language warriors would like to produce curriculum materials. Waabishkimiigwan, a professor at UMD and a co-founder of Waadookodaading, mentioned how she would like to continue developing audio-visual materials that would make Ojibwe more accessible. Giniwgiizhig acknowledged, "I hope to be able to curriculum write so when we have more immersion schools the teachers aren't struggling, they're not putting in sixteen hour days to just to create something new or not creating curriculum three minutes before the class. The kids go out for recess and one or two of the teachers stay behind to get the next lesson ready because there is so much work to be done."

Some language warriors spoke about bringing the language resource room that has Ojibwe language material, a staff person that is knowledgeable and fluent in the language, and tapes where the students could walk in and just listen to the language, see it written, see it on a computer utilizing all of the technology that we have today. A technologically advanced language resource room would be my dream housed by elders.” Gaagigegaabaw would like to use his skills in Ojibwe and technology to help revitalize Michif [a Metis language composed of French and Cree spoken in Turtle Mountain, North Dakota and other Metis areas].

### Bringing Ojibwe Back into the Community

Some language warriors talked about the dream of bringing Ojibwe back into the community. Gaagigegaabaw mentioned, “I love the language table perspective. It has the traditional components of a class, but there’s also a sense of community, too. You look forward to meeting your friends and you are sharing this really cool moment of learning another language, especially your language.” He then spoke about exploring the idea of Saturday school modeled after other heritage language Saturday schools, “where you can go there to learn about your culture and your language and how to implement it in your life and really be proud of it, to be able to look at it in depth, so I think that’s really exciting.” Ajidamok noted, “My hopes are to see people like I saw them in the 1970s. We could walk downtown and somebody would walk by you and say something to you in Ojibwe and you could sit down on a bench downtown and you could hear elders speaking to each other as they’re coming out of the stores.”

### Developing More Immersion Opportunities

Some language warriors would like to develop more immersion opportunities.

Ogimaabinesiikwe, who left her immersion setting, mentioned that she would like to get back to immersion education, “I miss using the language all day long, using more language in my family- I hope that I can continue in my language learning and keep advancing more and more I work with the elders- I hope in the near future I won’t have to use so much English.” Another former immersion teacher, Waabishimakwa, became a college professor developing immersion teachers and started a language nest, “Now with the language nest happening at our school, being able to train teachers even better and to work with kids again, it’s going to be to me the very best.” Saagajiwegaabawiikwe stated that she would like to expand Nigaane, where she’s the director, get more people on board and help build a human resource capacity:

We need to build some more teachers. We need to raise money to keep our school going. We need to continue to build community consciousness so that other people will buy in and see this as their school and as their right to run their own school. I really want to see that empowerment in our own community and hopefully I can be a pawn to it and help people bring that feeling up. I want to see our kids talking Ojibwe really well and being really healthy and happy. (9/19/2009)

She spoke about the need to build more community consciousness and empowerment, increase enrollment, train teachers, and raise money. Naabekwa, who is a teacher there, suggests, “I hope to be involved with Nigaane until they throw me out of there. I feel so strongly about immersion with teaching, I’ll do it until someone says stop...I’m still going to help. I think if I get too old, then I’ll do curriculum development. When I can’t type anymore, I will talk. I will always do this. I will never stop. Giniwgiizhig

commented on how he would like to use his advanced degree to be in a position of power to promote immersion:

I think that the national movement, the national organization, the national battle plan is coming together on its own and that's the next step. I think for me I would like to keep championing immersion programs, like the Hawaiians preschool to doctorate programs, kindling that fire and networking with people to make sure that happens and hopefully when I finish up with my doctorate, I'll have the papers to get into a position of power, a gatekeeper, to make those things happen. Maybe I'll be lucky and be able to bring together my field of work, my professional field, which pays my bills, which is administration and connect that to language and bring those together and that will be my little grain of sand on the beach that helps out. (8/2/2009)

He looked at Hawaii with their preschool to doctorate programs in Native language and would like to help create this opportunity for Ojibwe. Waawaakeyaash added that he would like to see more Ojibwe around the community, "See the community support mechanisms around those things that would keep them going as well as expand to grow, so you flip on the radio you flip on the TV or you pick up the newspaper you walk around and people are speaking Ojibwe." One way that Nagamo-inini would like to see the use of Ojibwe increased is in the church he attends:

I'm retired from teaching, but I have a project that involves re-introducing Ojibwe hymns to Ojibwe Christians as a way of connecting them with their family traditions and as a way of getting them to use a bit of Ojibwe through song. I'm looking for ways to use the language of the hymns as language-teaching material as well. (1/5/2010)

He has worked closely with Baraga's hymns. Bishop Baraga was one of the first missionaries to write a dictionary (1853) and a grammar book (1850). They're still in use today.



### A Year-Round Language Camp

Another language warrior spoke about creating a year-round immersion camp. Pebaamibines stated “My long-term goal is to run an immersion camp year round and right now I’m building that possibility and I’m developing networks and I’m developing speakers and I would really ideally like to live out at my camp year round. I could live off the land and be immersed in the language back to the way I was born and raised. That’s my life goal to be an immersion teacher in an immersion setting.” Many language warriors have mentioned how they would like to go to a place where they can be immersed in language and culture. Mille Lacs Reservation has operated an immersion grounds for a number of years.

### Ojibwe Immersion at Home

Some language warriors talked about doing language immersion at home. One language warrior spoke about immersing his children in the language and stated that that’s what the Jews did to revitalize Hebrew, “I want to be able to speak to my babies in the language, nothing but Ojibwe. That’s my intention. I noticed the best little speakers are the ones whose parents are immersion speakers. I noticed that they are talking it at home. That’s free. All it requires is a little elbow grease on the part of the parents. You can’t beat that.” Then, he commented on the research he is doing on Ojibwe, “I’ll continue to do research on the language as long as I can, until I get tired of it or I die or whatever and figure out what we don’t know before we lose these elders and to pass this on to second language speakers, so that they can pass it on to their babies, so that we can preserve it.” Bebaamaashiikwe said:

I think that the ultimate goal is to have families speaking the language. Not just us teaching it to the kids. We want the kids and the families to learn together and I really think it is possible. I don't know all the how and pieces of it, but I've seen it. The Hawaiians have done it. The Maoris have done it. They've been able to have families really stick to the mission and really do what they can to learn and really use it at home. (9/19/2009)

Her children are good speakers because Ojibwe is being spoken to them at home.

#### More Time for Ceremonies

Some language warriors want to spend more time with ceremonies and make them available to others. Chi-makwa envisions building a cultural and spiritual community:

I ain't got no money, but I got some big plans. We want to have our roundhouse out there next to our sweat lodge. We are going to make some other visitor cabins, so we can have people come for teaching and learning programs. We'll be able to put them up in houses for free and learn from there. We'll be able to do teaching and learning units. We just want to have a community out there of healthy lives. We'll do medicinal things based on Ojibwe teachings. We'll have all the ceremonies available out there. Maybe even a Mide lodge, to do initiations out there just a place where people can go for healthy learning activities including Ojibwemowin. That's our plan. It can look nice and be nice. It doesn't have to be out in the wilderness where it's real rugged, with no bathrooms or running water. We want to have good facilities, too. We don't have to be struggling all the time. Let's have good facilities for these important things that we do. That's my goal. (8/24/2009)

He mentioned how he would like to have comfortable facilities and open housing for people to come and spend time immersed in Ojibwe and the traditional, spiritual life.

#### Going Back to School

Some language warriors talked about going back to school or finishing their schooling and going back home. Bebaamaashiikwe talked about going back to school, "I want to do some stuff in linguistics, doing some work like that. I do kind of feel like a

language nerd sometimes with the stuff we're writing and getting really excited about the work I do with Rose. There are just so many different routes you can go. There are so many leads. I think about going back to school. I think I really have to figure out how I could benefit the school best." Her husband has done advanced schooling to continue to improve Waadookodaading, the immersion school that they work at. She also would like to apply her coursework to help the school. Migizi see lots of potential opportunities to expand language use where he is from:

I'll finish my PhD, go back home, see what happens by the time I get there. I want to go back to LCO and help out at the tribal college. I see with Waadookodaading in place, there's a K-12 school- there's a headstart- plus, a tribal college. All the educational institutions are in tribal hands. I want to try to get back and help out in the tribal college's language program- advance it a little bit- do some work study things with Waadookodaading, young motivated college students, maybe screen them out when they are LCO High School, try to recruit them at LCO college and try to produce some crash course speakers to do some Waadookodaading work study internships, and stuff, finish their teacher licenses and come back. There's so much in place, there's the schools, the radio station. The opportunities are endless. We just need somebody with language skills and the motivation to make an impact, put together a center, recruit other kids, that's what the school stands for- language and culture. Language gets put on the back burner sometimes, so we can bring it to the front, expand on the program and really go a long way (1/6/2010)

He sees how his language skills will be able develop a pre-school through college program and be able to revitalize Ojibwe on his home reservation.

### Section Summary

In this section the Ojibwe language warriors shared their aspirations and dreams. The need for time to develop curriculum was expressed as well as creating a resource center. Bringing Ojibwe back into the community in a variety of ways was explored.. One dreamed about a year-round camp to be immersed in the language and culture.

Developing more and different kinds of immersion opportunities was a high priority. Some talked about doing immersion within their families at home. Some would like to have more time to spend at ceremonies. Some language warriors would like to go back to school to further their education and some have already taken that step.

#### Where Are the Next Language Warriors Coming from?

The language warriors identify several places where the future language warriors could come from. Some feel that the future language warriors are in the immersion, high school and college classrooms already. They feel that the youth of today will be tomorrow's language warriors, especially those in immersion classrooms. Some feel that the elders who are speakers, who are coming forward, are the language warriors and others talk about Native American professionals, who are going to ceremonies and learning the language. Finally, some language warriors believe that the next language warriors will come from communities that have critical masses of speakers.

#### The Language Warriors Are Already Here

Some suggested that the language warriors are already here. One warrior said, "They're in the immersion classrooms, they're in the high schools, and in the colleges."

Chi-makwa stated:

Our children and grandchildren have to be part of that movement. Otherwise after all of us old guys pass away, it won't be there anymore... In our sweat lodge, we started out with a bunch of us old guys but now we've kept on bringing in our nephews and nieces. Now we have people as young as like ten year-olds participating in our sweat. So they are learning from the ground up on how to do these things. (8/24/2010)

He mentioned how the young people have to get involved in order for the language and culture to continue. Gaagigeaabaw observed how passionate this generation of youth is about Ojibwe:

They can't wait to yell it out in the halls, for example. They can't wait to speak to one another in Ojibwe so somebody might hear them because they are so proud of it and it makes them feel good when they do that, so I see this generation that's enjoying the benefits of the people who struggled from the reservation to maintain our rights, to maintain our sovereignty to the American Indian Movement who strove to see that its embedded in their education as they grow up and then this generation who has actually implemented it in the classroom in the community and now on-line as well. I think the next generation is going to feel that it is something that is important, you know, it makes them unique and very special as well, so I'm very excited about them. (5/5/2009)

He noticed that this generation of youth is enjoying the benefits of the hard work of AIM and past struggles to maintain sovereignty. Naabekwa observed that the younger generation does not have the fear that he had:

I really think that our little babies that we're working with right now are going to be the real backbone. These ones that started at a young age, I think they are really going to be, because it is going to be embedded in their heart. It's not an intellectual endeavor for them. It's a natural thing. The ones that we're working with now, they get eight hours a day of it. For like fifth- graders and up, it is like effortless. They are not scared to hear the language, which is huge. I can remember when I first heard people. It was like, 'Oh my god they're speaking Ojibwe to me, run!' They don't have that fear." (8/24/2009)

He is a teacher in an immersion program and notices how effortless and fearless it is for young people to learn Ojibwe.

### The Immersion Classrooms

Several language warriors said that the immersion classrooms would produce the next language warriors. Ajidamok observed, "I think it is these young people that we

have within the program, within all of these programs. Maybe you have thirty students and maybe two or three are going to come out of there as warriors... Sometimes I look at them and they amaze me, what they can learn in one or two years. It has taken me a long time to learn.” Migizi mentioned how the support of the parents can make a big difference. He said, “My kids are going to know more speakers than I knew, because of who I associate with, places I go, things we do. We get our kids to speak and try to bring it back. Language can bring us together and make us more of a community.”

Waabishkimakwa also commented on the courage of the parents, “I think with the love and dedication of their parents and the inspiration they’re having from so young and the fact that I think a lot of their parents are still recognizing the connections to the elders that we are so lucky to have. I think a lot of these young children are going to grow up with the inspiration of their parents, the training and background their parents give them.”

Waabishkimiigwan asserted:

The language immersion schools are kind of new to make any judgments about them, but you would think logically, if they are making fluent speakers, but that’s a hard thing to put on a small number of kids in there. They can be anything they want to be. Are they going to be language warriors? I guess, maybe the people who are drawn to Midewiwin, in ceremonies. (1/18/2010)

She commented on how the immersion students can be whatever they want to be in the future, but noted that those who are drawn to the ceremonies, may be the next language warriors.

Ogimaabinesiikwe mentioned how a teacher can light the spark. She said,

I met a teacher who is really passionate about the language and the culture and revitalizing it and he managed to put a spark in me that I didn't realize I had before. That's what needs to happen. We need to have the teachers that can touch those students. (1/20/2010)

She reminded us about the influence teachers can have on students. Giniwgiizhig advocated for a village approach:

I see it coming through institutional change, people that are maintaining the battle, even though sometimes it may seem hopeless, but they continue on after- more resources little by little- language tapes are coming out- language resource books are coming out- little by little those resources have a kindling- of course we want a roaring bonfire- of course we will need a village approach to get that fire burning- so that's coming about through the grace of God and institutes and change- and people that continue to fight. (8/2/2009)

Awanigaabaw believes that wanting to be a language warrior is an individual thing. He noted, "It's such an individual thing. There's no guarantee. I really don't know because there are a lot of college students. If that fire catches in that person and their life has somehow led them to where they have to have the language." Perhaps, the spirit of the language chooses its warriors.

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe believes that the parents of the children in immersion programs are really the next language warriors. They have been courageous and made large sacrifices in order to provide for their children an opportunity that they believe in. She said,

I would say some of the different parents from immersion schools. We have one lady who moved here from Duluth to put her students in Niigaane. That's huge. We've got a mother who commutes from White Earth to be a student teacher here and has enrolled her daughter here. That's huge. That's an hour and a half every day one way that she's doing. I've got local community members that have their kids enrolled at

Niigaane. It's kind of a hard story because their own families are giving them heck saying "What do you need that for? Well, it's okay to learn the language, but don't get involved with all of the Indian mumbo-jumbo." That is hard, when your whole family, your support system, is not being very supportive. They say, "No, I believe in this, and this is what I want for my child." Those are language warriors to that we need to nurture and grow. (9/19/2009)

She recognized how much courage it takes for parents to believe in something for their children. Also, it seems that some parents support the language, but not the Ojibwe spiritual traditions.

#### Elders Who Are Speakers and Elders Who Are Learners

The first speaker elders, who are still language positive, are the language warriors. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe told a story about one of the elders, who was very supportive and courageous about preserving Ojibwe language. She said:

I think the first speaker elders that we have in our communities who are still language positive are our language warriors. We've had to go and really draw them out in a lot of the cases. They've been kind of shy to speak up on issues. That in itself is one area where we've had to really get out and cheerlead and educate the community. We had a really awesome grandpa who worked with us. Sadly he passed away two years ago. He was with us from the beginnings of our efforts at Niigaane. He was fearless. He would say anything. He wouldn't back down from an argument. He stood up for us on so many occasions. People would come in and say what you're doing is not going to help our kids. He loved our language. He loved our life. He did not feel ashamed of it. He was proud of it. He loved what our kids were doing. He was fearless. In his youth, he was in the army, he was a paratrooper, and he jumped out of planes. That was just his personality. He made nineteen jumps in his life. You're not going to catch me jumping out a plane with a parachute. But that was the kind of guy he was. He was fearless on everything and anything in his life. With his endorsement we were able to get other first speakers into our movement and that was, that is a language warrior right there. He didn't sit back and just say, 'Well you kids are going to lose the language.' I think we started pushing for it and I think our elders came in on that second wave. (9/19/2009)



She spoke about an elder whose courage and willingness to speak up for the language was fearless. He had been a military warrior and then became a language warrior. His death was a great loss to their immersion program.

Another source of language warriors identified are the Ojibwe professionals who are going back and picking up their language and culture. Giniwgiizhig observes:

It's happening all over, the apples are surprising. They're Indian, too, and they're helping create that change, the lawyers, the doctors. I'm starting to see medical doctors that are at ceremony and learning Indian medicine as well as Western medicine and they're working with elders. They're advocating, so I see them coming from the spirit world. They're coming through their own DNA through their ancestral knowledge. I see it coming through institutional change, people that are maintaining the battle, even though sometimes it may seem hopeless. (8/2/2009)

He makes a reference to apples, Natives who follow professional paths, who are now returning to their traditions, ceremonies, and language, many for the first time in their lives. They are realizing the importance of those things in their lives and in the lives of the people. They have a big influence on others.

#### Communities with a Critical Mass of Speakers Will Produce the Next Language Warriors

Waawaakeyaash believes the next speakers will come from communities where there is a critical mass of speakers, "There's a lot more potential now for them to come out of communities where there's a higher concentration of fluent speakers in existence. I see a few people doing things down here, but in comparison to Canada and other places, it's few and far between. It's pretty slim." Waagosh agreed, "You need a critical mass of people for a language to live. It's not going to live if it is just five guys meeting each other on a weekend once and a while. It has to live in all parts of life." He continued, "I see the resurgent interest in culture and most people just simply wish they had their

language, but won't work for it, but there are some who are really working for it. Those are the folks who really inspire me and give me some hope that we can do it.”

### Section Summary

The language warriors identified several places where the future language warriors could come from. Some felt that the future language warriors are in the immersion, high school and college classrooms already. They felt that the youth of today will be tomorrow's language warriors, especially those in immersion classrooms. Some felt that the elders who are speakers, who are coming forward, are the language warriors and another spoke about Native professionals who are going to ceremonies and learning Ojibwe. Finally, some language warriors believe that the next language warriors will come from communities that have a critical mass of speakers.

### Chapter Summary

This chapter began by summarizing the backgrounds of the language warriors in this study. There is much diversity among them. Then some language warriors shared their educational journeys and what was relevant. One language warrior noted that nothing he had taken had prepared him for the work he is now doing, but most felt that everything they had studied had helped prepare them for the work they now do. They named various people who inspired them. Some spoke about family members, relatives, and elders in the community. One told a story about an elder who used his tobacco and spoke to the bears. Another elder reminded a language warrior that the Ojibwe language is still here and that the language is losing us. Several spoke about Ojibwe language teachers that had inspired them and particular qualities that they had and in many cases

the Ojibwe language teacher was the only Indian or first Indian that they had ever had as a teacher. Some spoke about the importance of ceremonies in their lives and the spiritual teachers that they have had. One language warrior spoke about his boss, the president of a college that hired him and the leadership that he modeled. One pointed out that no one inspired him and that he motivated himself. He really felt that one's success in learning language comes down to one's personal motivation.

In the next section the language warriors identified some of their own reasons for caring about the Ojibwe language and their own sources of motivation. They expressed several arguments for learning Ojibwe. One is a spiritual reason; basically that it is a gift from the Creator and that it is the language of ceremony. Another is its centrality to identity and how it makes a people unique. A third reason is that it has so much knowledge embedded within it. Consequently, it has a contribution to make to the world. It is a part of the larger puzzle. In addition, language is what defines a people and it is central to sovereignty and a tool to help restore the health of the community. It helps Ojibwe people know who they are, enabling them to sing their own song, and to belong. It helps awaken and reawaken the Anishinaabe within. Learning Ojibwe is an act of decolonization. The boarding school experience and other acts of colonization have threatened the very existence of the Ojibwe people, their language, and their culture. The Ojibwe language revitalization movement has made being Anishinaabe and speaking Ojibwe positive, beneficial, and safe. Learning Ojibwe has helped people connect and reconnect with their people, their history, their spirituality, and their identity. For some language warriors, learning Ojibwe has been a life-changing experience.

Then, the language warriors discussed approaches that were helpful to them in their learning of Ojibwe. First, language warriors talked about using prayer, the pipe, and tobacco as being helpful ways to learn Ojibwe. Second, building a strong grammatical base was emphasized. Third, the language warriors discussed the need to be around speakers and to record, transcribe, and translate real speech and conversation. Fourthly, the language warriors spoke about how teaching in an immersion setting forced them to use what they know and to continue to grow. Several other approaches were also addressed. A couple of language warriors advocated for the master-apprentice approach and mentioned how helpful it was to have a first speaker in the classroom with them and how it was most effective to have a structured master-apprentice team with specific goals and activities. One language warrior mentioned how he was an active, aggressive learner in the community, but also a scholar at home spending lots of time with self-study.

Language warriors identified native speakers as the best resources, especially those who like answering lots of questions. Gentle correction is the most helpful type of correction to learners. Using tobacco to ask for favors is an Ojibwe teaching. Dictionaries, grammar books, language learning books, journals, and bilingual collections were all helpful. One language warrior noted how important it is to be accurate and materials with audio are the most reliable. Directors spoke about helpful workshops and how networking with the Hawaiians and other successful immersion programs is beneficial. Finally, one's success in language learning depends on one's internal resources, one's effort and one's motivation.

The Ojibwe language warriors credited the OLRM for giving them valuable experiences. They discussed how the language has connected them to pillars of the Ojibwe society, to the elders, and to language warriors in Hawaii, New Zealand, and at home. The movement has helped them to learn the language. It has also given the language warriors a purpose, a way to serve the people, and a way to help the surrounding communities understand that the Ojibwe people can make a contribution to the world and that they don't need to assimilate to do it. They also shared barriers they have faced and discussed sacrifices that they have made.

In the next section the Ojibwe language warriors shared their aspirations and dreams. Time is needed to develop curriculum. A resource center would be helpful. Ways to bring Ojibwe back into the community were explored. One dreamed about a year-round camp to be immersed in the language and culture. Developing more immersion opportunities was a high priority. Some talked about doing immersion within their families at home. Some would like to have more time to spend at ceremonies. Some would like to go back to school and some have already taken that step.

Finally, the language warriors speculated where future language warriors will come from. Some felt that they are in the immersion, high school and college classrooms already. They felt that the youth of today will be tomorrow's language warriors, especially those in immersion classrooms. Some felt that the elders who are speakers, who are coming forward, are the language warriors and another spoke about Native professionals who are going to ceremonies and learning Ojibwe. Communities that have a critical mass of speakers may produce the next language warriors.

## CHAPTER NINGODWAASWI:

### PERSPECTIVES ON POWER, KNOWLEDGE, SUCCESS, AND LEADERSHIP

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on what the language warriors believe about leadership. First, they discuss what power, knowledge, and success mean to them. Then, they discuss ways that they motivate others to want to learn Ojibwe. Then, they discuss their own styles of leadership and their own feelings about being leaders. Then, they identify qualities that they believe make effective language warriors. Next, they give words of advice for other language warriors. Then, differences in Native and non-Native leadership styles are presented. Finally, the language warriors discuss successful strategies, areas of failure, and the priorities of the movement, the leadership tasks that lie ahead.

