

Dakwänjē nùich'e

Dàyumnjī ech'i

Nee'aaneeg ts'iilji

Digginjik tr'iinli

Dākwanjē' it'ē

Hā yū x'at'ángix hāsiti

Dihenjik tr'inlay

Kudzáge léts' et'e



*We Are Our
Language*



Arlynn James

dunya-do, dunyá ughá hoóďän-do

*for children, so children can learn
with it*

Northern Tutchone

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"We won't be able to *think in our way...*
we will lose our ceremonies
and ourselves...*our life is our language...*
language is what makes us strong...
languages are who we are as a people."
Steven Greymorning, 1999.

"Take it away from the cultures, and you *take away* its
greetings, its curses, its praises, its laws, its
literature, its songs.
Its riddles, its proverbs, its cures, its wisdom,
its prayers."
Dr. Fishman.

"Each language carries with it *an unspoken*
network of cultural values.

They are a major force in the shaping of each person's
self-awareness, identity, and interpersonal relationships...
These values help build and maintain an individual's level
of comfort and self-assurance and, consequently,
success in life.

In the normal course of event these values are absorbed along
with one's *mother tongue in the first years of life."*

Adapted from Scollon and Scollon 1981,
as cited in Reyhner and Tennant, 1995.



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Section I: Introduction	3
• Overview of Document	3
• Project Description	5
• Methodology	6
Setting the Context	8
• Worldwide Language Situation	8
• Aboriginal Languages in Canada . . .	9
• Yukon's First Nation Languages . . .	12
• Our Children and our Languages .	13
Section II: Proven Practices	
Proven Practices for Program Design and Delivery	15
Proven Practices in Language Revitalization	19
Section III: Fluency Assessments	
Gwich'in Language Group Fluency Assessment	29
Hän Language Group Fluency Assessment	43
Kaska Language Group Fluency Assessment	57
Northern Tutchone Language Group Fluency Assessment . .	71
Southern Tutchone Language Group Fluency Assessment . .	85
Tagish Language Group Fluency Assessment	99
Tlingit Language Group Fluency Assessment	109
Upper Tanana Language Group Fluency Assessment	123
Section IV: Conclusion	133
Selected Resources and References	137
Appendices	
Appendix A: List of Stakeholders	143
Appendix B: Form A-1 Non-Speakers	145
Appendix C: Form B-1 Speakers	149
Appendix D: Form B-2 Speakers	153
Appendix E: Household Form	157
Appendix F: Objective Fluency Assessment Backgrounder . . .	159
Appendix G: Objective Fluency Assessment Tools & Instruments (<i>Tlingit-Teslin Dialect Sample</i>)	161

Kwäd̄äy kwändür: Ts'ärk'i dāk'al ch'e
nà tth'äy.

*What she is saying is that she's going
to tell you a story.*

Southern Tutchone

Lena Enoch





Eldred Johnny

shs_he'

my son (man speaking)