#### Perspectives on Knowledge

Most of the language warriors value formal education and have degrees and some are working on post-graduate degrees. All of them value what it means to be Anishinaabe. They emphasized various types of knowledge: knowledge of self and one's identity; knowledge of one's history, culture, spirituality, and traditions; and knowledge of the Ojibwe language.

#### “Knowing How Beautiful and Unique We Are”

Knowing one's strengths and one's weaknesses as a people helps one understand who he or she is and encourages a person to make a contribution to the world. Naabekwa spoke about the need for each person to get to know his or her own culture. He

mentioned that a strong sense of identity is huge and he remembered when he did not know himself and he has made the choice to get to know himself and his culture and no longer feels lost. He also said that in understanding people, people always do things for a reason. People make mistakes and they need to fix what they do. He designed t-shirts that read “*Aaniin ge-izhichigepan Wenabozho?*” (“What Would Wenabozho Do?”) Wenabozho is a central character in Ojibwe stories and spirituality, who often made mistakes and then made amends. Waawaakeyaash stated, “Cultural knowledge is the backbone of what the whole language thing is about.” Saagajigaabawiikwe said:

Locally, knowing our own people and our own history, understanding who we are as Anishinaabe people of this area, of this region and understanding what it is that brought us here, we very much still exist today as Anishinaabe people. What it is that has kept us alive and kept us going and knowledge of weaknesses so we can improve on them, also an understanding of how beautiful and how unique we are in the world and what we have here contributes to the entire world to make this a livable place (1/16/2010).

She noted how important it is to know one’s tribal history. Understanding how unique and beautiful the Ojibwe people are in the world contributes to the world and makes it a livable place.

“If People Believe in Themselves Knowledge Will Come to Them”

Several language warriors stated that knowledge comes from getting to know oneself. Ogimaabinesiikwe stated that “knowledge of self, who I am and where I’m at, where I came from and where I plan on going” are important types of knowledge.

Ombishkibines observed:

Everybody has their own gifts. Everybody has their own purpose. Some people are fishermen, some people are gardeners, some people are factory workers, we need them all. Some people are spiritual people and some

people are doctors. We need all walks of life. I think you try to learn what you can, but a lot of it comes from within. Though, I think a lot of it has to do with learning yourself. I think most of it comes from oneself not from someone else. One of the biggest things I've seen is people looking to find the great one, the great shaman, or something like that. But, it is all within oneself. If people believe in themselves, knowledge will come to them. (1/27/2010)

Ombishkibines has been an oshkaabewis, a helper, to ceremonial leaders. Much of his time is spent helping out in ceremonies. He is pursuing his Ojibwe language fluency by accompanying these spiritual leaders and attending language classes at various colleges.

“Things Are Secretly Embedded in Every Word”

Knowledge is embedded within the words of the language. Pebaamibines stated, “People say knowledge is power. The more knowledge of the language, the more insights you gain about the language, how it works. There is so much to learn within the language.” Gaagigebines pointed out, “There’s a lot of spiritual words in the language that people would not be aware of if they didn’t have the knowledge. You can’t teach the language without culture, and you can’t teach culture without the language.”

Gaagigegaabaw expressed the importance of understanding the etymology of the language, “Being able to look at the etymology of our words and in our language and to look at our history and compare doodem (clan) with oodena (town). From the knowledge to look inside the language, you get wisdom. Waagosh added,

There are things that are secretly embedded in every word that we use in our language, things people do that they might not be aware of, an understanding or a perspective that is built into these words. Gichi-aya’aa (an elder, a great being) and mindimooyenh (one who holds things together describing the role of the family matriarch) describe those people, That says a lot. We don’t have to say respect your elders. It’s built into the words. (1/16/2010)



Waagosh has been an editor of Oshakabwis Journal for several years and an author of Ojibwe books. He attended Princeton University, received his doctorate from the University of Minnesota, and has been an Ojibwe language and culture and history professor at Bemidji State University. He has worked closely with ceremonial leaders in a master-apprentice relationship and is conducting many ceremonies.

So Much Knowledge Is Contained within Ceremonies

There's so much knowledge within ceremonies. Chi-makwa explained:

You can go to school many years and get degrees and when you do that you become a very knowledgeable person, but the kind of knowledge that is important to me is the knowledge of spirituality and the language that goes with it...When I was growing up I was told to pay attention to your dreams, pay attention to your relationships and how can you help people-how can you understand people better.(1/24/2010)

He expressed that the knowledge he was most interested in obtaining now in his life was spirituality and language. He has been a lawyer for many years.

Giniwgiizhig stated:

The more I learn about Indian ways the more I realize I don't know anything. I start to realize that there is so much out there. I start learning about ceremonies, why things work the way they do, Indian philosophy, perspective, how it goes. You think at some point you know it all. Then, you realize you don't know anything. That's an interesting thing about knowledge. The more you know, the more you realize you don't know. (1/16/2010)

He mentioned how attaining knowledge can be humbling when one realizes how much more there is to learn. He found this to be especially true about Ojibwe philosophy and spirituality. Waabishkimakwa expressed the importance of getting the young people to understand and value these ceremonies, "I greatly respect the knowledge of our traditions and our ceremonies, our sacred legends, our sacred songs, I think those are basically what

gives us definition in life as a people, but I also value the kind of knowledge that comes in the form of being able to integrate that knowledge or make it applicable to young people today.” Waagosh, who spent many years as an apprentice to Mide priests and doing ceremonies reflected on knowledge connected to ceremonies:

When I’ve done a lot of work with ceremonies, people say do it this way. This is the way we do it here, following the path without deviating from it. Later on, I’ve come to understand the reasons for the procedures or protocol and the knowledge that was built around them in a much deeper way. There is a danger sometimes in thinking too hard, working around ceremony, knowledge of procedure, knowledge of music, knowledge of language, knowledge of the substantive part of stories, knowledge of how to deal with and treat other human beings. There are a lot of different types of knowledge. Lots of times the focus is on high culture, our ceremonies, major societies, and things like that. Everyday knowledge like how to live off the land, how to harvest rice, how to go snare rabbits, those are things that we need to fight to preserve, too. Very critical, the everyday things are more important than the things you go to a few times a year. You go to ceremonial drum. There are many who know how to sing and some who know how to talk, but how are they living their lives the other six days out of the week? What’s forming who we are, the fabric of our society? That’s critical knowledge, too (1/16/2010).

Waagosh identified many things that are necessary to learn in conducting ceremonies, high culture, but he also expressed the importance of how one lives one’s daily life. He mentioned that everyday cultural knowledge and survival skills are also critical.

#### Other Things That Language Warriors Need to Know

Although, there is a strong value among language warriors for learning the traditional ways, history, survival skills, and spirituality, and the challenge of how to make these ways relevant to the younger generation, there is also respect for mainstream education. Migizi stated, “What’s contained in the language as well as cultural knowledge, mainstream knowledge is good, street knowledge (laughs) doesn’t hurt

either, you know, book smarts will only take you so far. There are all kinds of knowledge and they are all important.” Gaagigegaabaw expressed his joy for learning:

I enjoy knowledge. I enjoy the pursuit of it and I enjoy being knowledgeable in our language and that could be a lot of the facets: who speak our language, where these people are, what sort of dialect they use, what are the grammatical features. Knowledge can have some technological aspects, how to do it, on-line resources to bring knowledge and wisdom together, (1/6/2010)

Gaagigegaabaw has used technology to make the Ojibwe language accessible on-line and hoped that young people would be able to and willing to access it, if the language was presented on line in a helpful and enjoyable way. Waawaakeyaash spoke about the many things that language warriors, who are teachers, need to be knowledgeable about:

How language is learned, how language is used, and what language is and how it grows and changes. I think it is important. I think knowledge of education is important. How we learn, why we learn. How things are chosen that we are taught, why they are taught, where are they taught, who teaches them, I think that is important. Professional knowledge, organization, how it works, how it survives, funding, how do you manage those type of things and how do you facilitate growth and maintain academic leadership and professional leadership is important. I think too, that there are a lot of others things that are extremely important. You can figure out how to write grants and you can read from books about language and teaching styles and immersion teaching strategies, I think knowledge is enlightenment and it is life changing and could be profound. People don't realize how vitally important it is. (1/17/2010)

Waawaakeyaash is responsible for helping to start Waadookodaading, the first Ojibwe immersion program in the United States. He continues to work on an advanced degree in immersion education. He mentioned how knowledge can be both life-changing and profound.

### Section Summary

In summary, the language warriors value all kinds of knowledge. Many are still working on advanced degrees. Most value spiritual knowledge and are concerned with how they can make it relevant to others, in particular, the youth. Many of the language warriors are involved in and leaders in Ojibwe traditional ceremonial life. They believe that every culture has value and that the Ojibwe culture has an important contribution that it can make to the world. Some expressed the importance of getting to know oneself. By learning the etymology of Ojibwe words, one can learn a lot about their people and their spirituality. The language warriors who are teaching the language need to learn a lot about language education itself, especially immersion education methods, grant-writing, and technology.

#### Perspectives on Success: “How Many New Speakers Have Been Created?”

The language warriors had many ideas about what success means. Some of them focused on their goal of becoming fluent, but also on the fluency of their students, as benchmarks of success. They also felt that group success was more important than individual success. They believe that each person has gifts and has been put here on this earth for a purpose and success means knowing why we are here on this earth and using our gifts to make a contribution. Success is measured by the health and happiness of the individual and the community and being able to speak Ojibwe is a big part of it.

#### “My Favorite Sound in the World is Children Speaking Ojibwe”

Several language warriors identified success as reaching their goal of getting their students to become fluent in Ojibwe. Waabishkimakwa said, “My favorite sound in the

world is children speaking Ojibwe. To me that is success It's more than just repeating words, but kids who really speak the language." Waawaakeyaash emphasizing the importance of immersion education added, "You empower these kids and you give them a great education, and if they can speak the language and they have great comprehension, they are going to go so far with that." Naabekwa expressed the excitement of seeing one's students' faces light up, "For me as a teacher success is watching a kid light up when understanding comes or watching them to display something that they understand about themselves using the language successfully." Pebaamibines summed up the idea of making his students fluent in this way, "To be able to speak it and converse with students of the language and stay in Ojibwe is success, producing speakers of the language." Saagajiwegaabawiikwe also reflected on children knowing the language and being healthy and happy:

It means healthy and happy children knowing our language and having healthy and happy families and expressing ourselves in a happy and healthy manner, being spiritually strong. Our community members are able to participate in our ceremonies. Success is kids who honor the knowledge of what brought us here today and are able to put it together with the world we live in today and carry it forward. (1/16/2010)

Success is children learning the language and knowing who they are, knowing their history and culture, and living it today, and keeping it alive for the future. She emphasized happiness and health within children, their families, and the community and how knowing the language will help make this happen. Gaagigebines reflected on success:

Doing the best you can do is being successful. You may have lofty goals that you aim for that are pertinent. You feel satisfied. Success is when you exercise your full potential. I feel I'm successful if I can motivate and

stimulate my students to exercise their full potential, get them motivated, get them on the bandwagon. (6/24/2009)

As language warriors, success is also measured by how many new speakers have been created and how much Ojibwe is being used. Gaagigegaabaw explained:

On the personal level it would be good if more and more people could help out this way, like our governments, both the American and tribal having more and more people learning Ojibwe and having a real, genuine desire to understand the language and themselves and to understand their own perspectives of the world. I would like to see the people using the language more often with each other greeting each other and using Ojibwe all the time and intergenerationally and with one's peers and the whole gamut. (1/6/2010)

He stated that governments, both tribal and non-tribal governments, could do more to help more people to speak Ojibwe. When people greet each other and use Ojibwe intergenerationally and with their peers, then Ojibwe is truly a living language.

“Accomplishing What You Were Put on This Earth to Do”

Several language warriors identified happiness as success. For Migizi success was providing for his family and being happy. Ogimaabinesiikwe said that creating a life that is rewarding will make one happy. Ombishkibines stated that “success is accomplishing what you were put on this earth to do and using the gifts that you were given.” Waagosh explained that “everyone's role in language and cultural preservation is equally important and valid and that you need to find out what you are meant to do and then do it, being true to yourself and your values, making sure that we're all making a contribution and not just relying on others to do it.” He further stated:

Everybody has their own path in life. The Great Spirit has a plan for everybody- the plan for everybody is different- I believe that there are

competing forces that are working in the universe- there is a spiritual purpose to things, but there is also blind random luck in both a good and bad way- sometimes a baby dies right after he is born- how fair is that? Those things compete- we get a glimpse of the Great Spirit's plan in dreams and visions and things like that and so I think it is important to listen. (1/16/2010)

#### “Individual Success Is Pointless”

Just as some language warriors defined success as getting your students to reach their goals, some stated that group success was more important than individual success. Giniwgiizhig stated, “Success is really important for the well-being of the group. Individual success is pointless. I can make all the money in the world and not change or help anybody. That is not success, but when you help bring up the whole group that is more important to me.” Ogimaabinesiikwe agreed when she said:

You are offering your skills to make a person or a community better, that's success. It doesn't mean a high end job that you get a six digit salary. It's not what car you drive or what clothes you wear. It's not where you live or who you know. That's not success. If you're happy and you're contributing, that's success. (1/20/2010)

She pointed out that the materialistic ways that many people define success is not success to her, but instead success means making a contribution to another person or to the community.

#### Section Summary

Most language warriors did not think about themselves, but rather about the success of their students and the future of the language. They felt that success was making a contribution and using their gifts to do what they were put on this earth to do.

## How the Language Warriors Defined Power

The language warriors defined power in a variety of ways. Power is the ability to take care of self and others. It is reaching one's goals and getting things done by gathering, communicating, and planning. It is making progress, but progress needs to be made respectfully, not putting oneself above others, but treating others equally with kindness and respect. It is sovereignty, determining one's existence and destiny. Power is influencing others and creating change. Naabekwa stated, "Teachers don't realize the powerful position they are in, the influence they have, and how they can create an atmosphere where students will hunger for the language and for the information to be an effective Anishinaabe person in the modern world." He identified the powerful role that teachers can have.

Some of the language warriors also pointed out types of power that they didn't like. One stated that negative power is when you subordinate other people. Waabiskimakwa spoke about egocentric power and said. "We see enough of that in communities where everyone is jockeying to see who will be the big chief. That's the kind of power I tend to disassociate myself with."

### "The Spirits Are the Real Ones That Have the Power"

Several language warriors addressed some spiritual aspects of power. Naabekwa pointed out that we are being used by the spirits, the real ones that have the power, when he said, "We are so frail as people. I think power is gifted to us and we are at the mercy of those gifting us, even the ability to get up in the morning. We are really lucky that we



can sit here and have this conversation... We are asked so little to give back in exchange for this life.” In addition, Ombishkibines also spoke about the gifts that each is given when he stated, “People were given gifts, people have different gifts and a lot people don’t want them. It’s sometimes hard to live with the gifts that you’ve been given, because you have to use them.” Giniwgiizhig spoke about the need to look inward and the power of healing:

When I start reconnecting with my ceremonies and the spirits and talk to them in a language they love, that connection gets closer and closer. So, that’s the power of wellness, the power of knowledge, and that becomes community power. When we’re all healthy holistically, spiritually, and intellectually, that’s power. (1/16/2010)

He explained that community power and wellness happens when everyone is holistically, spiritually, and intellectually healthy. Waagosh stated that the power in ceremonies comes from people working together and relying on each other,

I don’t think much about power except in the terms of spiritual power, not command or control, but the ability to help or inspire or move other people or entities in some significant way, sometimes around ceremonies. A lot of people will look at the wrong parts of things, look at so and so. The power of a ceremony comes from everybody who comes there and by helping one another and working together. That’s why our major ceremonies are also societies comprised of people, not just bundles, or tobacco. By relying on one another it draws a greater power and it has shown the power to do a number of things from the curing of cancer to making a language live against all odds. To me that’s power much more than the kind people think of. (1/16/2010)

Waagosh acknowledged that most people don’t think about power in spiritual terms. He also noted that sometimes people look at the wrong parts of things and may be critical of others, when really power comes from all the people who attend

ceremonies and work together and help one another, whether it be in curing cancer or making a language live against all odds.

### Section Summary

The ability to take care of oneself and others, reaching one's goals, using one's gifts, getting things done, determining one's own existence and destiny, influencing others, and creating change were some ways that the language warriors defined power. They also stated that subordinating others and being egocentric were misuses of power. Several spoke about spiritual power as the most important power and that power in a community happens when everyone is holistically, spiritually, and intellectually healthy. The future tasks of the language revitalization movement are great and in order to succeed more language warriors need to be developed.

### Developing Language Warriors

This section shows that there are many different kinds of language warriors with different types of personalities and different jobs to do. Several key components of what it takes to be a good language warrior are identified. Some language warriors address the role of spirituality in their lives. The need to share what one knows is crucial. The love for the language is compared to love for one's own children. Part of being a language warrior is the willingness to fight for the language. Finally, there is a caution, not only to share what one knows, but also to be humble.

### “We Need a Good Mix of Everybody”

One language warrior noted that there are many different kinds of language warriors with different types of personalities and different goals and objectives. He said, “We need a good mix of everybody to do it. “Another said, “I think you have to be good at making community. You have to be inclusive to be a language warrior.”

Ogimaabinesiikwe stated, “Being a teacher isn’t the only way to be a language warrior. There are a lot of roles and jobs out there. Diligence is needed to stick with it no matter if the day is good or bad.” She also spoke about whatever job a language warrior chooses to do, it’s important to persevere.

### Willingness Is Key

Willingness was a key value that several language warriors mentioned, a willingness to learn, to help others, to share, and to be open-minded.

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe emphasized that language warriors need “determination, persistence, courage, fearlessness, a willingness to work hard, willing to laugh, willing to share. That’s a big one – willing to share what they’ve learned.” Another language warrior said, “I guess your passion and your consistency to keep going, keep learning, and keep using what you know, sharing it with other people.”

### “Personalizing the Relationship with the Spirit of the Language”

Closely related to this willingness is self-motivation. Pebaaamibines suggested:

A good language warrior is one that is self-motivated and takes charge of their own learning. That’s the difference between a student and a scholar. A student takes it for the grade. A scholar learns it for their own personal use. So if they can learn it for the purpose of doing ceremony that’s a really good factor. People that are running ceremonies have to do it in the language. They have a better chance of staying focused when it becomes

personal. They need to personalize the relationship they have with the spirit of the language. (4/15/2009)

Many language warriors have had to study very hard and that takes self-motivation. He reinforced the idea that many Ojibwe language warriors have also become ceremonial leaders. Gaagigebines, also, emphasized the importance of spirituality in one's life:

So I definitely know without a doubt that the Ojibwe language was given to us as a gift from the Creator. When I treat it like that, there is also a spirit keeper of the language and you need to spiritually acknowledge that spirit. So when you keep spirituality forefront, and you have people following you, that demonstrates you are a warrior. You are saying the right things and teaching correctly in the eyes of Creator. That's what makes a good warrior. When you acknowledge the source and keep spirituality forefront, then you will be a warrior with a lot of people following you. (6/24/2009)

He noted that part of being a warrior is having people follow you. He spoke about the need to be a good role-model and to give credit to the Creator and the spirits.

#### Knowing Oneself and the History of the People

Knowledge of self and of the history of one's people is another key component of being a good language warrior. Gaagigebines, talking about how important it was to understand the past, stated, "I can hear the words of my mother when I say this. You always have to know who you are, what you are, and why you're doing what you're doing. If you know where you come from and you know where you're going, then you're definitely a warrior." Waabishkimakwa stated what made a good language warrior, "I usually never pause when I answer a question, but this is an important question. I think a good language warrior is someone who knows how much they have to give, and gives it. They know what their limitations are and does something about those limitations." He addressed the need for language warriors to be reflective and honest with

themselves. Bebaamaashiikwe recalled the history of the boarding schools and how it wiped out the language and culture on her father's side, in particular, noting, "I think having that ability to just think clearly about what happened in the past, why the language is important, and how it is going to affect future generations." She also emphasized of looking back to plan ahead.

### Having a "Thick Hide"

Patience and perseverance are also important values. Naabekwa reflected:

You have to have a thick hide. You have to be able to listen. That's really the big thing – to listen, and to be able to take ridicule, and to just be hungry and just persevere. No matter what you have to keep your eyes on the prize. That's the language. Just focus on that and you can take anything. You have to be kind of humble, but at the same time you have to be arrogant. I don't mean arrogant as in belittling, but you have to have it like, "I am going to get this. I am going to speak my language." You have to be aggressive in that way. But at the same time you have to be able to make mistakes, take direction, and be wrong and be able to admit it. It is hard. (8/24/2009)

### Being in Love with the Language

Other key components are loving the language and being willing to share it.

Ajidamok believes that the language belongs to everyone and stated, "It belongs even to the people that don't even want it. It is still there. You have to kind of figure out how to make them want it and how to make them respect it." Waagosh compared loving the language to loving your children, if you truly love Ojibwe as much as you love them, you can persevere:

What makes a good language warrior? Having a true love of the language, that passion, that commitment to the language will translate into whatever success in life, if you fall in love with your kid, you'll figure out how to handle fevers, change diapers, as long as you have the first experience of falling in love with your kid. For someone to do a good job and help

advance the language and keep it alive falling in love with it and seeing its value and its importance is a critical first step. (1/25/2009)

### A Call to War

A good language warrior is willing to fight and to do what it takes to keep Ojibwe alive. Giniwgiizhig addressed this call to war:

You have to get up off your ass and start learning, even more so to understand the art of war. You need to learn to unify and there's more to unification, it's planning, to have a strategy, and to swallow your pride and say I don't know, to work with other people and to get together and have a collective battlefield, and to take the time and energy that extra mile to drive all the way to some gathering place where you can start planning together. I think we need a battlefield and a military headquarters. We need a national goal and we need a gathering of warriors and we need to not be afraid to break a few rules. (8/2/2009)

He's speaking about the willingness to prepare for battle, a battle to keep Ojibwe alive.

Language warriors need to be willing to gather and unite and have a strategy. The researcher wanted to ask a VietNamWar veteran what being a warrior and a language warrior meant to him and Chi-binesi commented on the use of the term "warrior" the researcher uses to describe a language activist. Chi-binesi then defines what kind of struggles language warriors sometimes face:

I think it is a quick way to define what we are trying to do in our efforts to use and preserve the Ojibwe language. Someone has to fight for what is important. A good warrior is someone who knows that everyone feels fear, but what is important is what one does in spite of the fear. A good warrior knows there are many battles but only one war. Battles may be won or lost but it is important to keep in mind that the war must be won. A good language warrior struggles on in spite of the indifference shown by almost everyone around them who don't know there is a war going on to preserve the Ojibwe language or to keep fighting for those who don't care that a war is going on to keep the Ojibwe language alive. (1/3/2011)

Chi-binesi agreed that the term is appropriate because there is a battle going on to preserve the language and many do not care or are not aware.

### “It’s Not about Me”

One language warrior cautioned that some language warriors need to learn sharing and humility:

Some of our people, like I said, we’re really hurting communities and some people get into learning it so they can be a star and then they don’t want to teach anyone else because they feel like they won’t be a star anymore, if somebody else knows it. They feel like they’re exotic if they can talk Ojibwe over there. They can be put on a pedestal and be admired. I’ve seen that in some of the younger people coming up today so teaching that humility and teaching that sharing. That is a really important thing. It’s not about me. I’m part of this community. It’s about this community and I have a responsibility to this place. I have a responsibility to this world.