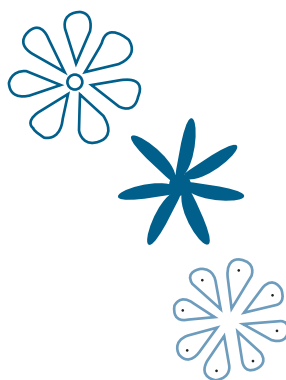
Upper Tanana



Dinjii Zhù ginjik ga'òonàhtan

She teaches Native Language

Vuntut Gwich'in



Fluency Assessment Workshop



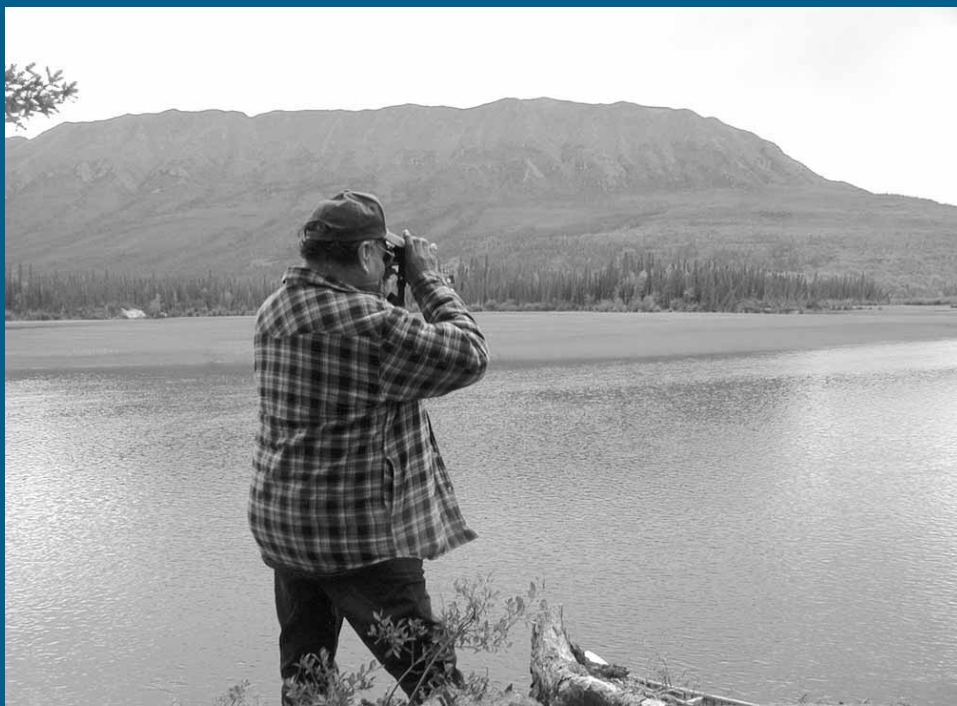


Early photograph from ALS

Ests'eni éh wéts'íhdél

My relatives are all working together

Kaska



Joe Jack

Tóo Ch'ike' Táh Mén

among the ragged lakes

A Tagish place name

khu.îx'i

hosts

Tlingit



Agnes Winzer and Jessie Barrett





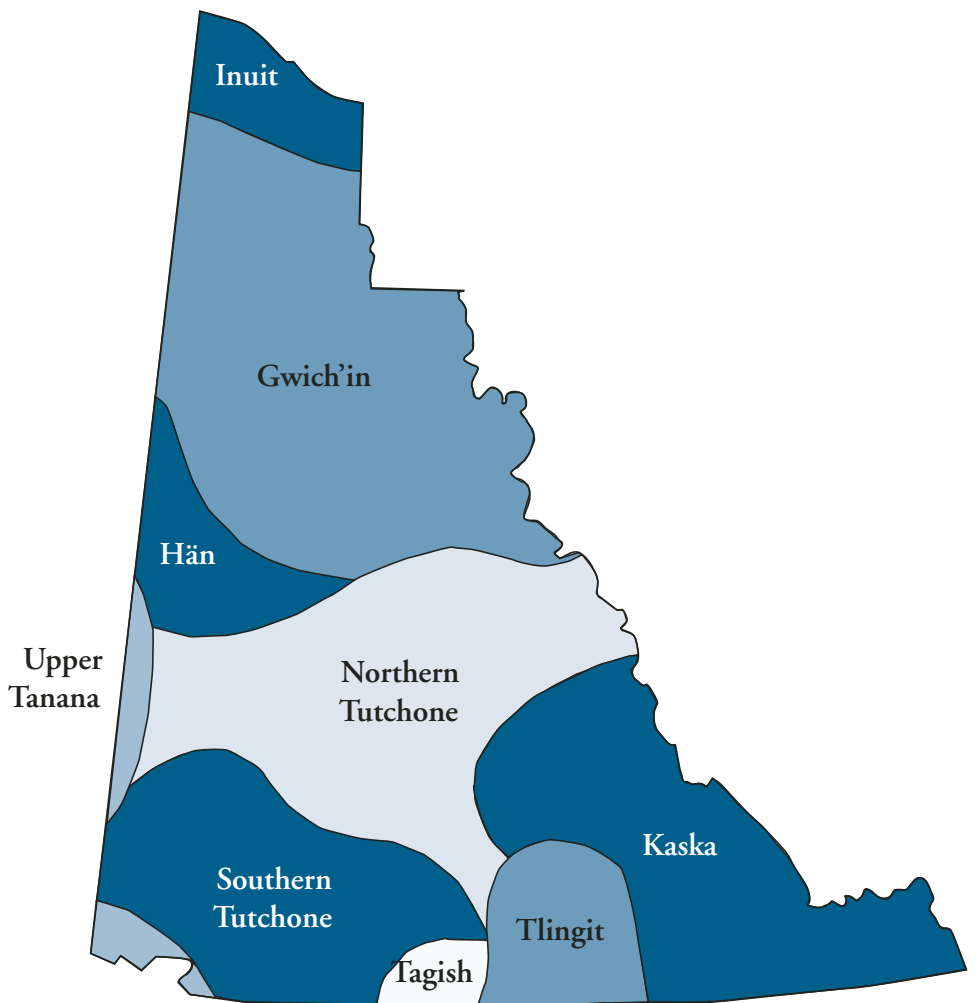
Drumming

háäch'ùunohtönn

teacher

Hän

We Are Our Language



Courtesy of Yukon Native Language Centre

Acknowledgements



This fluency assessment on Yukon First Nation languages involved cooperation and collaboration efforts between Yukon First Nation language groups, Yukon Native Language Centre (YNLC), Yukon First Nation Relations/Aboriginal Language Services (ALS), the Yukon Bureau of Statistics (BOS) and the Yukon Department of Education.

The research design and methodology for the fluency assessment was developed with direct guidance, feedback and advice received from a Fluency Assessment Research Team that provided overall direction for the project. The Fluency

Assessment Research Team included representation from:

Yukon First Nations: Angie Joseph-Rear, Gerald Dickson, Marie Davies, Corinne Kendall, Colleen Joe and Elder Emma Sam; and

Yukon Native Language Centre: Margaret Workman and André Bourcier; and

Aboriginal Language Services: Cheryl McLean and Jeannette Poyton; and

Department of Education: Tina Jules; and

Bureau of Statistics: James P. Tousignant, PhD.

The team was guided by Cheryl McLean, Director of First Nation Relations/ Aboriginal Language Services. The fluency assessment data collection instruments were designed by Tina Jules with input and guidance from the Fluency Assessment Research Team members and from Yukon First Nation elders and fluent speakers representative of all 14 Yukon First Nation communities. James P. Tousignant, PhD, of the Bureau of Statistics provided invaluable support throughout all phases of the fluency assessment project.

The survey was conducted in the communities by people who were hired by the First Nation, using Aboriginal Languages Community Initiatives Program (ALCIP) funds, and training was provided by ALS and the BOS. The delivery of the fluency survey and assessment was undertaken by First Nation members in their respective communities. Special gratitude is extended to all of the community based Project Coordinators, Surveyors and especially to the Elders and the Fluent Speakers. Many thanks go out to the staff of BOS as tremendous efforts went into fine tuning the design, process and the instruments as well as the actual collection and organization of the data received and yes, the training of coordinators too.

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In closing, the Government of Canada must also be acknowledged for their continued support and financial assistance. This project was one of the goals of the 1998-2003 Canada-Yukon Cooperation Agreement for Aboriginal Languages.

SPECIAL NOTE:

While this assessment was sponsored by First Nation Relations/Aboriginal Language Services, Executive Council Office, Government of Yukon, the opinions expressed herein do not purport to represent the views of the Yukon Government, the Government of Canada or Yukon First Nations.

Section I: Introduction



OVERVIEW OF DOCUMENT

The first section of this assessment provides a brief description of the project with an overview of the methodology. Section one also attempts to set the context by providing a description on the state of the languages around the world, in Canada and in the Yukon.

Section two of this assessment provides an alternative to a set of recommendations by offering a general discussion around proven practices in the areas of program design and delivery, and language revitalization that may have practical relevance to some of the Yukon First Nation language groups. This specific discussion is organized into a number of themes, which are based not only on the recurring trends and patterns that evolved from the analysis and interpretation of the data collected, but also from the relevant ideas and programs recommended by a number of language and program experts.