This language warrior challenged the motivations of some of the language warriors and urged them to remember that they have a responsibility of sharing what they know with the community.

### A Section Summary

There are many kinds of language warriors with many kinds of roles, personalities, and goals, and they are all needed. A good language warrior has to be willing to work hard, to laugh, and to share. Many language warriors have found it helpful to have a strong spirituality. Knowledge of oneself helps a person to continually improve and knowledge of one’s history and the history of one’s people helps one work in the present and plan for the future. Having a thick hide and being able to listen were also identified as helpful qualities. Love for the language makes one passionate and helps one persevere. A language warrior needs to fight for the Ojibwe language and there

is strength in unity. Finally, it was noted that a language warrior needs to be humble and community-centered.

### Advice for Other Language Warriors

In this section the language warriors give words of advice to other language warriors. Being a language warrior is a special calling and can feed you in various ways. Now is a crucial time! It's important to work with first language speakers and continue to work on one's fluency, not to give up, and to keep on learning.

#### It's a Special Calling

Being a language warrior is a special calling. Ombishkibines stated that we all have a purpose, "If you don't do it, nobody else will. We're put on this earth for a reason, we have a purpose, we got to feed our spirit, we got to do the things the Manidoog (spirits) want." Then he cited something that his teacher, Lee, had said when they do funerals especially for the old people, "It must feel really good to know that you accomplish what you were put on this earth to do as you walk down that path. It's important to be Anishinaabe and to know your language."

#### "It Will Feed Your Spirit"

Becoming a language warrior can meet various personal needs. Gaagigebines suggested, "Pick up as much language and become part of the revitalization movement because it will feed your spirit. It will feed your self esteem. It will feed you financially, socially, and I think credibly with your career in the community, in the state, and recognition for the type of person you are."



## The Time Is Now

Now is the time that language warriors are urgently needed. Waabishkimakwa said, “*Noongom izhichigen!* (Do it now!) It’s a hard thing to say! This world offers a lot of distractions, but also beautiful and different things that are worthy!” He is urging people in spite of all things that are out there to become language warriors.

### Work with First Language Speakers to Become Fluent

Key to being a language warrior is fluency in Ojibwe. Several language warriors emphasized the need for future language warriors to work on their language skills and always strive to improve. Migizi pointed out that learning Ojibwe is difficult, “Don’t give up! Tell them to hang in there. It’s rough, it’s hard. Talk to yourself, if you have nobody else to talk to you! Use it as much as you can. If you know how to say three words, use them!” Giniwgiizhig admitted that it’s an ongoing struggle for him, “Never give up, it gets tiring. Sometimes you wonder. You lose the faith. Am I ever going to learn the language? Is the light ever going to come on? Little by little, I’ve been a lazy learner, but I never did give up!” Waagosh also stressed the importance of persevering in one’s language study, “First, of all, don’t give up because it can be very, very frustrating. I’ve seen a lot of people who say I can’t get it through my thick skull. It takes tremendous dedication, self-sacrifice and persistence.” He continued, “We need to develop all that passion of the language and that will translate into action and success on their part!” Saagajiwegaabawiikwe mentioned lots of language strategies and also emphasized the need to keep improving:

Be fearless! Don’t ask permission to speak our language. Like Darrell Kipp says, ‘We don’t ask permission.’ Speak your language as best you

can. Learn it to the best you can! Hang out with first speakers! Listen to recordings! The reason we speak, hey, is so that others will hear it, whether it's our kids, our friends, our grandmas, or the *manidoog* (spirits) and we want to give the best examples! Learn to do it well! Strive to do well! Strive to improve always! (1/16/2010)

She said that part of being a language warrior is to be fearless about speaking the language, always speak it, and always strive to improve.

Waabishkimakwa spoke about the importance of working with first language speakers, "Right now you have a unique time to spend with the most wonderful speakers that you will ever hear and I really mean that- do it now- and remember those people in everything you do for the rest of your life. Naabekwa emphasized how important it is to work with the first speakers::

We're not used to asking the questions. We're used to being fed the information. That's the way we've grown up because of the schools. We've become kind of lazy or we're scared to ask questions. We have to be brave, take some tobacco and ask the question that we know needs to be asked and keep asking, until we find someone who is willing to work with us. But, I mean jumping classes, get on the internet, anything and everything will help as long you're always double checking. Is this the way it's said? (1/16/2010)

He expressed how important it is to use every resource available, especially first speakers, to offer tobacco, and not be afraid to ask questions.

"Never Give Up!"

Ogimaabinesiikwe emphasized how one cannot let the stress get them down. "Don't let the stress overwhelm you, if you get to a point where you think you just can't take it anymore, don't walk away and think you're in a dead end situation, because there is a need for language warriors everywhere in all communities." She mentioned how language warriors are needed everywhere. Gaagigeaabaw talked about the need to have

hope, “You can over-analyze it because of lack of funding, lack of resources, lack of acknowledgement from our community at times, lack of support. Have complete faith that we’ll be successful.” Waawaakeyaash mentioned how important it is to be resourceful and optimistic and to take care of oneself:

Don’t give up! Take care of yourself! You got to do things that enable you to stay recharged and enable you to have the mental strength and endurance you’re going to need! It’s not a sprint- this is a marathon and you have to pace yourself, but you have to always got to be improving, you got to always be training, you got to always be studying and you have to always look back at what you did and you have to help each other and you got to remain optimistic! The pessimism is contagious as is the optimism and if you choose to look at the problems instead of part of the solution as Famous Dave says, “You won’t grow, you’ll tear down and be sucked into negativity and you’ll feel bad and you won’t let what this is about come through in your efforts.” The bigger picture is you got to buckle down and you have to be serious and you have to think ahead and you have to use every resource you possibly can. If that means Ojibwe traditionalism, Ojibwe language, trapping, hunting, fishing, living our language, visiting the speakers, that’s good and this may also may mean many components of non-Ojibwe world, professional development, study, and leadership training, learning how to do fund-raising and learning different types of stress management and team-building and all that I think that’s vital. Look at all things available to you. (1/17/2010)

He mentioned that it is a marathon! He emphasized living the language and culture, but also to learn about the resources in the non-Ojibwe world! Giniw-ogichidaa, a tribal council member from Grand Portage, also emphasized how important it was to persevere.

If people really want to learn the language and put aside quality time to take the time to learn it, you have to have perseverance. People are not always going to be there. You have to have patience with people. You have to be knowledgeable. Never give up on people. There is so many outside forces that influence our people today day to day living, surviving, all these things. A language warrior has to be conscious of all that, so they don’t get frustrated. They have to have a vision of our language and our culture. They have to be resilient. If something doesn’t work then you have to try different things to reach that vision, different goals and strategies. There’s always another way to do it, to keep it alive. They

have to be strong for the people. Many of our people have been beat down for so long that they don't think they're strong anymore, so somebody has to keep that strong. We have to keep being a strong people, no matter what we're faced with. (7/19/2009)

He reminded the language warriors to be strong for the people, to have vision, to be flexible and realize that there are many ways to get something accomplished. Being patient helps one persevere.

### “Keep Fresh and Keep on Learning!”

Pebaamibines had advice to language warriors who are teaching Ojibwe, “You can never know everything...It's what an elder told me when I started teaching it. You will find that it is a life long learning and it's true. Don't just teach the same thing over and over. Learn from what you are teaching. Always grow with the language, always develop new ideas!” He mentioned the need to keep fresh and to keep on learning.

### Section Summary

The language warriors advised other language warriors not to give up. They felt that it was a special calling. It can feed you spiritually, financially, and socially. Being a language warrior is highly regarded in the Ojibwe community. The time is now to work with first language speakers and continue to work on one's fluency using every resource available. It's important to be fearless, not to give up, and to keep on learning.

### Motivating Others to Speak Ojibwe

This section explains how language warriors exercise their leadership by motivating others. A couple immersion school directors speak about empowering others. Some language warriors talked about how leading by example motivated others. One teacher spoke about how she passes on teachings she has received from her elders

through stories. Another spoke about how he uses technology to make Ojibwe accessible and interesting.

### Empowering Others

The language warriors identified that one way to motivate others is to build them up, to empower them. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe stated, “Help them to build their own understanding to become experts in their own field that they are interested in. You can’t count on one person to have all this. If that person falls over and you don’t have him or her there, then what? So, really build up in other people, their empowerment, their knowledge, and their contributions.” Another director spoke about the need to “provide workshops of different kinds to build up their skills.”

### Motivating Others by Example

Most language warriors felt they motivated others through example. Ogimaabinesiikwe stated, “I’ve shared stories about how I grew up and what I endured and it is not too far from what the kids are going through right now, so then they see that we are really alike and then they see where I’ve gone and they see how important Ojibwe is to me.” Saagajiwegaabawiikwe added, “Being an example of living your life the way you’re telling other people to do, raising my kids in Ojibwemowin to help out and contribute.” Another language warrior said, “I’ve been asked to talk to kids...I am an ex-gang member. I was on the streets, I’ve been to prison, juvenile...I look at them with the language. They look at me, if he can do it, I can do it. It gives somebody hope to see someone who lived the way they’re living and be able to pull out of it and live a good life.” Migizi said, “I practice what I preach. That doesn’t mean I’ll go around

preaching. I preach with action. I study my language hard. I visit with people and I spend a lot of time and people can see that without having to preach too much. It seems you lead best by example.” Pebaamibines said, “I try to model what I am asking them to do. If I ask them to do a power point presentation, I put one together first. Every time I give them an assignment I try it myself to see how hard it is to do- I wouldn’t ask them to do what I wouldn’t do myself.” Applying this style to his personal life as a marine sergeant, Chi-binesi-reflected:

A good leader is one who would do what he is expecting his followers to do. For example, as a Marine Corporal or Sergeant, it wasn't my duty to walk point but I did it any way because I wanted to be a good example and to teach my troops how to do it properly, to lead by example. A good leader knows what the fight is about, the overall goals. A self starter who knows he can always improve on what he is doing. (1/3/2011)

He reminds us that a good leaders lead by example, but they also teach others how to do it properly. They are goal-directed, self-starters, and know that there is always room for improvement. Awanigaabaw concluded after a long pause:

Trying to lead by example, I try to give them quality language. I’m not always successful, from the horse’s mouth, the real thing. It’s a hard one. Either they’re motivated or they’re not. I encourage them. I tell them the steps. If you want to be fluent, do this! I try to help them, if they ask me. I try to be a resource. If I don’t know the answer, I find out. I stopped begging people. I try to encourage them. (1/7/2010)

He is highly motivated and tries to be an example to others. He believes in self-motivation.

### Always Speak Ojibwe

One way of motivating others is to speak Ojibwe to them. Waagosh acknowledges that this doesn’t always work:

I think a good leadership strategy is to speak the language to everybody, whoever I meet whenever I meet them. Not all of our people are at that point yet. It might engender harsher feelings because people become shy, resist and back away, if they're intimidated by language. I think that a leadership strategy I use is not to be intimidating, but be positive and encouraging, but also at the same time not to be manipulative or cheap. But you have to sell the language, too. You have to be the encourager extreme, super positive, and make people feel welcome and that there is a place for them, because they are so historically shy. You have to help people get out of that, something I do to try develop leadership. I try to be a good leader, a good role model, a good example. (1/16/2010)

He recognized how language warriors need to be aware of how people have become historically shy and how learners have to get over that, how language warriors need to be encouragers extreme, and make people feel welcome and needed.

#### Motivating by Teaching Values

One language warrior spoke about passing on to her students the values that she has learned from her elders. Ogimaabinesiikwe shared:

I guess I kind of try to incorporate family values into all of my lessons and stories of the elders that I receive and I talk to the students about what the elders say they desire from them. They tell me what they want the kids to learn and what they want them to appreciate and value and I pass that on to the students. They take those to heart and personal identity values, more so here in the city... What are some of the family values? Respect for the elders, respect for women, respect for everybody. (1/20/2010)

She emphasized the value of respect. Lecturing from teachers, elders, and families was a traditional Ojibwe way of teaching, usually through stories.

#### Using Technology to Create an Ojibwe Presence

Creating a multimedia presence motivates others. Gaagigeabaw explained:

One thing is to create a multi-media presence for Ojibwe people. As curriculum has evolved in the past twenty years, I've tried to make it as widely available as possible using the internet, doing podcasts about vocabulary lessons or creating interactive multi-media web-pages and

websites that our kids can go to at anytime, ipod touch, google, any cell phone, computer labs in any school, inspiring them by seeing it more often- on facebook, embed in their my space page and just by creating that presence. I'm Anishinaabe. This is how my language sounds. It is really cool and we're able to share it with the world. (1/6/2010)

Gaagigegaabaw uses technology to make it accessible. Another challenge he addresses is to develop "cool lessons," so the students will want to access them.

### Section Summary

A couple of immersion program directors spoke about motivating others through empowering them. One effective way to do that was through workshops. Several language warriors spoke about leading by example. A couple told about how sharing their lives and teachings with young people helped them connect and maybe through that will get the idea that they can become language warriors, too. One professor spoke about not expecting his students to do what he wouldn't do himself. One professor felt that either students are motivated or they're not and he was not going to waste his time on those who are not motivated. One mentioned how she lectured about respect and the teaching her elders gave her. Another mentioned how he tries to motivate others through the use of technology.

### Ojibwe Leadership

In this section language warriors reflect on what leadership means to them. They share how their service to others, the example of the way they live their lives, and focusing on the Ojibwe language revitalization movement over time have put them in leadership roles. Some of the language warriors share their feelings on being a leader. One describes shared authority.



## Qualities in a Leader

Certain qualities of leadership emerged in the data. Giniw-ogichidaa, tribal council member at Grand Portage, reflected on what qualities of leadership he most admires:

Leaders have to be open-minded and develop a discipline to be able to listen. You got to be able to listen to each other and we got to be able to understand our different experiences in life so that we are sometimes going to come to different conclusions and different ways of looking at an issue. We always have to be understanding and really hear where each other is coming from. So, I tell young people you have to be open-minded and you have to have the ability to really listen especially to elders, because they have so much life knowledge. Be able to listen to your elders and also remember who you are and what it means to be an Anishinaabe. Know the values and principles that go along with being an Anishinaabe and try to live those principles- as difficult as it is in society, so then never be afraid to speak your mind, never be afraid to speak up when you feel you have to. Don't let your voice be stifled by someone. If you know you have information that is valuable to the discussion, never sit back and be afraid to express yourself. It's so important. That's how we functioned in our societies between clans. We had the ability to speak and many times come to a consensus- willing to argue and debate and finally we all agreed on something so you need to acquire those abilities that what will make our communities strong again. Always respect where the people are coming from and where they are at. They're not all going to be at the same place. We're all coming from different experiences- negative and positive. These are things I tell young kids today. It's really important to learn about our land and the reservation- all the resources- we might not have the dollars in the bank, but we're wealthy people with our resources. We have everything in Grand Portage for us to survive, even a depression. We're going to need leaders to be able to protect our resources and what we got and at some point in time they're going to come after it, they're going to want it, and they're going to come in and try to take it. We need to understand our history and how our lands were taken before and how our people were fooled and tricked and we got to be smarter than that, we have to be able to think a lot quicker today, because of all the stuff that is going to be coming at us, all the words they're going to throw at us to try to get us to give up our resources and our lands. We're going to need to develop leaders that will be willing to stand up and speak on behalf of the people to protect our resources and our lands.  
(7/19/2009)

Giniw-ogichidaa said that leaders need to be open-minded and be able to listen, especially to the elders. They need to respect others and where they are coming from. They need to speak up and try to reach consensus. Leaders need to stand up and speak on behalf of the people and protect the resources and the land.

### Leading by Example

Some language warriors just become leaders by the work that they do, by the way they live their lives, and by the examples they show others. Waagosh emphasized that others will follow you, if they have faith in you, “If you really believe it and you live it in every fiber of your being, people will see that, spirits will see that, and it will inspire them to work with you, especially in Indian country.” He then added how important egalitarianism is, “It’s important that a leader doesn’t have a hierarchical sense of their work. You have to be able to work with people.” Another language warrior emphasized the need to be on the same page as your staff and to believe in them. Naabekwa spoke about how he didn’t feel like a leader, but “he was standing on the shoulders of his elders.” He said, “If it wasn’t for them, there is no way I could even be doing the job that I’m doing. There’s no way that I would have the ability.” He acknowledged his elders as his true teachers.

Some people are just pushed into leadership. Migizi stated how he got pushed into it, “Leaders are the ones who don’t want to be leaders (laughs). You’re just kind of pushed that way. It kind of turns out that way.” He continued, “Try to do a good job. Hopefully, you influence someone else to do something and to help out, like a domino effect. For me, it’s just trying to live the good life and do good for myself and my family.

If that makes me a leader, that's good." Chi-makwa noted how he leads by example, "I've always just focused on what I feel is important in terms of language and culture and I do that. I voluntarily make myself available to other people who do that, too. I don't ever try to tell people to do something that I wouldn't do." Awanigaabaw said, "You have to lead by example. That's the main thing. You have to be humble. I tell my students that I still work with my elders. I still study. I tell them how I do it. I try to be truthful with them. Gaagigebines reflected on what being a leader means to him:

I think a leader shows by example, doesn't dictate, but explains this is how it is done, and then demonstrates how it is done. When I am standing up in a classroom, what I notice is that the students really gravitate and swallow up all the customs that we have. So when I say that we teach the language and the culture, they can't be separated, they are starving for this information. I see that the first time that they're going to hear all of this is from me, and so as a leader, I direct them that it is important to know the knowledge, but more importantly how to acquire it. I mean by using tobacco, the customs and the traditions; respectfully treating women, respectfully giving gratitude towards the Creator, the source of where all this information is from. I'm thinking as a leader, the first time these kids are going to hear all of these concepts is from me. As a leader I take on the responsibility to present it in an honorable, respectful way. That's the first thing that they are going to know when they learn the Anishinaabe language. They know it comes from the creator and so they know that every time they're going to sit at a language table they have to put food out. They have to put their tobacco out. So, in terms of leading and describing what it is, by example showing them this is how it is done. So, by example, I get called upon to do pipe ceremonies. The things that I say in the classroom reflect itself when I'm outside of the classroom, in public, doing pipe ceremonies. So, it's not just giving it verbally, but demonstrating this is how you do this, so you're leading. Always giving credit to the pipe and not the individual because that is the source. The only thing that you have is the limited knowledge of how to do these ceremonies. So out of respect, if we can teach that to our students, to lead respectfully, you will have many followers. (6/24/2009)

He mentioned how he would frequently be the first Ojibwe teacher the students might have and how many things are new to them, how he must be a respectful role-model and give credit to the sacred pipe.

### “Sticking to Something”

Leaders sometimes surface because of the work that they do over time.

Waawaakeyaash, a co-founder and teacher at Waadookodaading, mentioned that he became a leader by just “sticking with something” over time.

I never thought I would be a leader and still wonder if I am, but it’s more or less just happened because we’ve been focused on something and wanted to do it and we’ve kept doing it for a while and there’s just so few of us doing it that I guess people are starting to look and ask us what we do, but I mean but I’m no expert at it at all. It’s kind of daunting- I don’t know- I’m still trying to figure how best to do that, but I think it’s one of the greatest challenges we’re facing now because I myself am inspired to do it and to keep doing it, but what I’ve seen happen a lot of the time is a lot of people have come and gone and a lot of people go back and forth in studying language and teaching. I think that’s not so effective for themselves and for the programs. It’s kind of like working out or jogging or when you play a musical instrument, if you don’t stay with it, it goes away. You’re not as good as you were, so I think in terms of leadership. I think those are some of the biggest challenges. I think I always believed that by staying true to what we’re trying to do and staying focused on it and not doing it for any other purpose other than just trying to learn as much as we can and share that with other people, I think that’s been one of the strongest successful aspects of what we’re doing. (4/3/2009)

He acknowledged how sticking to something over time has caused other people to regard him as a leader in the field of Ojibwe immersion. He mentioned how important consistency in a program is.

### Leaders Experience a Range of Feelings

Language warriors spoke about experiencing a range of feelings and that being a leader is both painful and exciting. Gaagigegaabaw, an Ojibwe language teacher, said,

“Um, there are times when it is really exciting and fun and inspiring and other times it can be trying and alienating.” Giniwgiizhig reflecting on his experiences as a school administrator and program director stated:

Leadership is very painful. I’ve been hurt a few times in tribal politics. Self-oppression and perpetuating colonization continue to perpetuate the negative. A lot of stuff happens. It’s painful when you’re trying to do your best and there are a lot of naysayers... You get battle-fatigued, you get hurt, you sit around and cry, you feel hopeless, and then you get up again and then the magic of people and the magic of spirits all working together. It’s happening with or without you. You get charged up again and think I’d rather be with you guys, so then you’re back up again.  
(8/5/2009)

He acknowledged the pain of being a leader, but also its excitement. He attributed the negativity within tribal politics to self-oppression and perpetuating colonization.

Waabishkimakwa asserted that it is uncomfortable being a leader when you are young:

I think it’s very challenging as a young person and I’m not particularly feeling all that young sometimes these days. Also being respectful of the fact that my parents are alive, my grandparents... knowing that I have a place and work to do, and I still have lots of energy. So as a leader it is a strange place to be as a young person and I still feel a degree of uncomfortableness with that. Beyond that, I feel a sense of urgency and call to action. That’s something that is within me that inspires me to go forward. Even though a part of me wants to say, “Hold up, you shouldn’t be as out there as you are right now.” But, I believe I still do it respectfully and I still do the work because not enough of us are doing it. So, it is a difficult place to be -- as a young person trying to move this forward, knowing maybe it’s not quite your place, but knowing you have to do it to make it happen. (8/5/2009)

In many Indigenous circles, including the Ojibwe, the elders are the ones who are regarded as the leaders and the teachers of the traditional ways. Yet, he recognized the urgency of the call to take leadership because there are so few doing this work and the

elders are dying. Ombishkibines, who is also young, reflected on how his life has changed:

It's scary, it's stressful, it's hard, in one sense I'm trying so hard to learn these things to keep things going because I know we need it as a people as a whole. I need to do my part in it. It's not talking about it, just do it, and hope other people are following suit to know people are counting on you to hear the old people say things. It's scary, almost to a point where you just want to give up and run and hide. Part of me just wants to be a John Doe and go to movies or hang out, you know. I love it; it's rewarding. When it's over, I 'm glad I did it. I don't even know when the last time was that I just hung out for a weekend. (1/27/2010)

He pointed out how sometimes he wished his life would be more his own, where he could just hang out, but then he realizes how rewarding his life of serving others is.

#### “Standing Up in the Back of the Canoe”

Ogimaabinesiikwe said, “Humility as well as a strong educational background and experience are good leadership qualities... A leader needs to take cues and suggestions from their team, always willing to learn. They can't be too set in their ways.” She identified the need for humility and strong educational background as necessary qualities of a leader. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe emphasized the importance of listening to and involving all of the stakeholders:

A leader really should come from a place of moderation. We need people to light our fires and cheerlead and get people fired up to get our movements moving. We need to be able to sustain that movement, also. You have to work with so many different personalities and so many different ideas and points of reference. People come from all different places. People are going to look at something from a different angle. Being able to operate within that and to see a broad picture, to see a panoramic view of what's going on to be able to stand up at the back of the canoe and see what is coming up in the river and to know what's going on there. We have a lot of questions still within our own organization at

Niigaane about Ojibwe forms of leadership because it's been so long since we've seen it practiced in our own communities. We have a lot of questions. Was it consensus style? Did you have to force things? How does that work? How do we operate ourselves within this wider community that's saying "push, push, push, rush, rush, rush"? The way we would like at an idea of Ojibwe leadership is that things aren't always spur of the moment. You take some time; you take the pulse of the community. You check it out and then you come back and you can make a decision. Sometimes we get pushed into these other systematic settings, "Come on, make a decision, do it now. What? Who cares if you have to go talk to people? Just you make a decision. You're one person. You're smart enough to do this." There really has to be this idea of shared authority. We really got to get the backing of the people that are involved, the stake holders. (9/19/2009)

She felt that this was the traditional way, the Indian way, of being a leader, taking time to get the pulse of the community. She noted that this style goes against mainstream leadership which demands that leaders meet stringent deadlines and leaders often have to act individually, instead of sharing their authority.

#### Section Summary

Some Ojibwe language warriors were pushed into leadership roles just by the work that they do. They became leaders by focusing on their work and doing it for a long time. Leading by example was a preferred style of leadership among the language warriors. Several addressed their feelings which ranged from excitement to frustration, from battle-fatigue to inspiration, from being scary to being difficult. Some spoke about being too young to be leaders in a traditional society that regards most highly the wisdom of the elders and yet felt the urgent call to take action. Finally, one language warrior spoke about how important it is to share authority, involve the community, follow a more traditional Ojibwe leadership style, and how it cannot be rushed.

## Differences in Ojibwe and Non-Native Leadership

This section compares top-down leadership to bottom-up leadership. It explains the natural or traditional way of Ojibwe leadership. It emphasizes servant leadership and leadership by example as preferred styles of Ojibwe leadership. It mentions how the needs of the community come before the needs of the individual and how authority can be shared. Finally, it describes the crab in the bucket syndrome and how it holds people together, but also holds people back.

### Bottom-up Leadership

Several language warriors commented that in Ojibwe communities, leadership often happens from the bottom-up and in non-Native communities leadership often happens from the top-down. Chi-makwa stated:

It's hard for a Shinaab (Ojibwe slang term for Anishinaabe, Indian) on the bottom to listen to somebody at the top just because he's the boss. You know how that is. The chief is the poorest one. A good leader is someone who does what he expects others to do. You don't just tell, you show them how you do things. You live that life too. Don't have the attitude do what I say, don't do what I do! (1/24/2010)

Chi-makwa mentioned how the traditional chief served the people first and was often the poorest. He led by his example. Giniwgiizhig added,

A lot of Native leaders try to copy Western styles. They push themselves in the front of the line. They try to make themselves leaders by being the first to speak. Native leadership has to do with the situation. If you have something to say you'll get up and say it." He continued, "Don't be in front of the line, if you don't know anything about it. Let the natural leaders in those areas come out instead of forcing your will onto people-say I'm going to be the boss, the head, and push others around. (8/2/2009)

He recognized that leadership in Indigenous communities is situational. Naabekwa agreed,



I think Natives are more hesitant to do things without the consent of people and I think non-Natives if they think it's the right thing they will do it and force everyone to see their point of view. It's top-down, chain of command. Even though there is a bit of that in Anishinaabe culture, it feels more of an idea of consensus, not that you agree with everything, but can you live with this agreement- If there is a groundswell of disapproval, it won't continue. (1/6/2010)

He mentioned the value of reaching consensus in Indigenous communities.

### Servant Leadership

Research showed that in many Indigenous communities, people become leaders by serving others. Gaagigegaabaw spoke about Kizhenaabe ( a kind man), a concept he learned from Tobasonakwut, a former grand chief of Treaty Three in Ontario, Canada. "When a person was between the ages of twenty and forty, he would donate his hunting, trapping, and fishing to the village, especially to those most in need. After that he would be a leader because he had made a contribution." Waabishkimakwa contrasted the cruel power that comes down from other systems, the false hierarchy of who's in charge, and said, "In our system who's in charge is who does it, who's doing the work to be in charge, and who's accepted by the community to be in that place." An Ojibwe concept of "inendaagozi" means she or he is permitted to do it and that's what I believe being accepted by the community means. Waagosh stated, "To be a servant leader- that being from politics to religious leadership to academic leadership- the willingness to serve other people and seeing your leadership as serving a higher purpose- like language preservation and revitalization rather than serving yourself and it is a very different way that leadership is defined in corporate America or in American political structures." He

mentioned that the work language warriors do serves a higher purpose and being a servant to others means putting them first.

### Putting the Community First and Sharing Authority

In Native leadership what's good for the community comes first.

Ogiimaabinesiikwe said, "In non-native leadership one man is in command and he makes the decision. The Native approach is what would be best for everybody and in non-Native politics it is what would be best for me. Native leadership considers the group as a whole rather than considering who is in your club." Another difference may be the willingness to share authority, realizing that one person does not need to have all of the answers. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe said, "The idea of shared authority is really different being able to say I understand this part and person B understands that part of it. You stand side by side, not the hierarchical thing, but you're aware of what others have to contribute and how you all work together." Another aspect of Indigenous leadership is shared authority. Gaagigebines reflected on working for a Native and non-Native boss and how their styles differed and how he felt about them, "When the White supervisor came in everything was documented to the last minute. I feel like producing more if somebody isn't watching the clock. Somewhere, somehow, the Native boss was very charismatic and he motivated others to want to do more for him and as I observed him, how he endeared himself to the people he worked with, he taught me how to treat people, he treated others as equals." There seems to be a much higher regard for authority and the clock in non-Native leadership styles and a higher regard for egalitarianism in Native communities.

### Crabs in the Bucket

Some language warriors spoke about the high regard for egalitarianism also has some negative aspects. Migizi experienced this feeling when he left his reservation to go away to school, “If you leave to do something for yourself, someone will try to bring you down for leaving the rez (slang for reservation). It’s the crab in the bucket syndrome. People tell to you to go get an education, but when you actually do it, people talk bad about you.” The crab in the bucket syndrome speaks about how when a crab tries to get out of the bucket, the other crabs will pull it down. This phenomenon keeps people somewhat equal, but can limit individual and community potential. Pebaamibines, who left his Canadian reserve community for employment opportunities, observed, “I think in Indian communities it’s hard to be a leader because the people who want to do something usually leave the reserve. The ones who stay behind on the reservation are satisfied or are looking for an easy way of life, a mediocre way of life, so they always complain about something.”

### Section Summary

Bottom-up leadership, leading by example, situational leadership, shared authority, egalitarianism are all components of Ojibwe leadership. In Ojibwe communities one is recognized as a leader by their service to others. The needs of the community come first. At times, this can hold back the community and the individuals within it.

## Successful Strategies and Areas of Failure

### What's Been Successful?

The first part of this section focuses on strategies that have succeeded and failed and suggestions for improvement. First, language warriors have looked at other models and learned from them. They saw that most successful programs focused on the very young and used an immersion approach. Another successful strategy is the master-apprentice approach, especially when it is structured. Most language warriors have had close relationships with elders and first speakers. Another strategy is to increase the domains where Ojibwe is spoken. It is the language of ceremony, but it needs to be used in the community. Immersion schools are a good example. There have been successful language camps and language tables. Many of the language warriors have had successful higher education experiences and have been inspired by former teachers. They have all had to do a lot of independent study as well. Two other strategies mentioned are mandating the use of Ojibwe language at the workplace and making it the official language of the reservation. Red Lake has already done this, White Earth was next, and now the other reservations are following suit. There is a need for strong institutions, procedures, curriculum and teachers in order to have strong and successful Ojibwe language programs. Finally, a couple of language warriors identify how important self-motivation has been to their own success.

### Looking at Other Models

Ojibwe Language warriors have looked at and studied other tribal and national efforts in language revitalization and realized the importance that cultural traditionalism

holds in curriculum development. Professional development should not be just Ojibwe-centric. Waawaakeyaash stated. “Look at what’s been done and what programs are there that are training people to learn and to practice more effective ways of teaching. What’s important for self-preservation is focusing on our traditionalism and maintaining that as a foundation of your daily thought, your action. That’s an integral part of your planning in curriculum development.” He’s been supportive of the work that CARLA, an institute at the University of Minnesota has done with immersion education. He has also had the opportunity to travel and observe other immersion programs and met with immersion educators.

Waagosh noted that the Hawaiians, the Maori, the Mohawk, and the Blackfeet have had more success in language revitalization and been at it longer than the Ojibwe. He said, “Their focus has been on the youngest-aged cohort in the development of first language speakers and a culture based approach. Many language warriors felt the immersion strategies have been the most successful in producing speakers. One said, “I’ve seen kids walk away with very good language skills.” Giniwgiizhig shared, “If I were to invest, I would spend it on immersion and documentation. Look at the Israelites- they brought it back to life when it was dead, because the scholars had it and they made a radical decision not to speak anything else- except their own language.” Waagosh commented, “It needs to focus on the living part of language- verbs rather than nouns- actually speaking, using commands, TPR (total physical response) teaching, strategies that tend to be more active. That’s why immersion is more effective, trying to do a little bit of everything for everyone. Chi-makwa stated:

Language immersion is probably the biggest successful thing, schools like Waadookodaading and Niigaane, where the children are learning two languages at once. There is plenty of room in a person's brain to learn three to seven languages all at one time. It's not going to get crowded. It's only going to get better. Our relatives were smarter than us. When the French came, they learned French and when the English came, they spoke English. We shouldn't complain having to learn two languages. (1/24/2010)

He sees the potential for bilingualism, that it is a good thing, and has been part of the history of the Ojibwe people. Even though there is a lot of support for immersion, there were questions about language maintenance after the children complete the program. One language warrior pointed out, "After fifth grade where do our kids go? They've lost it by eighth grade, which is the nature of learning and the nature of being a child. Three years for them at that time is a really long time, especially not having daily interaction with the language."

#### Master-Apprentice Program

Several language warriors had the opportunity to be in formal master-apprentice program and have reflections on their strengths and weaknesses. In the master-apprentice approach, a language student learns from a first language speaker. Ogimaabinesiikwe noted, "I've seen a lot of people over the years just kind of adopt someone as a mentee, kind of an unspoken, and I think that is a really good strategy, just volunteering yourself and teaching those people who are wanting to learn." Saagajiwegaabawiikwe argued that the structured Masters-Apprentice project has been successful in some areas and that some have been unsuccessful because they didn't frame them well, "People didn't set goals for themselves, going forward with intent, always being intent on setting goals and objectives, checking in and evaluating...It's the ones with goals, objectives, evaluative

measures that have been successful.” Waawaakeyaash added, “You can’t leave it all up to the master in the classroom with you to set you straight. You have to be informed what to do and what to try and be adaptive and flexible with your timing, with your strategies.”

### Community Use

Language warriors identified several strategies that they felt would increase community use. Language tables when done well can be successful. Migizi, a doctoral candidate in linguistics at the U of M noted, “They can be good for people, a place to use the language. They need to be more family friendly. Everything can be improved.” Another improvement that was mentioned was to have more structure and direction. People like coming to language tables because besides sharing food, they have an opportunity to learn and to use Ojibwe. Besides language tables, language camps have also been successful, particularly in motivating others to seek for more cultural and Ojibwe language instruction. One language warrior acknowledged how helpful and open the First Nation of Nigigoonsiminikaaning in Canada with their language camp has been to language warriors in the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement, “I see a lot more cultural activities going on and people being really open to sharing those teachings and those language abilities.” Saagajiwegaabawiikwe said, “There needs to be more arenas and places in our communities where we can speak our language, our language of transaction and communication.” Awanigaabaw stated, “Language tables can work in helping learners become fluent, if students are in charge of their learning.” This was true of his experience going to the language table at Mille Lacs. He also stated that language camps and language tables cannot make people fluent, if too much English is used. Chi-

binesi, who started an Ojibwe language and culture camp at Fond du Lac Reservation with his wife and me, shared why he thought language camps were helpful:

Because we let the world know we think it is important to learn more and more of the language. By using Ojibwe artists who teach what they know, we reward those who wish to learn more of what it means to be Anishinaabe. This is the carrot part of the plan. It is a place where fluent speakers can talk among themselves without worrying about whether the listener understands what you are saying. I have always thought the only thing harder than learning Ojibwemowin is knowing Ojibwemowin and having no one to talk to. Maybe we could have more than one a year.  
(1/3/2011)

He feels that language and language camps can help motivate others to learn more Ojibwe and that they can cultural activities at the same time. It is also a place where fluent speakers can be together.

#### Higher Education

Some language warriors felt that the U of M had been helpful in developing their passion and understanding of Ojibwe language and culture and motivated them to pursue careers in it. Waabishkimakwa noted that the post-secondary movement has provided students the opportunity to begin or continue Ojibwe language studies.

#### Mandates

Two other successful strategies mentioned were having workplaces that mandate learning Ojibwe and adopting an official language policy. Naabekwa noted, "A school or work situation where you are mandated to learn language and show progress in learning language. It's been done in Red Lake. Put some teeth behind it and make it a requirement of your employment. In order to work here, you have to show



improvement.” Another is having an official language policy. Red Lake Nation declared Ojibwe as its official language in April of 2010.

### Strong Institutions

Waagosh said, “Grouping resources tends to be more efficient, not putting too many eggs in one basket. You have to have strong institutions, procedures, curriculum, not just strong teachers...If you have a strong curriculum you could make your teachers and students stronger at the same time and be a lot more efficient.” Strengthening the curriculum could be beneficial to both the teachers and the students

### Self-motivation

Finally, a couple of language warriors said that self-motivation led to their success. Awanigaabaw argued, “Did anyone have to beg me? No. No one begged us. Either it’s in there or it’s not. I don’t know how to put it there in others. I don’t think it’s possible. It’s individual. You’ll never get fluent with an attitude that someone is brighter and therefore they became fluent. You have to have a positive, I’m going to get fluent-attitude.” Another spoke about perseverance, “Never give up! Never give up hope! Voice an aspiration! Be active, not passive. Gii-ayaangwaamizi awiia (Somebody persevered). They hung in there and never gave up.”

### What Is Not Working?

The second part of this section focuses on what has failed. First, one language warrior addresses a past practice of talking about things with no follow-up action. Then, some language warriors discuss language teachers and their methods. Some are inadequately prepared for classroom teaching. Some teach more grammar than

conversation and some, who go too fast, leave students behind. One language warrior identified problems when programs are poorly planned or the teachers are less than fluent in immersion settings. Finally, one language warrior addresses the need to share what one has learned with others and not to let one's ego get in the way. Another speaks about putting the children first.

#### Talk without Action Goes Nowhere

Some language warriors felt that in the past many Ojibwe people spent time talking about things and not getting much done, but now the emphasis has changed to action. Chi-makwa recalled, "In the old days we would talk more and put less into action. We were trying to figure out what the status was of the situation and the best for going forward, spinning our wheels. The most common denominator among all the groups now is not let's just talk about it, let's not sit around asking permission, let's just do it."

#### Inadequate Teacher Preparation, Methods, and Planning

The language warriors noted that Ojibwe language teachers need to be better prepared. Some elementary school Ojibwe language teachers were not successful in creating fluent students. Some had the students just color pictures. Pebaamibines suggested, "The teacher doesn't have the motivation or is burned out or doesn't have the training or doesn't see the big picture." Waagosh noted, "One of the biggest complaints about language programs is that they're not well-designed, they are not sequenced. Kids learn a list of ten animals and how to count to ten and then when they go up to the next grade the kids learn the same list of ten animals and they learn how to count to ten. It

just doesn't grow and twenty minutes every other day is not consistent enough to really develop.”

Naabekwa commenting on how some teachers emphasize grammar stated, “I think the idea of the bilingual type of teaching is a glacial process...It's effective to help you understand the language, but not effective in just learning how to speak. If they learn immersion and then go back and study structures, they'll have more tools to say different things.” Grammar can be overemphasized. Teachers talk about the structure of the language instead of teaching the language. Gaagigebines agreed, “We have instructors out there who are heavy into describing grammar and the language people who walk out of there are not as orally fluent as they could be... We have to keep it in balance.”

Sometimes language teachers go too fast. Ogimaabinesiikwe said, “The Gekinoo'amagejig program at UMD left some people behind. I know that from personal experience that if I didn't have the passion that I had to be a language warrior, I would have fallen through the cracks years ago.”

Waawaakeyaash stated, “If you call yourself immersion and then put teachers in the classroom that can't speak more than ten words of Ojibwe, who can't carry on a conversation of fifteen seconds in Ojibwe, you're not immersion. You might not even be a second language class.” He continued pointing out how programs that are not well-planned out are set up for failure. He said, “No way can you carry on your program without being thorough enough in checking people out before you hire them, not thinking enough program changes, not thinking how much immersion pedagogy can be applied to

every classroom teaching right down to what you want them to say, what you want them to do. If you haven't thought that far, you're setting yourself up."

### Not Working with Native Speakers

Some language warriors noted that sometimes Native speakers are not worked with or not listened to closely, so some materials lack authenticity and accuracy.

Waabishkimakwa noted:

I would say where within our professional practice I wish we could work better with our elders to put their voices in the center. Second-language voices go first in our formal approaches and there are still so many good first language speakers out there. I wish we could do a better of empowering those voices to come forth. It's important to listen to the first speakers and to learn from them. In their passing the necessity to do this is more urgent than ever before. (1/15/2010)

He pointed out that there are first language speakers who are still alive and whose voices need to be put in the center.

### Too Much Negativity

Some language warriors mentioned that when we cease to help others in our community, we fail. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe noted, "Some younger language learners have learned to a really high proficiency and they choose not to share that because it gives them a sense of perceived coolness or power. They don't want to share that because they think that they might lose that status." She continued, "It's not good when our egos and our pride and ourselves get in the way of helping others." Another language warrior added that the focus needs to be on the kids, "I think we don't have time to reinvent the wheel and we don't have time to fight one another." He commented that fighting over writing and dialect issues have caused setbacks. He added, "We need

to focus on the kids and the work ahead. The kids are all eager to learn. We shouldn't have to fight our own people about a culturally-based approach.”

### Section Summary

In the first part of this section, Ojibwe language warriors discussed how it was helpful to study other tribal and national efforts of language revitalization. They realized the importance of traditionalism, the preservation of the traditional way of life, in curriculum development. They found that the focus has been on immersion settings especially for the very young. One language warrior addressed how Ojibwe people had been bilingual in the past from contact with the French and then the English and he promoted bilingualism. The language warriors were concerned about language maintenance after the students completed immersion. Next, language warriors described the master-apprentice program and noted that the most successful master-apprentice programs are the ones that are well-structured. Many of the language warriors have worked closely with elders, first language speakers. They, then, spoke about creating safe places for language outside of the classroom. They spoke about language tables, where people gather together to eat and to speak and learn the language. Those that were well-planned out and student-led are the most successful. Language camps were helpful, especially if a lot of Ojibwe is spoken, and many language warriors, who have visited and been at camp at Nigigoonsimini-kaaning, a Canadian first nation community, where several language warriors are from, expressed gratitude for receiving teachings and openness. The University of Minnesota and some other higher institutions have inspired students to begin or continue their studies of the Ojibwe language and have inspired them

to set up programs and take leadership in the movement. A couple of schools have mandated that their staff work increase their Ojibwe language skills. Red Lake Nation was the first reservation in Minnesota to declare Ojibwe to be their official language. White Earth has also done this. Finally, a couple of language warriors addressed how self-motivation was what made them successful Ojibwe language students and it is difficult, if not impossible, to motivate others to learn Ojibwe.

In the second part of this section, language warriors addressed areas of failure. One talked about a past practice of talking about things with no follow-through. He noted that today there is much more action than in the past. Then they discussed inadequate teacher preparation, methods, and planning. They spoke about how some teachers have students color pictures and learn lists of animals and numbers, and how a bilingual approach was very slow. Some teachers push grammar too hard and conversational Ojibwe not enough. Some teachers go too fast and students get left behind and drop out. One expressed the need to choose teachers more carefully, holding them to a high level of fluency, and planning programs more carefully. Another language warrior spoke about the need to empower first language speakers and encouraged the second language speakers to learn from them and to put the first language speakers' voices in the center. Finally, a couple language warriors addressed issues of negativity. One spoke about how egos can get in the way of sharing what you know with others, while another language warrior spoke about putting the children first, and not fighting about orthography and dialect issues.

## Challenges, Needs and Priorities of the Movement: Tasks That Lie Ahead

Working closely and carefully with the elders who are passing away, doing accurate documentation, recruiting, training and retaining qualified teachers who are fluent in Ojibwe, securing funding, motivating others to value Ojibwe, and fighting against the pressures of negativity, divisiveness, and dominant society are discussed in this section. The language warriors vary in their thoughts about what the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement need most. For a language to survive, there are several needs, but one of the greatest is to have a large number of speakers. There is a need for more people to become Ojibwe speakers. Other ways to make the movement stronger are also explored.

### Using First Language Speakers

The language warriors acknowledge the lack of first speakers of Ojibwe, Bebaamaashiikwe noted, “At LCO (Lac Courte Oreilles) there aren’t very many speakers left. We’re lacking people, definitely, fluent speakers. We’re pretty lucky that we’ve kind of built some collaborative partnerships with other groups that are trying to do the same thing. We’ve kind of been leaning on other communities for help.”

Waabishkimakwa added, “I think developing opportunities for students, not just resources, but the opportunity to speak, for them to get that real life, real world practice with speakers.” He noted that teachers can facilitate opportunities for students to speak outside of the classroom. The first speakers of Ojibwe are dying. Gaagigegaabaw noted, “Our Gete-anishinaabeg (old people) are going to pass. They’re going to go home- *Wii-kiiwewag-* and that’s going to be really, really difficult, because they’re irreplaceable, um,

it will be difficult to get a lot of that important source knowledge when they inevitably pass. So, there's a time constraint with that on how we can document our language to preserve it for the generations that are going to come." Awanigaabaw, who received his doctorate in linguistics and worked closely with the elders at the Ojibwe language table at Mille Lacs, commented on the importance of working with the elders, the first speakers:

When they get a little older, they're harder to work with. They lose their hearing. Other challenges to the movement are not enough people are doing it. There are not enough people working with the elders, not utilizing them while they are here. It seems like people attain a little fluency; then, they stop learning. They stop working. Maybe that's not true, but it's what I see. We're not utilizing them enough and the work I do see being done with them needs to be more rigorous. The stuff they're publishing needs to be correct, especially their transcriptions and their translations. That can be improved. It's a struggle. It's hard to do that, especially if they pass away. (5/9/2009)

He emphasized the need to document the elders and to be more accurate in the transcriptions and translations. It is urgent as the first speakers are quickly passing away.