The rationale around providing a discussion as opposed to a set of recommendations is derived from the fact that all Yukon First Nation language groups are in unique situations, although with common areas. The discussion method also recognizes the complexity of the situation as it does not assume that there is one set of recommendations, a step by step recipe, or one blanket approach that would be relevant and applicable to all Yukon First Nation language groups.

The discussion approach is not only utilized as a means to recognize each language groups' unique situation, but also as a way to show respect for the Yukon Model, which was adopted by Aboriginal Language Services as a guiding principle for delivering programs and services to Yukon First Nation communities and language groups. The Yukon Model leaves the decisions regarding local initiatives, programs and activities with the community. The decision as to what specific language revitalization activities to undertake and what strategies to incorporate, is left with those best informed which are the First Nation citizens that make up the composition of each individual language group. Thus, the discussion method is utilized with the aspiration that the information presented might assist Yukon First Nations on their journey to breathing life back into their languages to make them strong and everlasting once again.

The third section of this assessment provides detailed information pertaining to the state of individual Yukon First Nation language groups, and as a collective whole is intended to illustrate a picture of the state of First Nation languages overall in the Yukon Territory. Comments regarding the overall state of Yukon First Nation languages will not be a part of this assessment as each language group is in a situation that is unique to their community. Section four provides the concluding comments for this assessment, which are based on recurring themes and observations made within and around the realm of Yukon First Nation languages. The appendices include a listing of the stakeholders and copies of the instruments used to collect the data needed to conduct this assessment.

The conclusions and discussions presented in this assessment are based on the data collected for this Yukon wide assessment of Yukon First Nation languages and the findings elicited from the information gleaned from a number of language studies and reports. The research examined data collected from the Yukon First Nation communities and the eight language groups within these communities. In addition, information was gleaned from various literature on program planning methods, language planning theories, language statistics and community based surveys and fluency assessments.

This assessment by no means intends to criticize or minimize the work of the dedicated people that work within the realm of Yukon First Nation languages; instead it is intended to provide further information that will hopefully assist Yukon First Nation people and the organizations that provide programs and services, in their journey towards reversing the language shift that has been occurring over the years.

It is hoped that the efforts of all involved, will provide a window of opportunity for language programming that will be helpful in the work ahead for language revitalization. It is also hoped that this assessment will provide support and direction for all those that continue to work and commit themselves to reversing the language shift and sustaining Yukon First Nation languages for the generations to come.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Purpose

This fluency assessment on the eight Yukon First Nation language groups was undertaken by Aboriginal Language Services as a means to meeting its commitments as required under the terms and conditions of the Canada – Yukon Cooperation Agreement for Aboriginal Languages, for the period of 1998-2003.

Project Goal and Aim

The overall goal of this assessment is provide a picture that describes the current state of Yukon First Nation language groups. In addition this project aims to provide Yukon First Nation Language Groups and Yukon First Nation communities with information that might assist them in their efforts aimed at preserving, restoring and perpetuating their ancestral languages.

Project Participants

The fluency assessment research team included representation from a number of the main stakeholders which are the Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Native Language Centre (YNLC), Yukon's First Nation Relations/Aboriginal Language Services (ALS) and the Yukon Department of Education (Dept. of Ed.). The Yukon Bureau of Statistics (BOS) provided technical expertise, support and advice throughout all aspects of the assessment. A more detailed list of stakeholders is provided in Appendix A.

The fourteen Yukon First Nation groups which included representation from all eight Yukon First Nation language groups as well as fluent speakers and Elders from throughout the Yukon Territory also provided feedback, direction and approval for the research process, design, methodology and the data collection instruments.

METHODOLOGY

With respect given to the Yukon Model, the parties involved in implementing the fluency assessment, committed to Yukon First Nations that they would have the opportunity to review and approve all stages, processes and products prior to implementation and before public release and further, that no community specific information would be released without their consent. Through meetings and consultations involving all fourteen Yukon First Nation groups, and the establishment of a Fluency Assessment Research Team representative of the main stakeholders, this commitment was met.