### Building up the Critical Mass

A need for more people to get involved was expressed by several language warriors. Communities and individuals both need to make a commitment toward using the language. Giniwgiizhig said, "You could study Ojibwe or play Blackjack on the computer. Tribal council has to make a choice." He means that there is a need to prioritize your time and decide what is more important, playing on the computer or studying Ojibwe. Tribal council needs to prioritize the Ojibwe language and make it a national policy. Waabishkimakwa believes that communities need a reality check, that there is a problem, the language is dying, and they may need ideas. Ogimaabinesiiikwe mentioned all the roles and skills that are needed and added, "We need the support of



everybody within the community. The movement definitely needs people who see the importance in language and culture in their future and their children's future and want to have that for their families and their communities." Waawaakeyaash believes that people need to get involved and want to get involved, but don't know how. He said, "They need a part in it. They got to get involved. Many people want to get involved, but don't know what to do or are so busy." Waagosh spoke about the need for a critical mass of people learning it as their first language, second-language learners, dedicated apprentices at ceremony, and we need people who are working at it" and added, "A loss of a speaker is only a true loss if s/he is not replaced by a new speaker."

#### Increasing the Domains Where Ojibwe Is Spoken

Some language warriors commented on the strategy of increasing domains where Ojibwe is spoken. The most common place Ojibwe is used now is at ceremonies. Chi-Makwa stated, "It would help if the language of our economy was Ojibwe and if we went to work or school or church or to the store and that the people communicated to us in Ojibwe." Noting that it wasn't really happening anymore, he added, "We should have a rule of thumb that everybody who knows Ojibwe, even if not totally fluent, has the obligation to teach at least two people. Those people have the obligation to teach at least two, so the numbers would grow exponentially. We need to get that base bigger and bigger."

#### The Need to Be Needed

Waawaakeyaash jokingly told me to shut off the tape recorder and get to work. He felt that the movement needs "a kick in the ass." He said, "People need to be inspired

and motivated, excited, thrilled, validated, recognized, and they need to be needed.” He continued, “It’s going to be a struggle for a while. I come home frustrated almost every night and my wife said, ‘Maybe you’re just a catalyst for change.’ We envision a great goal and maybe we’re just players in a piece of it in time. My wife is the voice of reason and I’m the fanatic.” He shared his feelings of frustration and spoke about how his wife has been a good support for him. Migizi expressed a similar need, “More successful second language speakers need to be getting attention, getting credit from first speakers from reservation communities, kind of highlighted if you could just get more positive support. We just have a purism. If you make mistakes, people are over-corrective. It does more damage than good.” He stated that second language speakers are sometimes criticized for language errors that they make and that over-correction may do more harm than good. Also, second language speakers need more encouragement and support.

### The Need for Leadership

Leadership within the movement is another need that was expressed by the language warriors. Naabekwa stated:

It needs leadership. It needs to find people who are able to work with people really well, that have clear vision and juggle all these different balls that are going on and also keep them together. Maybe, it’s a group of people, but we need leadership. Someone who has the time and energy, who says damn it we’re going to make this central place, someone who can get people together, and get people excited about each other and what we’re doing and that’s a tough thing in Anishinaabe country. That’s a tough sell because there always that negativity, but if there is someone who can help people put the negative stuff aside and look at what we’ve got and go after it.(1/16/2010)

Naabekwa identified qualities of leadership needed in the movement. He stated that the negativity in Anishinaabe country can be destructive and a needs to be put aside.

Anishinaabe country describes all places where Ojibwe Indians live and really is a world view.

### Creating a Literary Tradition

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe said, “Literacy materials are very lacking if we want to have a school. We have to come up with something. Our kids have to read and write. Our kids have to be able to process in that manner in order for it to transfer over to their English language skills.” Waagosh suggested, “Documenting literature, we need a thousand more books with one word per page and we need a thousand more complicated books that have the most intricate use of language that there is and everything in between and we have a few little pieces here and there some nice historical texts that people are working on transcriptions for.” He added, “One of the things that has really helped the Native Hawaiians has been their long literary tradition before their language loss that they have been able to tap into in their language recovery.” Waawaakeyaash stated:

There are no Ojibwe authors really writing stuff other than transcribing elder’s narratives which are really great. There’s not a group of people actively publishing stuff, books on whatever, news. You might look at any other written resource or any other print resource of any other language. You’ve got advertisements, you’ve got literature, you have news, all sorts of stuff, all the different genres of writing and commentary and written word from any other language. (4/3/2009)

He recommended a group of people working together to create and publish materials in various genres. Awanigaabaw acknowledged that materials that get published need to be more accurate. He observed, “I think things get black and white in a book and people think they’re correct. Things that get published need to be reviewed.” He continued, “It’s why I do linguistics. I’m going to be doing a lot of research and in the future it will be a

goal of mine to produce materials that are not just rehashing of the old stuff ... we need research to figure out what we still don't know about the language before these elders pass on." It is invaluable work that fluent, Indigenous linguists can contribute to the study of Ojibwe and it needs to be done while the first language speakers are still alive.

Ogimaabinesiikwe stated that there are many resources out there for people who want to speak Ojibwe, but not a lot out there for people who want to teach Ojibwe, "So as far as curriculum, it has to be one of our biggest issues. If you look at the Hawaiians and how far they've come and what they have and you look at Ojibwe curriculum availability it is very, very slim and it is very difficult for the teachers who are teaching in that area." Naabekwa added, "We need books, not just wordlists, but things that document the real everyday conversational writing." Ajidamok added, "As an immersion school we struggle with the charter rules and regulations. We have to abide by their rules and it causes a clash between cultures." She addressed the conflict of two cultures and how the added expectations add pressure and affect immersion and the personal lives of the staff.

Many materials need to be created. Some language warriors stated that curriculum development is "creative" and "exciting", but it is also "exhausting." More multi-media materials need to be created to enhance learning and engage students. Naabekwa mentioned, "One of my biggest wishes is that we have kind of like a 'Rosetta Stone' type program someday, where we'd have a visual dictionary with moving pictures. I think some of the things can't be well expressed in just stationary pictures in print. I think anything would be better with audio accompaniment." He continued, "A visual dictionary, and things that will engage kids on their level. Not necessarily vocab stuff,

but video games and cartoons that put our language out there.” Ombishkibines spoke about how his daughter was learning Spanish from watching Dora, “She would watch Dora movies and pick up Spanish. We need to make movies in Ojibwe... and continue to have stuff to watch and listen to throughout our lives.” Waagosh added, “We just need a lot more audio and interactive software stuff you know that approaches language with visual things. Some learners respond better to audio, some better to writing, some better to visual, something that’s a mixed media thing.” He also mentioned the need for web-based dictionaries that are in their infancy. Gaagigegaabaw has worked hard to make Ojibwe more accessible through the use of technology. He said, “One thing I’d really like to improve on is getting the materials out to students, uh, out to people who really have genuine interest in learning the language.” Giniwgiizhig stated, “Media, we need language TV stations, language radio stations, language programs that you can turn the radio on and listen to language.”

Nagamo-inini mentioned the need for dialogues, “Conversational material like dialogues that present question/answer exchanges about ordinary activities—the kind of “communicative competence” materials that are available for other languages.” Migizi added, “Where you can see and hear speakers in action instead of just trying to memorize it and trusting yourself with pronunciation. Mary Hermes and John Nichols are working on a big Ojibwe conversation grant.” Saagajiwegaabawiikwe commented, “We don’t have a lot of examples of interpersonal communication... and the pragmatics of our language, different aspects like that of our language.” She continued, “If you have first speakers in your community, you know that’s a hell of a resource to have and you have to

treasure that and do what you can. Then you have to learn about elicitation techniques. What is going to make an effective time spent with this first speaker? Paper and pencil methods don't get people speaking. Waabishkimiigwan stated, "People have to speak to each other basically. It's not about taking classes and passing. It's about people speaking to each other in Ojibwe,"

### Training, Recruiting, and Retaining Qualified Teachers

The language warriors also spoke about the challenge of training, recruiting, and retaining qualified teachers who are fluent in Ojibwe. Many language warriors have worked closely with the elders and now are stepping forward to start, lead, and work in the Ojibwe Language Revitalization Movement. Ogimaabinesiikwe commented on the rigor of the training, when she said that she had "seen people over the years opt out from learning anymore language or trying to further their education as far as becoming immersion educators or even language educators. It is something you have to have the passion for, but also you have to be willing to put the work into it." Nagamowinini, who has served on the school board of an immersion school, mentioned the challenge of "producing teachers who are fluent in the language and also have good teaching skills, plus the necessary teacher certification." Waawaakeyaash added:

Growing, keeping, and expanding the number of highly fluent immersion teachers is probably one of the biggest challenge. The amount of work that is being handled by a small number of people is really hard. The amount of work that we do as a collective is huge for the number of us. It's gigantic. A lot of people don't realize it. They don't see all the other stuff. They just think you're just another elementary teacher. (4/3/2009)

The language warriors are able to speak about other language warriors whom they know who have burned out. One of the challenges is retaining teachers and directors due to the workload. Pebaamibines observed:

The greatest challenge has been to stay focused and to stay committed. A lot of people get charged up and they want to teach the language, but then they burn out. So language warriors need to revitalize themselves. They need to find energy in the movement. They need to know that it's more than language. It's revitalizing a way of life. So when people have a commitment- I think it's the impact it will have, when people make a lifelong commitment to it and that's the key. (4/15/2009)

He believes that being a language warrior is a way of life, a lifelong commitment, and that language warriors need to revitalize themselves. Awanigaabaw shared an insight about how hard it is for second language speakers to be truly qualified and that he has come to realize that not just anybody can do it. He said, "I initially thought that second language speakers who attain a certain level of fluency would be able to notice these things that we don't know yet. I have come to find out that they don't. Maybe they're not looking for them, or they stop noticing, or their skills are not there to be able to do the research." He has gained linguistic insights about Ojibwe that second language speakers who are not trained in linguistics are missing.

Several language warriors spoke about the need to create more demanding language classes on all levels. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe stated, "Really challenging and progressively scaffolding Ojibwe language courses at area colleges, at area schools, any educational institution from our local schools on through our colleges and universities are really missing." Waawaakeyaash agreed, "More short-term perhaps would be really good language programs- extremely top-notch really high demanding, challenging language

programs that in four years create fluent speakers or very, very advanced level speakers.” He then spoke about the need for recruitment. He said, “If universities or higher education are interested in pursuing it, they got to start growing their possible candidates way back, even going into high schools and talking to the students there and having them participate actively in some of the things that the immersion schools might be doing.” Ajidamok noted “I wish we could take that whole group and just go somewhere for a year and just go into deep immersion. I think we’re right on the tip of the ice, because we’re second language learners; we’re on the edge of going over. It seems like we can get this far... but then all of these other forces in life interfere.”

Naabekwa accerted, “I think we need to take a look at who gets a license to teach the language these days. I think if it was my way, I wouldn’t even be teaching right now. I wish that we could find a way to put our elders and our speakers in a place that they deserve to be, teaching, and paying them accordingly.” Bebamaashiikwe reflected, “Here we are at this immersion school and it’s like spinning our wheels trying to have more teachers that are qualified and not just being fluent or proficient at that level, but having the state licensure, which is another hoop that people have to jump through... I think we’d be better prepared if we were able to get that degree, having another strong foundation being the language. Waawaakeyaash suggested,

Um, I think we should revamp all the university programs right now that offer Ojibwe and we should begin to assess them more often with more effective assessment tools that give us an idea of the type of language being used and how accurate it is and the applicability of it as well as the rate and depth of the type of proficiency we’re building and the type of speakers we’re creating or not creating and use that data to start to improve the programs. I don’t think we’re tracking any of it. We’re not using any effective assessment tools and to have some sort of assessment



committee or group of individuals comprised of a number of different backgrounds Fluency is the key, you know, that's the focal point and start looking at it that way and building the resources to do it. (4/3/2009)

Waawaakeyaash emphasized the need for more effective assessment tools. Ojibwe needs to be offered for four years in college. Waabishkimakwa noted, "I think what we need to do is extend our programs, especially at post-secondary. Even in Canada, I could take a whole course of study in French language. In fact, I could do so in the US – Spanish language, Italian, German – degrees in that. Where is our degree in Ojibwemowin?"

Bebaamaashiikwe reflected on the need for four-year degrees in Ojibwe:

I would really love to see a University offer a degree in Ojibwe Language. Partly because I think that's a legitimate desire. This is Ojibwe country. It's great that they offer Dakota or Ojibwe, but two years? What can you do with two years? It is really much more of an appreciation of the language. I don't think that it is really fair to only offer two years. I'd love to see a really stellar four year program where you come out really able to talk and speak with people. Having had French and taken the requirements of college level that was required to graduate from college, I was able to converse. I was able to dream in French. I don't think that that is too much to ask to have that kind of Ojibwe language degree for those people. I know a lot of people that have had the same kind of two year program that I've had and it is not enough to have you prepared to do immersion. There's a lot that you have to do on your own to bring your skills to a level that is appropriate for that. Even so I feel that my skills are limited. The whole conversational ability to just sit down and have a conversation with a fluent speaker would be a challenge for me. The whole conversational piece is missing. I'd like to see more of that. (9/19/2009)

She recalled how two years of language isn't enough and isn't fair. She did not feel prepared to do immersion or to converse. Other language warriors agreed and recommended that the courses could be more demanding.

## Getting Our Communities Speaking

Several language warriors focused on the need to build up a critical mass of speakers. Bezhig-giizhig noticed, “I think what needs to be improved is a method of instilling a real desire to apply oneself to the language.” Giniwgiizhig said, “We need to develop language passion, language necessity.” Chi-makwa suggested:

In the bigger picture what I’d like to see is the tribal officials in the state of Minnesota take a greater role and responsibility in revitalizing the language. If the reservations, like Leech Lake, are ever going to turn out mass numbers of speakers, it is because the tribal officials have decided that this is important. They’re going to start learning it themselves and using the language during their meetings and all of their important functions. (9/24/2009)

Chi-makwa mentioned the need to encourage the people within tribal governments to use Ojibwe. He believes that they can be role-models to the rest of the people.

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe, speaking about creating safe places for the language, said,

Experiences, environments, in which we can speak our language...a place for our language. That is part of the reason why we started our school. Where are these kids going to go to learn this language that we want them to learn? ...They say where is this adult second language learner going to learn this language? You have to create it. (9/19/2009)

Gaagigegaabaw said, “That ‘s been really hard to get resources outside of the classroom that are authentic, especially from first language speakers who are invaluable to share their knowledge or share their speech patterns with students who want to learn the language.” He continued, “If we can get our communities to use our languages as much as we do in the classroom, then we’re going to really start succeeding.” Pebaamibines noted, “We need more language camps. We need more people to develop language immersion opportunities...We need more schools like Waadookodaading that are

committed to immersion education. If our language is going to survive, we need to do it in the language.” Giniwgiizhig, who advocates for an Ojibwe Notre Dame, said, “Well, let’s have a place where we can learn it, let’s have our own monks, our own students learning about drum society, learning about medicines, healthy life styles and learning the language of ceremonies, and the universe how it is structured, and being able to talk in Ojibwe and learning our history and legends.” He promoted the immersion grounds at Rutledge, but said it is hard for him to get there.

Waabishkimakwa noted, “We have a lot of kids going into the public school system who can take Ojibwe. They never reach fluency. So why is that? What we’re trying to do is to make materials that really shift the paradigm of teaching from words and memorization and grammar to where you are teaching more of a conversation and more of an immersion style.” Waawaakeyaash added, “In the communities themselves—really beef up the immersion programs, ensure that they can go K-12, which means preparing the teachers, having the language, having the immersion pedagogy instruction, having the curriculum development, and then the financial backing to do all that.

Saagajiwegaabawiikwe observed:

Language tables have become really popular and that’s a really good place and a really good entry point, too. That’s a really good support place in communities. That’s been really effective and that’s been really helpful. As long as you got them organized... I’ve been to a few different language tables that were nothing but English language chat for the entire evening.  
(1/16/2010)

She addressed the need for language tables to really use Ojibwe. Recognizing that the language has to be brought into the home, Pebaamibines stated, “We need to have speakers of Ojibwe that are born into the language. A good example of that would be

Keller Paap and his wife. They speak to their children in Ojibwe. We need to grow our speakers. The greatest resource we can have is our children.” Chi-makwa, who is close to retiring from his career as a lawyer, said, “I would like to do language revitalization and ceremonies and cultural things for the rest of my life, and then teach that, help teach young kids learn about these things and make sure this way of life goes on.”

Naabekwa observed: “We need to learn the kinds of things that we really need to know. So we recover ourselves as Anishinaabeg and the way we are supposed to behave in various situations. Studies like that would be huge.” Giniwgiizhig proposed, “Infuse language in your institutional system and to do that, not just in education, but to make it a national goal in your tribal constitution as part of your continuing education and training to have those kinds of requirements.” He added, “Slowly but surely we’re reconstituting ourselves as Indian people, Indian organizations, institutes moving toward language.” The language warriors have an optimistic outlook on the future and a strong belief that the Ojibwe language will come back.

### Raising the Status of Ojibwe

Another challenge that the language warriors expressed is to motivate others about the importance of Ojibwe. Naabekwa said, “The core strength we need for our people to really understand is the reason why the language is so important and what can happen. They kind of know what it feels like to not have it and that’s why you see so much *giibaadiziwin* (foolishness). We’re searching. That message somehow needs to be delivered to people. I don’t know how to do that.” He acknowledged that it is not easy to change people’s minds and hearts. Ajidamok added, “Sometimes, as Indian people, the

greatest challenges that we have are other Indian people. It takes a lot to try and overcome that image that if you know your language you might not make it in the White world. It was instilled in people a long time ago and it is really hard to get it away from us. We need to instill in people that learning the language actually helps you. It helped me in my life. It helped my children.” She addressed how the language has helped her and her children and that many Indian people still hold onto anti-Indian language and cultural beliefs that have been passed down through the boarding school era. Chi-makwa observed how there is generational trauma:

The Federal Pendulum has swung from one end to the other. A lot of our people suffered through some of those phases. When they were taken away to boarding school and taught not to speak the language and they were humiliated, a lot of things happened to them. Even today I know elders who are seventy to eighty years old and they know the language, but they can't or won't speak it. Those kinds of feelings are generational. They get passed on from generation to generation. A lot of us grew up with the idea that there must be something wrong with the language. If I know that, it doesn't get me a job, it doesn't get me a home, it doesn't help me to support my family, and it makes us wonder if all that stuff is what we are supposed to be doing. Those are the kinds of things that I feel are being roadblocks in the way for people. (8/24/2009)

Chi-makwa addressed the doubts that many Native people have about the value of retaining the Native culture and the language. Saagajiwegaabawiikwe spoke about people who are not language positive. She said, “We have a lot of hurt feelings in our communities and a lot of damaged emotions about our language. The challenges are getting the folks together to heal about it, to talk about it, the socio-cultural ideas of the functions of our language. The reality of what we have. Just getting our communities educated and talking about it again, that's a challenge.” She also expressed the negativity that people feel about the language and hard it is to heal. Bezhig-giizhig pointed out the

need for a critical mass of speakers to keep the language alive and noted that in the Twin Cities the number of fluent speakers is becoming few and far between.

Waabishkimiigwan raised the question:

What would make that person who's mostly concerned with paying the bills and taking care of the family to say, "Oh, I gotta learn and here's how I'm going to do it." And that's a decision every person has to make and not the few people who are the language warriors. Everybody has to decide that or enough people have to decide that so there's a momentum, and if there's a momentum, then it becomes easier for people to learn. (1/17/2010)

She described how a critical mass of speakers and a momentum in the movement will make it easier for others to learn. Waagosh noted how overcoming past history is a big challenge:

Our people have become so systematically disempowered over time. When we look back, people did everything for themselves, make their own clothes, catch the animals that they made their clothes with. People can't do that anymore. It's like people lost the will to even want to do that. They waited for their check to go to Walmart to buy their clothes. They wait for their comods [commodities]. They wait for others to do things for us that people have forgotten how to do things for themselves. That's probably what kills our language movement number one, because nobody can learn the language for you, not a single person. That's what you have to do and we know it's hard work. It's a lot of studying and commitment to really do it well, but a lot of people aren't there. In some ways it encourages a sense of independence, a spirit of personal resourcefulness that's been removed a couple of generations ago, so in that way learning Ojibwe is profoundly empowering. (1/16/2010)

Waagosh identified a helplessness and lack of motivation fostered by government paternalism. People cannot learn Ojibwe as a second language without hard work and commitment

## Funding

The language warriors identified funding as a major challenge. It was noted that tribal councils support the language politically, but are not always willing to commit the necessary resources toward language revitalization. Migizi noted that “Waadookodaading is struggling with funding-based grants and donations. I would like to see some of the casino and gaming revenue go to language revitalization supporting programs that are in place. It’s hard to compete with local schools.” Funding is important in running immersion programs, paying teachers, and developing and purchasing curriculum materials. Waawaakeyaash commented on how grant-writing has burned out many directors of immersion programs.

Although Chi-makwa stated his belief that it’s people, not money that’s going to save Ojibwe, Migizi pointed out, “I’d like to see more support from tribes. Each tribe could fund some of the projects and some of the resources that come out, so maybe one group would not have to pay so much.” Awanigaabaw added that immersion teachers are underpaid, “It would be better if they could pay these teachers more. They get tired, as you well know. There are not very many people who can do the job.” Ojibwe immersion teachers are rare and spend many hours outside of their teaching day to create their curriculum.

## Confronting Negativity and Divisiveness

Feelings of negativity and divisiveness among the Ojibwe people are big challenges. Chi-makwa, who has spent the last decade learning his ceremonial ways and working on learning the language, sees Christianity as a challenge. He stated, “Another

big issue, too, is Christianity because we've had our native religions and practices since time immemorial and you know the Christians are just newcomers on this earth, and yet they've had a huge influence on our folks. They ended up with the deed to our lands and we ended up with the bible in our hands." On the one hand, studies have stated that most Christian missionaries have not valued Native spirituality or Native languages and that the churches have been a part of the assimilation process. On the other hand, some Christian Indians have felt that those who are Mide [traditional Ojibwe religion] feel that they have an exclusive right to the language. Nagamo-inini stated:

Some Mide folks are full of negative reaction toward Christianity, and they sometimes tend to convey the impression that only they have a right to the Ojibwe language. People have to realize that while Mide people need the language, they don't own the language, and all Ojibwe people (no matter what their blood quantum is) not only have a right to know Ojibwe, but they need to know it. (1/5/2010)

Besides religion, another divisive area is dialect. Waabishkimakwa stated, "The dialect issue, and some of these BIA divisions that now have become primal, of primal importance, those are destructive and nonhelpful things." He further addressed the need "to assess where we are at with our language ability and to do it with respect and integrity for people's self-esteem and for where we are as a people. We have been systematically beat up and we should not beat ourselves up." It should be noted that there are turf issues and some of those who are teaching others do not want their students going to those whom they do not approve of. Ombishkibines observed that "different teachers not agreeing with each other. A lot of speakers aren't teachers... They don't like you to go to someone else when they feel you are learning from them... I know there are a lot of people that are badmouthing each other when we should all be helping each other as far



as teachers.” He identified some of the negative attitudes that some Ojibwe teachers and speakers have towards others and that it is not helpful to learners. These disagreements may stem from different dialects, approaches, beliefs, backgrounds or abilities.

Some language warriors see dominant society as a challenge.

Giniwgiizhig stated:

Dominant society is a barrier because it’s all in English. Everything that’s attached to it, all of the systems, take mass media, turn the TV on, the radio on, go rent DVDs, playing X box, everything’s in English, our world, everything we’re surrounded by, is our greatest challenge. What’s the solution? How do we change that? Just like my mother back in the 60s and the 70s, she created change in the systems to have opportunities for Indians in that English system. We need to create change in our Indian systems to have our Indian systems become Indian, to become Anishinaabe, so we need to struggle to create change where we work for language to be a priority, for language to be part of our recovery, alcoholism, social violence. What is the cure? Part of that is language and our Indian ways, to have that *bimaadiziwin* (life) again, to have that good life, that healthy life, so we need to put that in our goals and objectives. We need to change to put it in our priorities and make that change in our social systems and our economic systems. If you want to be a social worker on the reservation, you have to speak Indian, because we’re going to take our students, our clients to ceremony to get that good health and we’re going to take them to the tent shake to find out what’s wrong and what the prescription is for them to get healthy again and to build those networks. It’s a systems approach. I think our battle is with dominant society and to change that system and to Indigenize our own systems.  
(8/2/2009)

He emphasized the need for a systems approach to make the Ojibwe language a priority and the Indian systems Anishinaabe (Indian). He sees fighting the battle to make this happen as an important step in healing and in gaining *bimaadiziwin* (life).

### Section Summary

In conclusion, the language warriors identified the need to work closely with the elders who are passing away. There is a sense of urgency and also a demand to do more accurate documentation. Some language warriors felt that there needed to be more awareness. Gaagigebines encouraged me to finish my dissertation because it would give people an opportunity to see what's happening in the movement. The need for programming that produced speakers, more involvement of elders and first language speakers in the movement and in immersion classrooms, and individual responsibility were mentioned. Four major needs that were identified by the majority of language warriors were the need for more people, increasing the domains where Ojibwe is used, increasing positive support, and the need for leadership. It was mentioned how difficult it is to recruit, train, and retain qualified teachers who are fluent in Ojibwe. They spoke about the need for funding.

Then, language warriors identified the loss of first language speakers and the need to connect with those who are still around. They stated the need to establish a literary tradition in the Ojibwe language and how it helped the Native Hawaiians in their revitalization efforts. Ojibwe authors are needed. Many genres of literature need to be developed. Technology can enhance language learning and make it more accessible and engaging. They expressed the need for more authentic conversational printed and audiovisual materials. Next, the language warriors spoke about the need to improve teacher training, develop more fluency, and increase the standards for licensure. The language warriors recommended that four years of Ojibwe at the university level should

be developed for immersion teachers. Then, they suggested ideas that would promote language use on the community-level. The public schools need to work harder to produce fluency in Ojibwe. One language warrior suggested that each tribe could do more to fund revitalization projects and another said that immersion schools need to pay their teachers better in order to retain them.

Some people do not value Ojibwe, so there is a need to persuade them about its importance. The negativity and divisiveness that exists within the community can destroy programs and discourage individuals. They identified how pervasive dominant society and English is and how language warriors need to battle against forces of assimilation and to Indigenize the system.

#### Chapter Summary

First, perspectives on knowledge, success, and power were identified. The language warriors value all kinds of knowledge. Many are still working on advanced degrees. They all value spiritual knowledge and many are involved in and have leadership roles in traditional ceremonial life. They believe that every culture has value and the Ojibwe language and culture is an important part of a larger puzzle. Those working in immersion settings have a lot to learn, including grant-writing and the use of technology. Regarding success, many felt that group success was more important than individual success. Increasing their fluency and that of their students was very important. Many felt that happiness was success and one said that accomplishing what you were put on the earth to do and using your gifts to help the people were examples of success. Power was defined as the ability to take care of yourself and others, reaching your goals

and making progress respectfully, being sovereign, influencing others, and creating change. Many felt that spiritual power is the most important power.

Second, motivating others was discussed. Some of the language warriors felt that they were able to motivate others, while a couple did not think that they could. Those that thought they could motivate others felt they could best do this by their own example. A couple language warriors felt that talking to young people and connecting with them may encourage them to become language warriors. Some felt that they could empower others by workshops and special training. One language warrior felt that by using technology he would make Ojibwe accessible and “cool” and that this would appeal to the young people. Those that felt that they could not motivate others felt that people needed to motivate themselves. Either they had it or they didn’t.

Third, various styles of leadership were discussed. Several language warriors felt they had been pushed into leadership roles just by sticking with something over time. People began to recognize them and seek their advice. Some language warriors felt that they were too young, but they felt the urgency to lead, when so many elders and first speakers are dying. The language warriors preferred leadership by example. One spoke about shared authority and the time it takes to get the pulse of the community.

Fourth, the qualities of a good language warrior were identified. It was pointed out that it takes all kinds and that many people are needed to make language revitalization happen. A good language warrior has to be willing to work hard, to laugh, and to share. Many language warriors felt that it was helpful to have a strong spirituality. Knowledge of oneself helps one improve and a good understanding of the past, helps one

work in the present and plan for the future. Being a good listener and having a thick hide were also helpful qualities. Love and passion for the language helps one persevere.

Some spoke about the need for a united battlefront.

Fifth, Ojibwe and non-Native leadership were compared. In Ojibwe communities leaders are recognized by their service to others. Also, because everyone has special gifts, those who are using their gifts in a good way to help the people are expected to lead when the need arises. Leading by example is the preferred model. The community comes first. Sometimes this can hold individuals back.

Sixth, the language warriors discussed strategies that have succeeded and failed and they discussed priorities of the movement. In the first part of this section, Ojibwe language warriors discussed how it was helpful to study other tribal and national efforts of language revitalization. They realized the importance of traditionalism and the preservation of the traditional way of life in curriculum development. They found that the focus has been on immersion settings especially for the very young. One language warrior addressed how Ojibwe people had been bilingual in the past from contact with the French and then the English and he promoted bilingualism for all. The language warriors were concerned about language maintenance after the students completed immersion. The language warriors described the master-apprentice program and noted that the most successful ones are the ones that are well-structured. Many of the language warriors have worked closely with elders, first language speakers. Then, they spoke about creating safe places for the Ojibwe language outside of the classroom. They spoke about language tables. Those that were well-planned out were the most successful.

Language camps were helpful and several of the language warriors have visited Nigigoonsiminikaaning, a Canadian community, where several language warriors are from and expressed gratitude for the teachings and openness that they received there. The University of Minnesota and some other higher institutions have inspired students to begin or continue their studies of Ojibwe and given them a passion to set up programs and take leadership in the movement. A couple of schools mandated that their staff work on their Ojibwe language skills. Red Lake Nation was the first reservation in Minnesota to declare Ojibwe to be their official language. White Earth is the second reservation in Minnesota to do this. Finally, a couple of language warriors addressed how self-motivation was what made them successful Ojibwe language students.

Seventh, language warriors addressed areas of failure. One talked about a past practice of talking about things with no follow-through. He noted that today there is much more action. Then, they discussed teacher preparation, methods and planning. They spoke about how some teachers just have students color pictures and learn lists of animals and numbers, and how a bilingual approach was very slow. Some teachers push grammar too hard and conversational Ojibwe not enough. Some teachers go too fast and students get left behind and drop out. One expressed the need to choose teachers more carefully, holding them to a high level of fluency, and planning programs more carefully. Another language warrior spoke about the need to empower first language speakers and encouraged the second language speakers to learn from them and to put their voices in the center. Finally, a couple language warriors issues of negativity. One spoke about how egos can get in the way of sharing what you know with others while another

language warrior spoke about putting the children first and not fighting about orthography and dialect issues.

In the following chapter there will be a summary of the data with findings, assertions, and recommendations. Suggestions for future research questions and a conclusion follow.

## CHAPTER NIIZHWAASWI: DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

### Introduction

The words and the stories of the language warriors in the last three chapters are not separate from theory. “They are real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being” (Brayboy, 2006). The language warriors shared their philosophies, beliefs, and visions for the future. They explained how and why they are fighting a battle to keep the Ojibwe language and culture alive. This is a radical act, an act of survivance. Vizenor stated that survivance is “native resistance of dominance” and “an undeniable trace of presence over absence, nihility, and victimry” (2008, p. 17). The language warriors are teaching those who want to learn that there are other viable ways, other important beliefs, and other sources of knowledge. They are choosing to be present with the Ojibwe language and culture as an alternative to globalization, pop culture, and other hegemonic discourses. As they start Ojibwe immersion schools and lead other efforts to continue and expand the use of the Ojibwe language and culture, they are being makers of history, instead of victims of it.

This chapter presents a summary of the study organized by emergent themes and discusses specific ways that this research can contribute to our understandings of language revitalization movements more generally. It discusses the central values of spirituality and identity and how they have motivated the language warriors and the movement. Their love for the language and culture and for the communities they serve also ignites passion and sustains perseverance in their work. Their love for learning and their commitment to it is central to this study. They also speak about their relationships



with elders, their parents, or their teachers who inspired them. Most have had close relationships with first language speakers, and are concerned about working with them respectfully and effectively while it is still possible. Another significant theme in this study is motivating other Ojibwes and non-Ojibwes to value, learn, and use the Ojibwe language. Finally, servant leadership, bottom-up leadership, and leadership by example are central to the success of this movement.

This dissertation set out to explore the following research questions, which focus on three aspects of the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. The first set focuses more on the movement, the second set focuses on the language warriors, and the third set focuses on leadership.

What perspectives are held by Ojibwes and non-Ojibwes regarding the Ojibwe language? What conditions have inspired the Ojibwe language revitalization movement? What has the impact of the movement been?

What are the backgrounds and educational paths of the language warriors? What's been relevant in their education to the work they do now? What are their sources of inspiration and why do they care about the language? What approaches and resources have been helpful to the language warriors in learning Ojibwe? What are their experiences like, their opportunities, barriers, and sacrifices? What are their hopes and plans? Where do they see the next language warriors?

How do they develop other language warriors, what advice do they have for other language warriors, and how do they motivate others to speak Ojibwe? What are their leadership styles? What are their perspectives on knowledge, success, and power? What

differences do they perceive there are in Ojibwe and non-Native leadership? What are their leadership strategies, challenges, and future tasks?

This study will be successful and purposeful if it meets three criteria that I stated in Chapter Bezhig.

- 1 Does it help increase the understanding of the development, lives, activities, struggles, and motivations of language warriors?
- 2 Does it contribute to the “knowledge that is critical to supporting commitments to self-determination, native-community building, and revitalizing language and culture” (Johnson, Benham & VanAlstine, 2003, p. 163)?
- 3 Does it describe how the decolonizing act of language revitalization is effecting community life and its stakeholders, transformation, and healing?

#### Findings and Assertions

This section will highlight the findings of the study and relate them to the literature.

#### **Finding 1**

**• Spirituality is a central value that guides the language warriors and the movement.**

Traditionally, Ojibwe people, Anishinaabeg, like many people of the world did not separate spirituality from the rest of everyday life. Spirituality was and still is a way of life for many Anishinaabeg. Christensen (1999) in her dissertation noted that “to be a healthy, balanced person one must walk the good road, living always in the sacred present, augmented and enhanced by ceremony” (p. 173). The language warriors believe

that learning Ojibwe has helped them and can help others on a spiritual path. By learning the Ojibwe language, they will be able to participate more fully and better understand Ojibwe ceremonial life, because the Ojibwe language is still the language of ceremony.

Some language warriors expressed that learning the Ojibwe language and culture has been life-changing and life-giving. They spoke about how learning the language and culture has helped them to get on a good spiritual path and live a healthy life-style. Some have become members in traditional drum and Midewiwin societies and some are taking leadership by assisting in or conducting these ceremonies. Learning Ojibwe has given them meaning, direction, understanding, and purpose. It has given them life and many Ojibwe language warriors are willing to give their lives to this movement.

Because many believe that the language is a gift from the Creator and the use of it will keep the world alive, learning Ojibwe is a spiritual act. Gaagigebines commented on how he tells his students that “By learning Ojibwe they are saving the world.” A language is closely intertwined with its culture and its worldview, and if the language dies, so does its way of life, at least significant parts of it. The worldview of many Indigenous peoples throughout the world still encompasses a very close relationship to the earth. Those cultures that have gotten away from caring for the earth and their intimate relationship with it are polluting the air, the water, and all of life’s resources. If we lose that relationship and respect for the earth, we die. We will no longer be able to drink the water, eat the fish or the animals, or breathe the air. Alfred (2009, p. 250) stated that “wherever people are still close to the earth and living in harmony with nature, the teachings are the same.” He added. “The ceremonies do more than connect us to a

particular tradition or community, they connect us to the earth and to our true natural existences as human beings.” Language warriors are standing up for Mother Earth and teaching others to do the same. Because culture, language and spirituality are so intertwined, the language warriors’ responsibilities are very demanding.

Many people throughout the world believe in spirits and many Ojibwe people believe that there is a spirit that takes care of the language and that people can offer tobacco and pray that they will be able to learn Ojibwe better. One language warrior shared a story about how he offered tobacco to an elder and asked for help and how he in turn was given tobacco to help him remember what he was going to be told. Knowing about this tobacco tradition opened up doors for him. Many mentioned how offering tobacco is an important part of their daily life.

Naabekwa, an Ojibwe immersion teacher, recalled in Chapter Naanan that while he was young he saw his grandfather make a tobacco offering and during his Ojibwe prayer the bears at the garbage dump stood up on their hind legs and listened and when he was done, they went back on all fours. This story demonstrates the power within the language and the spirituality and its interconnection. Naabekwa mentioned how that experience helped shape his future, “It set the hook.” He wanted to be able to talk to the bears in Ojibwe himself someday. For the last couple of decades he has dedicated his life to learning and teaching the language and the culture. It is worth mentioning that Naabekwa’s story, in Brayboy’s terms, is also a theory of the power and pull of the Ojibwe language.

The use of tobacco in prayer and making requests had not been addressed in other language revitalization literature, perhaps because other tribes have other customs and most previous language revitalization literature did not focus on specific cultural practices; however, spirituality and its connection to language revitalization was addressed in the literature. Crawford (1996, p. 63) expressed that language shift could only happen with “a change in values, a radical change, a religious conversion, and a societal movement.” I believe that through the indoctrination of boarding schools, missionaries, and other assimilationist practices people were forced away from the Ojibwe language and culture. Many of the language warriors spoke about their religious conversion to traditional Ojibwe spirituality, their desire to start schools that are Ojibwe-centric emphasizing traditional Ojibwe values, and radical conversions in their own lives. Deloria (1999) noted that the young people are bringing back the culture, the traditions, and spirituality and making them the center of their lives. Half of the language warriors are in their twenties or thirties. Spirituality was at the center of American Indian Movement and spirituality is at the center of the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. Littlebear (1999) argued that the most important reason for saving Indigenous languages today was for the spirituality that is embedded within them. Alfred (2009, p. 249) added “for humans to enjoy happiness at all, they must be integrated politically, socially, spiritually and culturally; language, stories, and ceremonies are the building blocks of an integrated human being.” Alfred’s quote reinforces the interconnection of language, culture, and spirituality and its relationship to wholeness and

to healing and points out the counter-hegemonic importance of Ojibwe spirituality and provides an ideological basis for “resistance to dominance”, in Vizenor’s terms (2008).

**Recommendation:**

The language warriors need to share what the language and culture mean to them and that spirituality is at the center of it. As they explain and model to others how it has been life-changing and life-giving, others will follow. They need to focus on the young.

It’s important to teach about Ojibwe traditions when teaching the language. It can enhance their learning, open doors for them, and help them understand why the revitalization of Ojibwe is important for many reasons, including the spiritual.

**Finding 2**

• **Identity is another important source of motivation to learn Ojibwe.**

Alfred (2009, p. 172) stated that “Native languages embody indigenous peoples’ identity and are the most important element in their culture. They must be revived and protected as both symbols and sources of nationhood.” Recently, as the English-only waves of legislation are surfacing in this state, each of the Ojibwe reservations is declaring Ojibwe as their official language and taking a stand to help assure its future.

Waawaakeyaash talked about how speaking Ojibwe has its own sounds, as every language is unique, and by speaking it, those sounds are being heard and air waves are being formed in a unique way. Waabishkimakwa spoke about how every people have their own language just like every bird has its own sound. Many language warriors commented on how Ojibwe is beautiful and unique, just like its people. As others get to

know more about the Ojibwe language and culture, they will begin to recognize the contribution that it can make to the world.

Learning Ojibwe also gives a person a unique opportunity to get to know oneself better. Pebaamibnes spoke about how learning the language and culture is “reawakening the Anishinaabe within.” It’s a way of connecting to one’s own heritage, but also to the rest of the Ojibwe community and having a unique place within the world. Alfred (2009) stated that “for all the chaos and pain brought about by colonization, and for all the self-inflicted wounds, the first step in getting beyond the present crisis must be to celebrate the inherent strength tht has allowed indigenous people to resist extinction.” Ojibwe language and culture are still here. Learning the language helps a person to know one’s people, one’s heritage, and one’s traditions. It opens the door to knowledge, survival, and healing.

**Recommendation:**

An Ojibwe person can learn much about themselves and their culture by learning the language. By declaring Ojibwe the reservation’s official language, it is a step in committing itself to helping ensure that the language survives as well as the identity of the Ojibwe nation.

**Finding 3**

**● Most language warriors are community-minded and are concerned about helping the community heal and to become strong again.**

Saagajiwegaabawik said that it’s not about us, it’s about the people. The love for the people, the culture, and the language has fueled their passion, energy and

perseverance. Bringing the Ojibwe language and culture back into the community is a way of healing the community. Alfred (2009, P. 165) stated that “disconnection from heritage is the real cultural and physical disempowerment of a person. Health and healing, truly, is achieved by rejecting the modern toxic lifestyle; physical and mental healing and cultural reconnection are linked.” A community is healthy when its individuals are healthy and health and healing come from being connected to one another and to one’s culture.

The language revitalization movement needs a good mix of everybody and all members using their unique gifts can make a contribution. Some believe that those communities that have critical mass of speakers will produce the next language warriors. A language cannot survive unless there is a critical mass of speakers (Anonby, 1999). One of the few places where Ojibwe is used in many communities is in its traditional ceremonies. Ojibwe needs to be used in everyday life. It needs to be the language of the home, the school, the workplace, the government, media, commerce, and recreation (Hinton, 2001). If all of these domains are not realistic, which ones are? A disconnect still exists in Ojibwe communities and as the first language speakers are dying some people question the value of learning it. The state of Minnesota is becoming aware of their role in contributing to the endangered status of Ojibwe and Dakota and has begun committing some money to their preservation.

**Recommendations:**

Educating others about the reasons for and the value of learning Ojibwe needs to happen Ways that state government can be helpful partners with the reservations need to



be explored. One area that I believe would make a visible difference is creating dual signage of place names, in particular, the lakes and rivers. In order to increase the critical mass of speakers, the domains of use have to be increased. The first speakers, who are central to the success of the future of language revitalization, need to be included. Ways to make the whole community educated about reasons for learning Ojibwe, getting community involvement in a plan, and making it accessible through instruction, technology and media will help revitalize Ojibwe. Finally, even though funding is always a concern, Chi-makwa stated that it is the people, not the money that will save the language.

#### **Finding 4**

**• One way to increase the use and presence of Ojibwe in communities is by teaching it in the schools and the most effective method of teaching and learning Ojibwe is immersion.**

Bryaboy (2005) in his fifth tenet of Tribal Crit stated that “government and educational policies towards Indigenous peoples are intimately linked around the problematic goal of assimilation.” At one time schools and churches were instrumental in destroying the Indigenous languages and cultures and had an agenda of colonization, assimilation, and conversion; however, now they can be instrumental in and supportive of bringing the language and culture back (McCarty, 1998; Alfred, 2009). Most language warriors felt that immersion was the most effective way to create new speakers of Ojibwe and the earlier start the better. Peace-Pretty on Top (2003) advocated for immersion in her research demonstrating that it has increased achievement and that it strengthens and

rebuilds community. Parents speaking Ojibwe at home with their children is ideal and a few language warriors are doing this. There will be work for future Ojibwe language warriors, especially as educators in immersion settings, and so there are economic reasons for learning Ojibwe. Palmer (1997) stated that languages will be revitalized, if they can become the language of work. English has been the language of work within this country causing other languages to be less valued and many heritage languages die out in three generations.

Several language warriors commented on how teaching in immersion settings using only Ojibwe has helped them as teachers to learn Ojibwe better. They acknowledged their gratitude to the first speakers who are involved in the schools in a master-apprentice relationship, especially with curriculum development and modeling authentic language. One language warrior spoke about his dream of conducting a year-round Ojibwe language and cultural immersion camp. Families could come and learn Ojibwe and learn how to live off the land, learn the traditions and stories, experience life through the seasons and spirituality of everyday life, and heal. Many families are suffering generational trauma and their spirits are broken, but today many parents are seeking Ojibwe language and cultural immersion opportunities for their children. Assessment results are proving how culturally-based education can give students a solid foundation, ground them in who they are, and how learning Ojibwe can help develop and use more of their intellectual potential (Treuer, 2010). One language warrior said, “My favorite sound in the world is hearing children speak Ojibwe.” Many children, who have

gained Ojibwe fluency through immersion, lose the language when it is not reinforced at home, in the community, or at school.

**Recommendation:**

Create language maintenance opportunities for students who complete immersion education.

Increase language nests and other immersion opportunities, birth through college, as well as increasing the domains of language use.

**Finding 5**

**• Many of the language warriors have a high regard for knowledge in the Ojibwe culture and in higher education and strive to bring them together to help the people.**

Many of the Ojibwe language warriors have worked hard to learn Ojibwe and are now involved in teaching it. They realize that they will continue to learn Ojibwe throughout their lives. Some have noted that learning a strong grammatical base as well as being around first language speakers of Ojibwe has helped them make the best progress. The master-apprentice model can be helpful when it is well-structured. When some language warriors reflected on what has been relevant in their formal educational paths to the work they now do, most were positive about what they had learned. A few spoke about how learning another language motivated them to learn Ojibwe and gave them language learning strategies that they were able to utilize in their learning of Ojibwe. They all spoke about how they have had to do a lot of learning outside of school both by spending a lot of time with first language speakers and immersing themselves in

Ojibwe, but also by studying hard. Most spoke about how doing transcriptions and teaching Ojibwe themselves have helped them learn Ojibwe. When people study Ojibwe language and culture closely, they begin to learn about the knowledge that is embedded within it. Within the language is an ancient history indigenous to this land.

Many are going back for more formal schooling in higher education to continue to increase their skills and obtain state required certification as classroom teachers. Several spoke highly about immersion education training that they received from CARLA. Seven of the twenty-one language warriors have their doctorates. Several language warriors are in doctoral programs in linguistics. The concepts of culture, knowledge, and power are interwoven. Brayboy (2006) stated that they take on a new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens. The Indigenous cultures are viable alternatives to dominant society. Language warriors value academic and cultural knowledge, especially that which is applicable to the work they are doing and helpful in serving others better. Although multiple layers of power were discussed, they stated that spiritual power was the most important power.

### **Recommendations**

To help local efforts there is a need to continue networking, doing research, and communicating about strategies that are working in other Indigenous communities throughout the world.

Higher quality teacher preparation, methods, and planning would help with student engagement, academic success, and language attainment.

Recruiting qualified teachers, retaining them, and increasing the quality of teacher education will help students learn Ojibwe.