The purpose of the Fluency Assessment Research Team was to provide direct guidance, feedback and approval for the research process, design, methodology and data collection instruments produced for the fluency assessment, as well as to provide representation for their specific organization or group. The Fluency Assessment Research Team worked together since spring of 2002 to design and develop an approved fluency assessment process that would enable ALS to meet its federal obligation as well as serve as a useful information source to First Nation communities.

The initial draft for the research process and design was developed by Tina Jules of the Department of Education and Dr. James P. Tousignant of the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, with direct feedback received from Cheryl McLean of Aboriginal Language Services. The design was based on a study of previous assessments and reports completed on Yukon First Nation languages as well ideas presented by well-known language experts such as Fishman, Hinton and Ignace; and reports produced by Statistics Canada, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the Government of Northwest Territories. The information deduced from past studies and reports assisted in structuring the research in a such a manner that would provide essential information that would at the end of the day, provide a picture concerning the state of Yukon First Nation languages with a view to better understanding the comprehensiveness and dynamics of language loss and language revitalization.

Jules and Dr. Tousignant designed the language survey and fluency assessment tools based on the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol Common Curriculum Framework for Culture and Language K-12, the

Ontario Native Languages Curriculum, the Yukon Native Language Curriculum, and the research completed by Barbara Burnaby around the assessment of Aboriginal language teachers in Ontario.

A draft of the process, methodology, surveys and assessment tools were presented at the ALS Community meeting in the fall of 2002 and revisions were made based on direction provided from the fourteen First Nation groups. In addition, fluency test revisions were made after working with Elders and fluent speakers in January 2003.

First Nation representatives designed a community based implementation process at the ALS meeting in October 2002. Community Language Coordinators (or others responsible for overseeing language programming at the First Nation level) coordinated the process by working with the team to identify households of First Nation citizens to be surveyed. First Nations determined who would implement the survey and assessment in their community. Communities identified fluent speakers to administer the objective fluency assessment. ALS provided funding on a case by case basis working with each individual community to implement the process that worked best for their specific needs.

The Yukon Bureau of Statistics (BOS) developed a training manual and provided training to community based interviewers. BOS staff traveled out to the communities and provided further training and support to individuals hired/employed by their local First Nation to deliver the survey and test. The Fluency Assessment was implemented at the community level from January to March 2003.

The data collected at the community level was then labeled, organized and sent to BOS in Whitehorse for further organization. The data collected underwent thematic coding, further organization, analysis and interpretation by Dr. James Tousignant from April 2003 to October 2003. Once the data was organized into visual forms a presentation was delivered by Dr. James Tousignant and Tina Jules at an ALS community meeting in December of 2003. The presentation focused on sharing the results, but also provided an opportunity for all participants to reflect and debrief on what the results meant at the individual and community level. All First Nation language group representatives approved the results and the presentation format.

Limitations

Time and resources limited this project right from the initial stages which, impacted the design of the entire project. Due to frequent and in-depth consultation and collaboration practices which were adhered to out of respect for the spirit and intent underlying the Yukon Model, the limited amount of resources, and most especially time, allocated to familiarizing and training community level surveyors and language “testers” affected the quality and quantity of data collected. More time and further support would most certainly have increased the accuracy, completeness, and quantity of surveys and assessments completed. Due to the inconsistencies and lack of quantity some comparisons will not be available in the study. Specifically the comparison between self-reported fluency levels and the objective assessment of fluency levels is not available.

CONTEXT

Worldwide Language Situation

Although exact numbers vary, research estimates that there are approximately 6,000 languages in the world (Wurm, 2001). Language scholars warn us that more than half of the world’s languages are now in danger of vanishing (Wurm, 2001; Cantoni, 1996; and Crawford, 1996) and that today, approximately 80% of the world’s languages have declining degrees of vitality (Cantoni, 1996). Tragically, only one tenth of the world’s 6,000 languages are predicted to survive (Crawford, 1996 and Norris, 1998). Language experts caution that the majority of the 600 languages predicted to endure to the end of the century are susceptible to eventually being replaced by the stronger and more aggressive languages such as the Chinese, English and Spanish languages (Crawford, 1996 and Cantoni, 1996).