### **Finding 6**

- **The learning and teaching of Ojibwe are political acts.**

If the power relations had been different, wouldn't everyone be speaking one of the Indigenous languages of this land? As long as the power relations remain unequal, the survival of language and culture will always be a struggle. Brayboy (2006) in tribal critical race theory stated that colonization is endemic to society. Each Indigenous society to assert itself, its identity, and its sovereignty must be involved in decolonization. Learning and living the Ojibwe language and culture are examples of this. In the Ojibwe language this act of making the journey back to one's people, language, culture, worldview and spirituality is called *biskaabiiyang*, "we're making a round-trip" and this journey back home was prophesized centuries ago as an act that today's generations would be involved in.

Localization is the other side of globalization and it is necessary to maintain a balance. Vizenor (2008) in defining survivance states, "Native resistance of dominance, however serious, evasive and ironic, is an undeniable trace of presence over absence, nihilism, and victimry" (p. 17). In other words, learning and living the Ojibwe language and culture is a way of being present, being unique, and being empowered. Alfred (2009, p. 149) stated that "reconstructing Indigenous knowledge systems is the first step in reorienting ourselves to being Indigenous." He argued that learning is a struggle and that Indigenous methods of learning are "transformational, experiential, observational and

practical.” He further stated that education defines a warrior and the “acquisition of knowledge, power, and vision is a dynamic process of teaching and learning” and that this needs to be passed on to the next generation.

**Recommendations:**

Build up the critical mass of speakers. Communicate the vision. Increase the domains where Ojibwe is used. Recruit new language warriors. Offer them tasks that match their gifts. Develop curriculum. Train, recruit, and retain qualified teachers. Raise the status of Ojibwe and raise its visibility. Heal negativity and divisiveness.

**Finding 7**

**● Relationships provide support for the Ojibwe language warriors and strengthen the movement through networking.**

This study also sheds light on what may be required for successful language planning efforts. Many language warriors acknowledged the importance of the support they receive from their families and friends. Without this support it would be easy to give up. The language warriors remembered the people who inspired them. Many of them were their elders and teachers. Many of them surrounded themselves with speakers and immersed themselves in the language and culture. Some language warriors drove great distances or spent many hours to be with first speakers and to be involved in ceremonies.

The language warriors also spoke about friends who they consult with throughout the Indigenous world and several Ojibwe language warriors have observed first-hand the revitalizations efforts that Hawaii and New Zealand. Smith (2004, p. 157) stated that

“networking is a way of making contacts between marginalized communities...It is a process which indigenous peoples have used effectively to build relationships and disseminate knowledge and information.” Some Ojibwe language warriors have developed beneficial relationships with leaders in those movements. They have also identified workshops, institutes, and conferences that have been helpful, giving them the opportunity to teach more effectively, understand immersion better, and connect with others.

**Recommendations:**

Work with first language speakers respectfully and effectively. Record the first language speakers and document their language carefully. Consult with them in curriculum development. Include them as partners in the classroom. Be humble enough to ask questions. Compensate them justly for the knowledge and expertise that they share. Communicate closely with other Indigenous language revitalization organizations.

**Finding 8**

● **Many Ojibwe people and non-Ojibwe people do not value Ojibwe enough to want to learn it.**

Ojibwe is still a spoken language and many of the ceremonies are still intact making the revitalization and recovery more possible than it is with many of the Indigenous nations throughout North America. A disconnect remains and some Ojibwe do not believe that keeping the Ojibwe language and culture alive is necessary anymore, especially with the death of the first language speakers. Others believe that it is valuable, but someone else can do it. They do not see it as everybody’s work or that everyone has

a part in the movement. Some are unsure. A number of Ojibwe people take the language and culture for granted, especially those who live on the reservation, and are not aware of the urgency of language revitalization or what their responsibilities might be within it. The infighting, jealousy, and negativity that exist within Ojibwe communities are not helpful to the Ojibwe language revitalization movement. Much of this behavior is a result of the colonization discourses that taught Indigenous people that their ways of knowing and believing were inferior to dominant society (Fanon, 1967; Foucault, 1980).

Some members of the non-Ojibwe community support Ojibwe language revitalization, especially those who are part of higher education. However, a significant part of the non-Ojibwe population believes in English-only legislation and that it is a waste of time and money to support Indigenous language efforts of this land. Other non-Natives are completely oblivious. Some Ojibwe people mistrust non-Indians because of past history. Some who learn the language might profit from it, misuse it, or use it against the people to turn them away from their traditions, like missionaries have done in the past. However, most Ojibwe language teachers welcome non-Ojibwes into their language and culture classes with the hope that they will become better neighbors and that those who become fluent will help build up the critical mass of speakers. Some language warriors believe that Ojibwe is a gift to be shared with everyone. One language warrior defined success as the number of new speakers that are created.



**Recommendations:**

Use all forms of media to raise awareness, remind others of the urgency, identify the value of learning Ojibwe, and invite others to participate in the movement, both Ojibwe and non-Ojibwe people.

Put Ojibwe on signs within the reservations and the surrounding areas. Many of the lakes and rivers in Minnesota have Ojibwe names that have been translated or changed. If dual signage was legislated, where the original names were also posted, it would be educational to all ages, a positive tribute to the first people, and great for tourism. The language would be in people's faces every day.

Recently the business community of Bemidji has been posting welcome signs and thank you signs in Ojibwe, as well as bilingual menus and word lists, in their establishments. It would be helpful to the movement if other cities and towns would follow Bemidji's example.

**Finding 9**

**• Servant leadership is essential to complete the many tasks that the movement faces.**

Findings from this study suggest that effective leadership must be embedded in Indigenous values and principles. The language warriors identified the values of being open-minded, being able to listen, never being afraid to speak up, acquiring abilities that will make the community strong again, remembering what it means to be Anishinaabe and learn about the land and its resources, the history and how the people were fooled,

seek consensus, learn as much as you can, live your beliefs, be humble, and share. Many of the language warriors do not think of themselves as leaders, but their communities do.

In part, the language warriors became leaders by being the first to step forward and take charge when they recognized an urgent need. They utilized their gifts, resources, and talents for the people, and had vision, courage, and perseverance. They are dedicating their lives to learning the Ojibwe language and culture and teaching it to others. Alfred (2005) stated that “the act of speaking and using Onkwehonwe (Indigenous) languages to reorganize and reframe our existences is perhaps the most radical act we can perform as Onkwehonwe warriors” (p. 248). He chose to use the term warriors to describe Indigenous leaders and stated that using Indigenous languages to reorganize and reframe our existences is the most radical act warriors can perform. Historically Ojibwe communities had three types of leaders: civic leaders, religious leaders, and war leaders. Through this study many of the language warriors that I interviewed are providing leadership in all three areas.

They are warriors because they have the courage to fight in the “battle of our lives to keep Ojibwe alive” and be positive forces and healthy people in the midst of apathy, doubt, and despair. They believe that the Ojibwe language and culture must survive and that it will adapt and change. It will not survive, if it becomes frozen in time. It must be contemporary and name the concepts, inventions, and changes of the present in every field of endeavor and must become a spoken language of the young and of all ages. The pressures of assimilation, globalization, and colonization must be responded to with respect for diversity, localization, and decolonization. Many of the language warriors

believe in bottom-up leadership and grass roots efforts knowing that only when the people are empowered is true change possible. Alfred (2009) stated that in Indigenous leadership there is “a commitment to a profoundly respectful way of governing based on a world view that values autonomy but also recognizes a universal interdependency and promotes peaceful coexistence among all the elements of creation” (p. 14). Language warriors do not coerce others to follow them or agree with them and are respectful of other people’s freedom and of gifts of individuals and of creation, and they have a vision about what is possible. One language warrior described a good leader as someone who can “stand up in the back of the canoe in order to see what lies ahead.”

Many of the language warriors have become leaders by example because of the work they do, the beliefs they hold, their dedication to serving others, their love for the elders, the first speakers, and for the culture and the language. Some language warriors have stated that they are happy that they are able to make a contribution, that they are able to do what they were put on this earth to do, or that they are able to use their gifts in service to others. They put others first and are making sacrifices. Edward Benton-Banai, an Ojibwe spiritual leader, stated, “A native leader is not known for what he has done for himself, but rather what he has done for his people” (1975, p. 1).

**Recommendations:**

What work lies ahead includes building up a critical mass of speakers, creating a literary tradition, using all available technology to develop multi-media resources, and record authentic conversations.

Other related leadership tasks that the language warriors identified are bringing people together, organizing, networking, cooperating within and between communities, and utilizing resources wisely. In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2004), a Maori scholar and warrior, identified twenty-five Indigenous projects that Indigenous communities throughout the world are involved in.. In summary, these projects are claiming and reclaiming, testimonies, story telling,, celebrating survival, remembering, indigenizing, intervening, revitalizing, connecting, reading, writing, representing, gendering, envisioning, reframing, restoring, returning and repatriating, democratizing, networking, naming, protecting, creating, negotiating, discovering, and sharing (pp. 143-161). These are the leadership tasks that lie ahead for the Ojibwe language revitalization movement and areas of future research.

#### Future Research

This study serves as a baseline for future research. In addition to those tasks identified by Smith, the following questions may be considered in future research.

1. How would this study be different if it had been conducted with first language speakers of Ojibwe? The language warriors who I chose to be a part of this study are all second language learners of Ojibwe. Two of the language warriors have had to learn Ojibwe again having lost a lot of the language due to the trauma of residential school. Four of the first speakers of Ojibwe, whom I have worked closely with and produced language materials with, have passed away since I started this dissertation.

2. How would this study be different if it was conducted in another linguistic area where Ojibwe is spoken, such as Eastern, Western or Northern Ojibwe?
3. How would this study be different if it had been a quantitative study of data resulting from stakeholders' surveys?
4. How have students who have completed Ojibwe immersion programs been able to maintain their Ojibwe fluency? What would be necessary to make this happen?
5. What recruiting and assessment efforts are being made to ensure that the students of Ojibwe are getting the best instruction possible?

### Conclusion

The language warriors, who have been a part of this study, have been an inspiration to me. I began thinking about doing this study when I was in educational leadership classes a decade ago. I have thought about the stories that the language warriors need to tell, the inspiration that they are to others, and their courageous leadership by example. Their love for the language and culture, their courage to fight for what they believe in, the dedication to learning from others, especially the elders, and the time they have spent seeking for knowledge and studying on their own, and their service to others are exceptional. Many of these language warriors are young and I consider them to be some of the brightest and most gifted people whom I know. Some have made radical changes and sacrifices in their own lives and some have said that just as the language, culture, and spirituality have given them life, they plan to give their lives to it.

Finally, whether the Ojibwe language revitalization movement is successful or not depends on leadership (Burnaby, 1997; Alfred, 2009). Second language speakers must

work together with each other, with the first language speakers, and with linguists. Three recent examples of this are, *Aaniin Ekidong* (2009), an Ojibwe vocabulary project, incorporating many new terms needed to discuss technology, mathematics, science, and other disciplines, *Awesiinyensag* (2010), a beautifully illustrated children's book of stories in Ojibwe, and the Fond du Lac Ojibwe language puppet shows on YouTube. Throughout history Ojibwe people have been strong and independent, tribal, and individually free. Whether Ojibwe survives depend on each community and each individual. They have a choice whether they want to learn Ojibwe or not. However, the people in the movement are creating counter-hegemonic discourses, challenging the status quo, and creating a healthy alternative. They are creating a presence, not an absence, becoming makers of history instead of victims of it, and they are living meaningful and productive lives. They are "weavers of change" (Johnson, 1997). They are healing and becoming whole, and helping others to do the same. They are transforming their communities.

McNally (2009), in his book on Ojibwe eldership, *Honoring Elders*, quoted the words of a deceased elder and friend of mine from Mille Lacs Reservation, George Aubid, whose words were posted on many refrigerators on the reservation:

We do not own the land upon which we live. We do not have the basic things of life which we are told are necessary to better ourselves. We do not have the tool to be self-sufficient. But today, I want to tell you that we do not need these things. What we do need, however, is what we already have... We need to realize who we are and what we stand for... We need to be as one again. We need to work again for the common good of all of us! We, the Anishinaabeg, are the human beings of this land. We are the keepers of that which the Great Spirit has given to us... If it is to be destroyed, only we can do it, by turning our backs on our language, our culture, our traditional drums and our religion; then and only then do we

lose because we cease to exist as Anishinaabeg. Remember what the object of the game is. Don't be enticed by their almighty dollar. Never allow them to forget the injustices. And always, my friends, remember the suffering of our Anishinaabeg. (p. 278)

George reminded us that what is most needed is what the people already have, a language, a culture, a spirituality, and a unique identity on this land. He affirmed that those gifts will be lost, if we turn our back on them. These are the gifts that are needed to be united, to be strong, and to never forget the injustices and the suffering of the past. As I close this labor of love, I want to remember and honor all those who have helped me in my journey through life. *Mii gwech.*

Rick Gresczyk, Sr. Gwayakogaabaw

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## Internet Resources for Endangered Languages

Endangered Languages Fund (Whalen)

<<http://www.ling.yale.edu/~elf/>>

Endangered Languages List (Listserv)

<<http://Carmen.murdoch.edu.au/lists/endangered-languages-l/>>

Ethnologue: (Grimes)

<<http://www.sil.org/ethnologue/ethnologue.html>>

Foundation for Endangered Languages (Ostler)

<<http://www.bris.acuk/Depts/Philosophy/CTLL/FEL/>>

International Clearinghouse of Endangered Languages (Tsunoda)

<<http://www.tooyooLu.tokyo.ac.jp/ichel-j.html>>

Linguistic Society of America Committee on endangered Languages and their Preservation

<<http://www.linguistlist.org/el-page/>>

Terralingua <<http://cougar.ucdavis.edu/nas/terralin/home.html>>

UNESCO World Languages Report <<http://www.unescoeh.org>>

Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights <http://www.indigo.ie/egt/udhr.html>

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Definition of Terms

Anishinaabe: The term the Ojibwe or Chippewa people call themselves.

Biskaabiiyang: The Ojibwe term that means “we’re making a round-trip” referring to returning to the traditional ways of life, language, world view, etc.

Colonialism: It includes the empowerment and enrichment of the colonizers through the control and oppression of Indigenous people and communities (Yellow Bird, 2005).

Decolonization: It necessarily requires an overturning of the institutions and systems that continue to subjugate and exploit Indigenous people and their resources and must occur at the individual, collective, and structural levels.

Endangered languages: Those languages that are no longer spoken by children.

Extinct languages: Those languages with no speakers left. They’re also called “sleeping” languages.

Indigenous: The people who can trace a long existence in their locale. For purposes of this study, the specific locale is North America. I choose to capitalize the term to refer to the Indigenous people of North America. I try to use the term Ojibwe or *Anishinaabe*. I also use the term Native interchangeably with Indigenous. Vizenor (2008) in speaking about survivance notes that there are no American Indians. This is a made up term by the colonizers.

Indigenous languages: Those languages that can trace a long existence in the locale which they are used today.

Language warriors: Those who dedicate their lives to leading efforts to maintain and revitalize their tribal language.

Language revival: The revival by governments, political authorities, or enthusiasts, to recover the spoken use of a language that is no longer spoken or learned at home.

Language reversal: Assistance to speech communities whose native languages are threatened because their intergenerational continuity is proceeding negatively with fewer users or uses every generation. (Fishman 1991:1)

Language revitalization: The attempt to bring back to its previous healthier state (restoration) and/or add new forms or functions to a threatened language with the ultimate aim of increasing its uses or users (transformation). (King, 1997:11)

Linguicide: the killing or murder of languages

Linguicism: the unequal division of power between linguistic groups

Master-apprentice model: Second-language speakers have attached themselves to first language speakers of the tribal language in a learner-teacher relationship to increase their knowledge of their tribal language, culture, and spirituality.

Midewiwin: The traditional Ojibwe religion or spiritual way of life. It is called grand medicine society in English. A member had to be initiated in a lodge to belong.

Moribund languages: Those languages that have only a handful of elderly speakers left. This is the state of the Ojibwe language in most communities today.

Native American: The Indigenous people of the Western Hemisphere. The terms Indigenous, American Indian, Aboriginal, First Nation and Native are also used

interchangeably in this study. There is a trend among Indigenous writers to capitalize these terms.

Ojibwe: A language in the Algonquian language family. It is one of the largest and most widespread of all indigenous languages of North America. Ojibwa, Ojibway, Saulteaux, Algonquin and Chippewa are other terms for this Indian nation. The people call themselves “Anishinaabe (g)” and they call the language Anishinaabemowin or Ojibwemowin.

Ojibwe country: the areas of southern Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec. and Ontario and the northern parts of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan where Ojibwe is spoken. There is a reservation of Chippewa-Cree and Metis in Turtle Mountain in North Dakota and Rocky Boy in Montana. (Appendix K)



## Appendix B: Translation of the Ojibwe Text from Chapter Bezbig

That's what those Indians do here. If someone is going to have a baby those parents invite an old man, or maybe an old lady. They ask him or her, "Wouldn't you name our child?" If that old man says "yes," they give him a little bit beforehand, especially tobacco. And then they tell him that, they'll make a ceremonial feast. They name the day when they will do it.

Then that old man meditates, what vision came to him while he was young, when he blackened himself with charcoal (fasted). In advance, he meditated about what he wanted to name the child. And when that day arrives, when they promised him that they would have a ceremonial feast, they invite that old man. They give him a blanket, and they also then give him food which was cooked. And then that old man invites some people, and he himself decides how many Indians should be invited. And then at that time that old man speaks about something which he knew when he was young he tells of it and then note that is how he will want to name that child. All things that an Indian sees can be the sources of where Indians are named, maybe this earth or maybe the great lakes or maybe the rapids or maybe from each of the directions that the wind comes from or maybe the sun and moon, the stars, a cloud, trees, a rock, or maybe any of those animals, all of those fish, or any of those or any of those (thunder)birds who fly about. And there are all the things that those who are named get their names from, Sometimes the Indian name givers chant. And sometimes that Indian name giver sings; and then while he is singing, he tells that name, which he names that child. That's why they did it. Sometimes someone got life, if the child got a name. And then they ate all the food that was cooked.

That's what the Indians did when they names someone. And those Indians when their child is named they will think about what their child has been given. Sometimes they will have a feast for their child hoping that their child will live a long time.

## Appendix C: Interview Questions

### One's Development

Tell me about yourself. (What is your name, tribe, clan, and home reservation?) Tell me about where and how you were raised. Tell me about your educational experiences both formal and informal. Tell me about what was relevant in your educational experiences to the work that you do now. Tell me what you have had to learn about outside of school. Tell me about who inspired you and how they inspired you. Tell me why you are so dedicated to the Ojibwe language.

### One's Work

Tell me about the work you have done to keep Ojibwe alive. Tell me about what resources you have found to be the most useful and what is lacking. Tell me what things need to be improved and suggestions that you have for their improvement. Tell me your thoughts about and experiences of being a leader. Tell me about the conditions (social, economic, cultural, and spiritual) that inspired the movement. Tell me about your support system (personal, financial, academic, networking). Tell me about the agencies that you work with (schools, university, funding, tribal). Tell me about your work situation and whether you work with others or in isolation. Tell me what you think about conferences, which do you attend, and how you participate in them.

### The Movement

Tell me about how reservation and urban strategies in the movement differ. Tell me about what impact the Ojibwe revitalization movement has had locally and regionally. Tell me about the greatest challenges that the movement has faced, is facing and will face.

## Leadership

Tell me about what makes a good “language warrior.” Tell me about where you see the next Ojibwe language warriors coming from. Tell me about some of your plans and hopes for the future. Tell me about the leadership tasks that lie ahead.

Appendix D: The Participants in This Dissertation

Name	Reservation Where One Is Enrolled Or Descended	Where one grew up	Wo rk	Occupation	G e n d e r	A g e 50 or +	F a m i l y	D e g r e e
Ajidamok 4/13/2009 1/18/2010	Grand Portage	Duluth	R	Director, Waadookod aading	F	+	G P	M
Awani- gaabaw 5/9/2009 1/7/2010	Kickapoo	Oklahoma	U	Ojibwe professor	M	-	P	D
Bebaam- aashiikwe 9/19/2009	LacCourte Oreilles	Eau Claire	R	Immersion teacher, curr developer	F	-	P	B S
Bezhig- giizhig 1/7/2010 1/19/2010	White Earth	Mpls.	U	Radio announcer, retired	M	+	G G P	
Chi-binesi 1/3/2011	Fond du Lac	Sawyer	R	Former marine, Writer	M	+	G P	
Chi-makwa 8/24/2009 1/24/2010	Leech Lake	Walker	R/U	Lawyer	M	+	G P	M
Gaagige- bines 6/24/2009	Nigigoonsi- Minikaaning First Nation	Nigigoonsi- minikaaning, Ontario First Nation	R	Professor Fond du Lac Comm. College	M	-	G P	B S/ M
Gaagige- gaabaw 5/5/2009 1/6/2010	Descended from Turtle Mountain	Brainerd	U	Education consultant, Mpls	M	-	-	M
Giniw- giizhig 8/2/2009 1/16/2010	White Earth	Mpls.	R	Teacher, Prinicpal, Director	M	-	P	M / D

Name	Reservation Where One Is Enrolled Or Descended	Where one grew up	W o r k	Occupation	G e n d e r	A g e 50 o r +	F a m i l y	D e g r e e
Giniw-ogichidaa 7/19/2009	Grand Portage	Duluth, Mpls, other towns	R	Tribal council	M	+	G P	B S
Migizi 1/6/2010 1/13/2010	Lac Courte Oreilles	Lac Courte Oreilles Res. WI	R/U	Doctoral student, U of M	M	-	P	M / D
Naabekwa 8/24/2009 1/16/2010	Leech Lake	Mpls.	R	Immersion teacher, Niigaane	M	-	P	B S/ M
Nagamo-inini 1/5/2010	Lac Courte Oreilles	Near Lac Courte Oreilles Res.	U	Professor, UW, Eau Claire	M	+	G P	D
Ogimaa-binesiikwe 1/20/2010	Turtle Mountain	St. Paul	R/U	Teacher, Waadooko-daading, Minneapolis	M	-	P	B S
Ombishki-bines 1/21/2010	Lac Courte Oreilles	Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation WI	R/U	Student, University of Minnesota	M	-	P	A A / B S
Pebaami-bines 4/15/009 1/16/2010	Nigigoonsi Minikaaning First Nation	Nigigoonsi minikaaning, Ontario First Nation	R/U	Professor U of M	M	+	G P	M
Saagajiwe-gaabawii kwe 9/19/2009 1/16/2010	Leech Lake	Chicago, Leech Lake	R	Director, Niigaane	F	-	P	B S/ M
Waabishki-makwa 8/5/2009 1/15/2010	Wasauksing Ontario First Nation	Parry Sound, Ontario	U	Professor, UMD Director	M	-	-	D

Name	Reservation Where One Is Enrolled Or Descended	Where one grew up	Wo rk	Occupation	G e n d e r	A g e 50 or +	F a m i l y	D e g r e e
Waabishki-Miigwan 1/17/2010	Living near Lac Courte Oreilles	St. Louis	R/U	Professor UMD	F	-	P	D
Waagosh 1/25/2009 1/16/2010	Leech Lake	Cass Lake, Bemidji	R/U	Professor BSU, author	M	-	P	D
Waawaake-yaash 4/3/2009 1/17/2010	Red Cliff	White Bear Lake, MN	R	Teacher, Waadooko- daading	M	-	P	M

R= reservation, U= urban, + (over 50), - (under 50), P (parent), GP (grandparent), GGP (greatgrandparent), AA (associates of arts), BS (bachelor of science), M (masters), D (doctorate)

## Appendix E: Native American Languages Act of 1990

P.L. 101-477 (October 30, 1990)

This federal policy statement recognizing the language rights of American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders was quietly enacted in the waning hours of the 101st Congress. Sponsored by Senator Daniel Inouye, Democrat of Hawaii, the bill passed on a voice vote in both House and Senate without hearings or any vocal opposition. It authorizes no new programs for Native Americans, nor additional funding for existing ones, but is expected to facilitate efforts to preserve indigenous languages.