Summary

- 6,000 + languages in the World
- Over half are in danger of vanishing
- Only 10% are predicted to survive

Aboriginal Languages in Canada

Researchers and linguists have for the most part concluded that there are 11 language families in Canada (Drapeau, 1995; Norris, 1998; and Norton and Fettes, 1994). Although exact numbers cannot be determined by research at this time, linguists and scholars studying languages commonly refer to a range of approximately 50 to 73 Aboriginal languages in Canada that are classified within the 11 language families (Burnaby, 2002; Drapeau, 1995; Fettes, 2000; Ignace, 1998; Norton and Fettes, 1994 and Norris, 1998). Canada's Aboriginal languages are dispersed throughout Canada and into the United States. The Aboriginal languages of Canada are concentrated in approximately 600 communities, however the languages are also spoken on the traditional hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering areas that surround these communities (Ignace 1998).

The First Nations Cultural Education Centers in Canada (FNCECC) demonstrates the steady decline of Aboriginal languages over a period of about 50 years by reporting the following statistics for Aboriginal people that have their ancestral language as their mother tongue:

- 1951 (87%)
- 1986 (29%)
- 1996 (20%)

(<http://www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal/ab-lang/noframes/draft-e.html>).

In 1991 the Assembly of First Nations in Canada produced a nation wide First Nations Language Strategy which stated that only the Cree, Ojibway/Anishinabe and Inuktitut languages were strong enough to endure the oncoming challenges beyond the upcoming century (Fettes, 1992 and Norris, 1998). A 1992 nationwide study on Aboriginal peoples, also known as the Aboriginal Peoples Survey reported that 70% of the Aboriginal languages in Canada were declining and moving towards extinction (Fettes, 1992), in which the details are summarized below:

- 12% of the communities are reported as having flourishing languages, where over 80% of all age groups can speak and many can also read and write.
- 18% of the communities are reported as having enduring languages, where over 60% of all age groups are fluent.

- 28% of the communities are reported as having declining languages, where at least 50% of the adults and a lesser percentage of the younger people can speak.
- 30% of the communities are reported as having endangered languages, where either less than 50% of the adults speak and there are few if any younger speakers, or although over 80% of the elderly speak there are no speakers under 45 years of age.
- 11% of the communities are reported as having critical languages, where there are less than 10 speakers in the language community or there are no speakers remaining.

(Ignace, 1998, p. 12)

In the 1996 Census, approximately 26% Aboriginal people in Canada reported their ancestral language as their mother tongue and only about 15% reported using their mother tongue as their home language (Norris, 1998). The 2001 Census indicates a further decrease in this area as it reports that for off-reserve populations, “12% of (the) people reported that the first language they learned and still understood was an Aboriginal language” (www.statcan.ca).

Although the language reports produced by the Assembly of First Nations, Statistics Canada, and the FNCECC tell us that the Aboriginal languages in Canada, with the exception of three, are rapidly moving towards becoming languages that cease to exist; these particular studies are limited. Two very significant limitations that impact the credibility of the national level studies should be noted. The first being that the overall picture is based on the assessments being completed using subjective approaches whereby community members guesstimate the number of speakers as opposed to actually assessing the language fluency levels. The guesstimating of speakers, as compared to assessing actual fluency levels results in reports that fail to show the decrease in the collective level of fluency over time, which is an important indicator for language strength.

The second limitation involves the grouping of all dialects within one language group. For example with the Cree language many of the dialects are considered by the local Aboriginal community as a separate language and in some cases national level language reports have grouped all the dialects together as one language and can count hundreds of thousands of speakers,

when really, from the viewpoint of the language community, there are far fewer speakers remaining. This practice of not reporting specific dialect scenarios results in making the language appear to be much stronger than it actually is, that is from the views of those that consider their dialect to be a separate language altogether.

Further to the noted limitations above, Ignace (1998) has found that according to community based assessments completed in a number of areas in British Columbia the languages were found to be in a much more urgent situation as compared to the statements made by the reports produced at the national levels.