### SHORT TITLE

SEC. 101. This title may be cited as the "Native American Languages Act."

### FINDINGS

SEC. 102. The Congress finds that—

- (1) the status of the cultures and languages of Native Americans is unique and the United States has the responsibility to act together with Native Americans to ensure the survival of these unique cultures and languages;
- (2) special status is accorded Native Americans in the United States, a status that recognizes distinct cultural and political rights, including the right to continue separate identities;
- (3) the traditional languages of Native Americans are an integral part of their cultures and identities and form the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of Native American cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values;
- (4) there is a widespread practice of treating Native American languages as if they were anachronisms;
- (5) there is a lack of clear, comprehensive, and consistent Federal policy on treatment of Native American languages which has often resulted in acts of suppression and extermination of Native American languages and cultures;
- (6) there is convincing evidence that student achievement and performance, community and school pride, and educational opportunity is clearly and directly tied to respect for, and support of, the first language of the child or student;
- (7) it is clearly in the interests of the United States, individual States, and territories to encourage the full academic and human potential achievements of all students and citizens and to take step to realize these ends;
- (8) acts of suppression and extermination directed against Native American languages and cultures are in conflict with the United States policy of self-determination for Native Americans;
- (9) languages are the means of communication for the full range of human experiences and are critical to the survival of cultural and political integrity of any people; and
- (10) language provides a direct and powerful means of promoting international communication by people who share languages.



## DEFINITIONS

SEC. 103. For purposes of this title—

- (1) The term "Native American" means an Indian, Native Hawaiian, or Native American Pacific Islander.
- (2) The term "Indian" has the meaning given to such term under section 5351(4) of the Indian Education Act of 1988 (25 U.S.C. 2651(4)).
- (3) The term "Native Hawaiian" has the meaning given to such term by section 4009 of Public Law 100-297 (20 U.S.C. 4909).
- (4) The term "Native American Pacific Islander" means any descendant of the aboriginal people of any island in the Pacific Ocean that is a territory or possession of the United States.
- (5) The terms "Indian tribe" and "tribal organization" have the respective meaning given to each of such terms under section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).
- (6) The term "Native American language" means the historical, traditional languages spoken by Native Americans.
- (7) The term "traditional leaders" includes Native Americans who have special expertise in Native American culture and Native American languages.
- (8) The term "Indian reservation" has the same meaning given to the term "reservation" under section 3 of the Indian Financing Act of 1974 (25 U.S.C. 1452).

## DECLARATION OF POLICY

SEC. 104. It is the policy of the United States to—

- (1) preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages;
- (2) allow exceptions to teacher certification requirements for Federal programs and programs funded in whole or in part by the Federal Government, for instruction in Native American languages when such teacher certification requirements hinder the employment of qualified teachers who teach in Native American languages, and to encourage State and territorial governments to make similar exceptions;
- (3) encourage and support the use of Native American languages as a medium of instruction in order to encourage and support—
  - (a) Native American language survival,
  - (b) equal educational opportunity,
  - (c) increased student success and performance,
  - (d) increased student awareness and knowledge of their culture and history, and
  - (e) increased student and community pride;
- (4) encourage State and local education programs to work with Native American parents, educators, Indian tribes, and other Native American governing bodies in the implementation of programs to put this policy into effect;
- (5) recognize the right of Indian tribes and other Native American governing bodies to use the Native American languages as a medium of instruction in all schools funded by the Secretary of the Interior;

- (6) fully recognize the inherent right of Indian tribes and other Native American governing bodies, States, territories, and possessions of the United States to take action on, and give official status to, their Native American languages for the purpose of conducting their own business;
- (7) support the granting of comparable proficiency achieved through course work in a Native American language the same academic credit as comparable proficiency achieved through course work in a foreign language, with recognition of such Native American language proficiency by institutions of higher education as fulfilling foreign language entrance or degree requirements; and
- (8) encourage all institutions of elementary, secondary, and higher education, where appropriate, to include Native American languages in the curriculum in the same manner as foreign languages and to grant proficiency in Native American languages the same full academic credit as proficiency in foreign languages.

#### NO RESTRICTIONS

SEC. 105. The right of Native Americans to express themselves through the use of Native American languages shall not be restricted in any public proceeding, including publicly supported education programs.

#### EVALUATIONS

SEC. 106. (a) The President shall direct the heads of the various Federal departments, agencies, and instrumentalities to—

- (1) evaluate their policies and procedures in consultation with Indian tribes and other Native American governing bodies as well as traditional leaders and educators in order to determine and implement changes needed to bring the policies and procedures into compliance with the provisions of this Act;
- (2) give the greatest effect possible in making such evaluations, absent a clear specific Federal statutory requirement to the contrary, to the policies and procedures which will give the broadest effect to the provisions of this Act; and
- (3) evaluate the laws which they administer and make recommendations to the President on amendments needed to bring such laws into compliance with the provisions of this Act.

(b) By no later than the date that is one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to Congress a report containing recommendations for amendments to Federal laws that are needed to bring such laws into compliance with the provisions of this Act.

#### USE OF ENGLISH

SEC. 107. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as precluding the use of Federal funds to teach English to Native Americans

Appendix F:  
Stages of Language Loss and Suggested Interventions  
Source: Fishman, J. A. (ed.) (2001).

Current Status of Language	Suggested Interventions to Strengthen Language
Stage 8: Only a few elders speak the language	Implement Hinton's Master-Apprentice model where fluent elders are teamed one-to-one with young adults who want to learn the language.
Stage 7: Only adults beyond child bearing age speak the language	Establish language nests after the Maori and Hawaiian models where fluent older adults provide pre-school childcare where children are immersed in their indigenous language.
Stage 6: Some intergenerational use of language	Develop places in the community where language is encouraged, protected, and used extensively. Encourage more young parents to speak the indigenous language in home with and around their young children.
Stage 5: Language is very much alive and used in community.	Offer literacy in indigenous language. Promote voluntary programs in schools and other community institutions to improve the prestige and use of the language. Use language in local government functions, especially social services. Give recognition to special local efforts through awards, etc.
Stage 4: Language is required in elementary schools.	Improve instructional methods utilizing TPR (Asher, 1996), TPR-Storytelling (Cantoni) and other immersion teaching techniques. Teach reading and writing and higher level language skills. Develop two-way bilingual programs. Develop indigenous language textbooks to teach literacy and academic subject matter content.
Stage 3: Language is used in places of business and by employees in less specialized work areas.	Promote language by making it the language of work, used throughout the community (Palmer, 1997). Develop vocabulary appropriate to the workplace.
Stage 2: Language is used by local government in the mass media in the minority community.	Promote use of written form of language for government and business dealings/records. Promote indigenous language newsletters, newspapers, radio stations, and television stations.
Stage 1: Some language use by higher levels of government and in higher education	Teach tribal college students subject matter classes in the language. Develop an oral and written literature through dramatic presentations and publications. Give tribal/national awards for indigenous language publications and other notable efforts.

## Appendix G: Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages

The Assembly of Alaska Native Educators adopted these Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages in 2001:

Native elders are the essential resources through whom the heritage language of a community and the meaning it is intended to convey can be learned. Parents are the first teachers of their children and provide the foundation on which the language learning of future generation rests... Indigenous language learners must take an active role in learning their heritage language and assume responsibility for the use of that language as contributing members of the family and community in which they live. Native communities and organizations must provide a healthy and supportive environment that reinforces the learning and use of the heritage language on an everyday basis. Educators are responsible for providing a supportive learning environment that reinforces the wishes of the parents and community for the language learning of the students in their care. Schools must be fully engaged with the lives of the communities they serve so as to provide consistency of expectations in all aspects of students' lives. Education agencies should provide a supportive policy, program, and funding environment that encourage local initiative in the revitalization of the indigenous languages. Linguists should assist local communities in the development of appropriate resource materials and teaching practices that nurture the use and perpetuation of the heritage language in each respective cultural community. The producers of mass media should assume responsibility for providing culturally balanced materials and programming that reinforce the use of the heritage language.

## Appendix H Navajo Nation Long-Range Navajo-Language Goals

### Background

It is our language that has made us, and now makes us, Navajos.

Our way-of-life has changed, and is changing, over time. Despite these changes, we have through our language continued to be Navajos.

We now believe, and worship, in different ways. Despite our confessional differences, we have through our language continued to be Navajos.

Our language has changed and continues to change. Ours is a living language.

It is our language which enables us to perceive and understand, think and feel, speak, interact, as Navajos.

The Navajo way-of-life is a meaningful and rewarding way-of-life.

Without the ability to understand and speak Navajo, we cannot fully participate in the Navajo way-of-life. Only a knowledge of the language will allow us access to a full range of Navajo activities.

Opportunities to acquire the ability to understand, speak, read, write, think, feel, sing, pray, in Navajo should be the birthright of every Navajo child.

### Navajo Language Goals

It is the policy of the Navajo Nation to work towards the acceptance of the Navajo language in all areas of contemporary Navajo life, and the prohibition of the Navajo language in none.

Throughout these goals, we write that Navajo will be "a" language of communication, not "the" language. The intent of this policy is not to exclude English; the intent is to maintain Navajo in activities where it is now used, and to extend Navajo into a wide range of activities where it is not now widely used.

We look forward to a time when most Navajo people will be not only bilingual but also bi-literate, bi-cognitive, and bi-affective. Among Navajo people, there will be little need for translation. As fully bi-lingual people, the language we use in a given situation will be a matter of individual choice. As fully bicultural people, we will be able to use either language, or both, to best express our thoughts, feelings, aspirations, and dreams.

1. Navajo will be a language of home, extended family, and neighborhood.

Navajo children will acquire Navajo as a first or second language in the home.

Navajo children will begin acquiring a knowledge of Navajo kinship and clanship in the home; his knowledge will be extended and deepened in day care, Head Start, school, and beyond.

Navajo will be used as a language of communication and interaction in extended family activities and in neighborhood and community activities.

2. Navajo will be a language of day care and pre-school activities.

Day-care programs, where available, will enable children to acquire Navajo and/or to continue to develop their Navajo language abilities.

Pre-school programs will enable the children to acquire Navajo and/or continue to develop their abilities to understand and to express themselves through Navajo.

3. Navajo will be a language of the school.

All students in all schools will receive appropriate instruction in and/or through Navajo at all grade levels; they will be expected to do at least as well in Navajo as in English.

Navajo will be taught and used in schools as a living language: students, staff, and parents will use Navajo as a language of instruction, communication, and interaction.

Schools will encourage community-based research strategies which require higher order communication and thinking through oral and written Navajo.

Navajo will be used in all school media. There will be appropriate school signage in Navajo.

Students in all schools will be taught to read and write in Navajo; they will be expected to do at least as well in Navajo literacy-based activities as in English.

Students will be taught and expected to think critically and to express themselves effectively through Navajo.

Students will be taught and expected to use those language/thinking abilities to study present Navajo problems in relation to the past, to weigh alternative courses of action, and to undertake activities that will improve contemporary Navajo life.

Students will leave school well prepared to participate in adult Navajo social, economic, political, ecological, and intellectual activities conducted through the Navajo language.

All school employees will either pass proficiency tests in oral and written Navajo or take course--work to increase their proficiency in Navajo.

4. Navajo will be a language of higher education and professional training.

All Navajo Nation scholarship recipients will either pass proficiency tests in oral and written Navajo or take course-work to increase their proficiency in Navajo.

University-level courses in and through Navajo will be available in on- and near-reservation colleges and universities.

A wide variety of community-college courses in Navajo language and Navajo ways-of-life will be available in Navajo at various locations around the reservation.

Professional training programs will be available to train people in the use of oral and written Navajo in a number of social service-type activities: education, health, counseling, welfare, etc.

5. Navajo will be a language of communications systems.

Navajo will be used in a wide variety of interactive communication systems.

Navajo will be used on the telephone, CB, and local interactive radio and computer networks.

Road signs showing place names, and some other signs, will be written in Navajo. There will be appropriate signage in Navajo around and in public buildings.

6. Navajo will be a language of the media.

Navajo will be used on radio and TV including appropriate children's and public affairs programming.

Navajo will be used in a wide variety of written materials for both informational and recreational purposes: flyers and brochures, papers, magazine, books, etc.

There will be a wide variety of recreational and entertainment activities conducted in Navajo: singing, story-telling, readings, plays, dances, concerts.

7. Navajo will be a language of business.

Navajo will be accepted as a language of oral or written communication and interaction within the workplace.

Businesses will employ Navajo-speakers in activities which involve dealing with the public.

Navajo will be accepted as a language of interaction in any governmental setting: school boards; Chapter meetings; land, water, or grazing boards; District or Agency councils, the Navajo Nation Council, and various quasi governmental boards or councils.

Navajo will be accepted as a language of interaction in court and court-like settings.

All Navajo Nation employees will either pass proficiency tests in oral and written Navajo or take course work to increase their proficiency in Navajo.

Source: *Navajo Nation Long-range Navajo-language Goals* from Resolution EC-MY-46-94, in material prepared by the Education Committee of the Navajo Nation Council (ECMA-13-95) for the National American Indian/Alaska Native Education Summit in Washington, DC, March 20-22, 1995 (quoted verbatim).

## Appendix I: Hinton's Approach to Language Planning

Step 1: The Introductory Stage, highly motivated people initiate activities, recruit others, and seek community involvement. Committees may be formed and community meetings may be held.

Step 2: Goal Setting addresses what you want to accomplish. Brandt and Ayoungman suggest that the first stage of goal-setting is "futuring". What role would you like to see language play in our community? What abilities or skills do you want to see? What are the most important aspects of our way of life that you want to see continued? What aspects of our life would you like to see changed? Once you know your resources and needs, goal-setting can become more precise and informed.

Step 3: Preplanning and Research. This is the stage at which planners survey their communities, discover their resources, research their language, and find out what other revitalization programs are doing. The human resources include speakers, community members who have been working with the language, community members with traditional expertise, language supporters and advocates, community experts, and outside consultants. Cultural resources are active traditions, ceremonies and native skills present in the community. Documentation resources are linguistic materials and publications in the tribal language, writing systems, classroom materials, books, language teaching materials, Web sites, CD-ROMS, tape and video recordings, and materials on language teaching theory and revitalization. Modern programs elsewhere, institutional resources, equipment and supplies and funding sources are other resources to be assessed.

Constraints of autonomy and dialect preservation need to be considered.



Step 4: Needs Assessment: When you know what you have in the way of resources, you will also know what you need.

Step 5: Policy Formulation may include a general mission statement about language or language related issues, a statement about the philosophy and value of the local language, a statement declaring it the official language of the community, information on the role and authority of various bodies, a list of prioritized goals, statements on the writing system, statements about intellectual property rights and copyright, and statements about social, cultural, religious, situational and political restraints that may affect language programs.

Step 6: Goal Reassessment, and Developing Strategies and Methods to Reach Your Goals. Here is where there is a timeline and a design of specific programs and projects, methodologies, funding strategies, training methods, and so on. Writing proposals and holding training seminars may be taking place at this point.

Step 7: Implementation: Now the program begins! Whatever you have planned now takes place. Materials, reference books, and curriculum are developed. Archives grow. Teaching happens. The community is doing the real work of language revitalization.

Step 8: Evaluation: The people involved in revitalization must evaluate the progress and effectiveness of the program on a regular basis. The assessment of the proficiency of the learners, the amount and quality of the materials developed, the degree to which desired groups are involved, and so on.

Step 9: Replanning: How should the program be modified to address the problems recognized in step 8?

## Appendix J

### Obama Agrees to Endorse the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

By [Krissah Thompson](#)

Washington Post Staff Writer

Thursday, December 16, 2010; 12:10 PM

[President Obama](#) said Thursday that the United States will sign a United Nations non-binding declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, a move that advocates called another step in improving Washington's relationship with Native Americans.

Obama announced the decision during the second White House Tribal Conference, where he said he is "working hard to live up to" the name that was given to him by the Crow Nation: "One Who Helps People Throughout the Land."

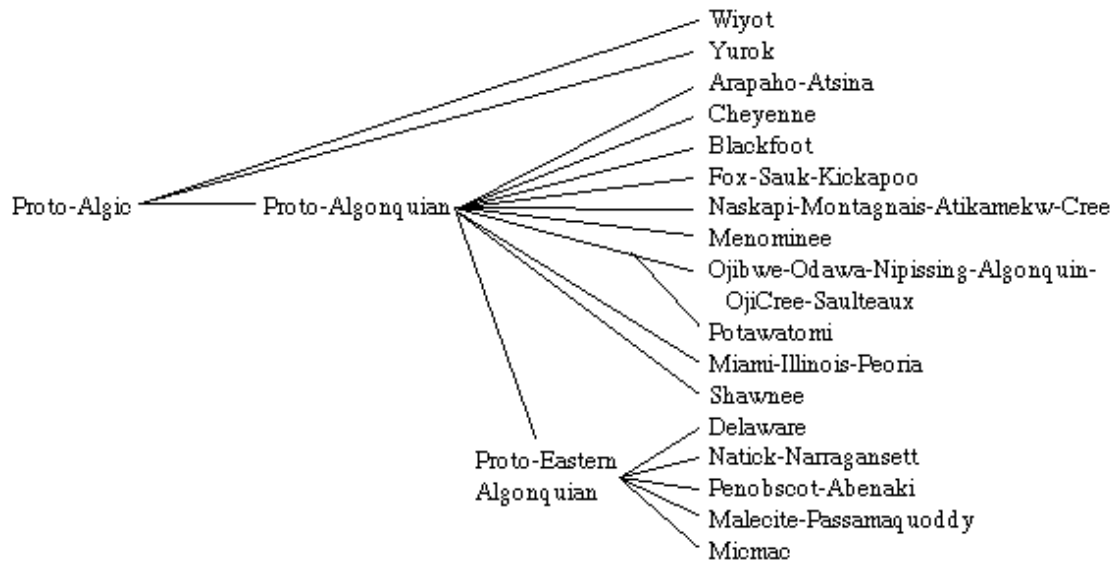
The United States is the last major country to sign on to the U.N. declaration, which was endorsed by 145 countries in 2007. A handful of countries, including the United States, voted against it because of the parts of the provision that say indigenous peoples "have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied, or otherwise used and acquired."

That language does not override national law, and Canada and New Zealand, which also initially opposed the declaration, said in recent months that they would support it.

Obama has told Native American leaders that he wants to improve the "nation-to-nation" relationship between the United States and the tribes and repair broken promises. There are more than 560 Indian tribes in the United States. Many had representatives at the White House conference and applauded Obama's announcement.

## Appendix K: Related Languages and the Map of the Ojibwe Language (Anishinaabemowin)

Ojibwe (also Ojibwa, Ojibway, Chippewa) is an aboriginal language of North America, spoken in a number of regional dialects in the Great Lakes region ( in the U.S. states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota), in Ontario, and on the Canadian prairies (in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta). The term Ojibwe as a self-designation is only used in a small region around the western area of Lake Superior. The more general self-designation for the language is Anishinaabemowin or Nishnaabemwin in syncoating dialects such as Odawa (Ottawa) and Eastern Ojibwe. Other self-designations include Anishiniimowin (Oji-Cree) and Nakawemowin (Saulteaux). The following table shows some of the languages belonging to the Algie macro-family, and the Algonquian language family, of which Ojibwe is a member.



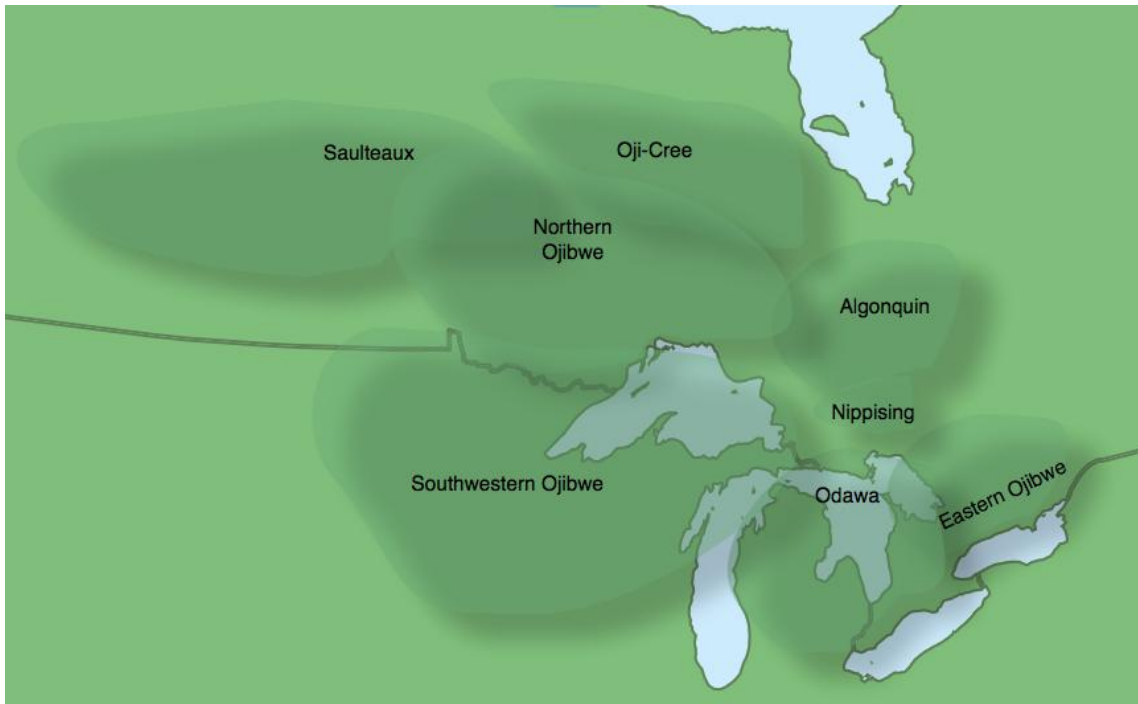
### 2. Regional Distribution (Dialects)

There are a number of regional dialects of Ojibwe, often bearing distinct names, including Eastern Ojibwe, Southwestern Ojibwe (also, in the past called Chippewa, and so designated in all treaties), Northern Ojibwe, Algonquin, Nipissing, Odawa (also called Ottawa), Saulteaux, and Oji-Cree (called by linguists Severn [River] Ojibwe). The map below shows the rough regional distribution of these dialects.

Source: Valentine, J. R. (2009). *Introduction to the Ojibwe Language for*

*Morphologists*. Madison: University of Wisconsin-Madison.

## Regional Dialects of Ojibwe



Source: Valentine, J. R. (2009). *Introduction to the Ojibwe Language for Morphologists*. Madison: University of Wisconsin-Madison.