Summary:

- In 1951 Census 87% of Aboriginal peoples reported their ancestral language as their mother tongue. In 1996 Census this number dropped to 26%
- In 1991 only 1 in 3 Aboriginal adults over 30 years of age could speak their ancestral language (Statistics Canada, 1991)
- In 1996 only 1 in 4 of Aboriginal people reported their ancestral language as their mother tongue (Norris, 1998)
- Over half of Canada's Aboriginal peoples report never having spoken their ancestral language (Burnaby in Cantoni, 1996)
- Of the 50-73 Aboriginal languages in Canada, 70% are in sliding towards extinction
- In 2001 Census only 12% off-reserve Aboriginal peoples reported their ancestral language as their mother tongue. Only 15% of the Aboriginal peoples that reported having their mother tongue actually used it as their home language
- The Assembly of First Nations in Canada have declared a state of emergency concerning Aboriginal languages as it predicts that only the Cree, Inuktituk, and Ojibway/Anishanabe will survive.

Yukon First Nation Languages

The trends illustrated in numerous reports produced clearly show the rapid decline amongst Canada's Aboriginal languages. Statistics on Yukon First Nation languages are no different. All eight of the Yukon First Nation languages have been identified as declining in strength and vitality and in a state of deterioration (AFN, 1991; Aboriginal Language Services, 1988). The fluency assessment of Yukon First Nations languages completed by Aboriginal Language Services in 1988 reported most of the fluent speakers as elderly and that there were very few numbers of the younger generation that knew their ancestral language. Two of the eight Yukon First Nation languages, Han (Moosehide) and Tagish, have only a few elderly speakers remaining.

One does not need statistics or language reports to figure out that the ancestral languages of the Yukon First Nation peoples are very much in danger of becoming extinct. One just needs to go to the local school to count the number of children that are able to fluently speak and understand their ancestral language. One just needs to do a quick survey of how many grandparents tell their children legends and stories in their ancestral language with full knowledge that their grandchildren can understand them. One will find that the numbers are few, if any at all.

Summary

- 8 language groups with many dialects
- All 8 languages are in danger of vanishing
- Tagish is near extinction
- Han language has only a handful of speakers remaining
- Most fluent speakers are elderly
- Few, if any, children are learning their ancestral language as their mother tongue
- Few, if any, children enter school as fluent speakers of their ancestral language
- English is the main language of business and government
- English is the main language used in the schools and in the homes

“Our Children and Our Languages”

Joshua Fishman (1996) strongly emphasizes that a sure sign that “language loss is occurring is when young children are no longer learning their language as their mother language or have their ancestral language as their home language.” In Canada almost a third of Canada’s Aboriginal population is less than fifteen years of age (1992 AFN Aboriginal Survey). Of these only one in five speak their ancestral language (Statistics Canada, 1991 Census) and over two thirds of Aboriginal children report never having spoken an Aboriginal language” (Burnaby in Cantoni, 1996). The 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey reports that the trend of rapid language loss amongst Canada’s Aboriginal off-reserve youth population continues,

Census data showed that between 1996 and 2001, the percentage of these children who could converse well enough in an Aboriginal language to carry out a conversation declined from 12% to 9%. The same was true for Aboriginal languages used at home, as the percentage fell from 6% to 5%. The proportion of North American Indian children with an Aboriginal mother tongue also fell from 9% in 1996 to 7% in 2001. According to the 2001 APS, while 25% of these children reported being able to speak or understand an Aboriginal language in 2001 (Excluded are children that were too young to speak or understand a language), only 22% of these could do so very well or relatively well. (www.statcan.ca)

When combined with the decline in fluency of middle aged speakers it appears that the younger generations will soon come to face the possibility and the implications of the extinction of their Aboriginal languages. The FNCECC notes that, “if there are no speakers of a given language over two successive generations the language will be lost.”

The message is clear; it is the Aboriginal communities of today that ultimately face the challenge of revitalizing their ancestral languages. Furthermore, it is the youth of today and the generations to come that have the most to gain if their ancestral language endures and the most to lose should their ancestral language become extinct.

Although the figures and statistics are indicative of language loss occurring at a rate never known before, Norris (1998) reports that **there is hope**. Statistics Canada data shows an increase in the index of ability revealing that there is an increase in the number of people that speak their language now as compared to the past, which is reflected in their report that 12% of off-reserve Aboriginal people reported having their mother tongue and 15% reported being able to speak their Aboriginal Language (APS, 2001). This shows that some people are learning to speak their ancestral language as a second language (APS, 2001). In addition, 90% of the Aboriginal people questioned indicated that they want to learn their ancestral language (Norris, 1998). The motivation to learn your ancestral language is a critical ingredient needed for reversing language shift (Fishman, 1996). The expressed desires to learn provide a glimmer of hope for the future of Aboriginal peoples and their ancestral languages.



Section II: Proven Practices

The situation in the Yukon mirrors that found in Canada as a whole. Yukon First Nation languages are in a period of rapid decline. However, there is hope. Hope lies in the interest and motivation of Yukon First Nation peoples to learn their ancestral language; a critical ingredient needed for reversing language shift (Fishman, 1996).

As mentioned previously, this assessment does not assume that a step by step process exists that will encompass the needs, goals, and aspirations of all Yukon First Nation language communities. Further, this assessment respects the principles underlying the Yukon Model, which is based on community level decision making for language programming at the local level.

The following section discusses a number of proven practices in the area of effective program reform and program design, delivery and evaluation as well as in the area of language revitalization. It is hoped that the research and lessons learned may have relevance and practical importance to some of the Yukon First Nation language groups and is provided below for easy reference.

PROVEN PRACTICES FOR PROGRAM DESIGN AND DELIVERY

Strategic Approaches, Relationships & Partnerships and Program Cohesiveness

Research on proven practices aimed at revitalizing Indigenous or Aboriginal languages and program reform, calls for a strategic approach aimed at developing program cohesiveness. Essentially in the Yukon there are two levels of programming that have the potential to impact language

revitalization. The first level are those programs that provide a service to all Yukon First Nation communities and are operated out of a central location, which in all cases is within the capital city, Whitehorse. The main organizations that provide centrally delivered services are the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN), Aboriginal Language Services (ALS), the Yukon Native Language Center (YNLC), Northern Native Broadcasting Yukon (NNBY), the Yukon Native Teacher Education Program (YNTEP) and the Department of Education.

At the second level are the community based programs, which are locally delivered and administered by the local First Nation government. Examples are school based programs, daycare programs, and a wide array of community wide programs. Both the central and community level language organizations largely makeup the composition of the main stakeholders for language revitalization concerning the Yukon First Nation languages.

Proven practices discussed by programming experts (Posovac and Carey, 1997 and Fullan, 2001) demonstrate that the main stakeholders need to come together and cooperatively develop and mutually agree upon a shared vision. It is a shared vision that will provide the foundation for programming at all levels. Building the framework upon foundation so as to plan the achievement of the vision involves careful planning and dedication. Building the framework involves the collective development of, thus mutually agreed upon, long term goals; short term goals; strategies; guiding principles; complete with a common understanding of the various roles and responsibilities of each organization involved in the realm of language revitalization at the central and local levels (Posovac and Carey, 1997 and Fullan, 2001). Researchers also note that on-going assessment and evaluation methods involving as many stakeholders as possible will continually improve and maintain optimal programming and thus is vital to effective program planning and delivery (Posovac and Carey, 1997 and Blair, 1997).

A contributing factor to designing an optimal framework is a process that involves all main stakeholders developing shared meaning (Fullan, 2001). This involves open and respectful sharing of views, perspectives, and philosophies in the area of language revitalization as a means to developing respectful understandings of each other. Furthermore, the opportunity must be provided to share ideas and information as a further means to developing a shared understanding of the First Nation language communities' aspirations, goals, and needs (Posovac and Carey, 1997). It is also important

that the main stakeholder groups have a firm mutual understanding of the unmet needs, and the needs that are met, the proven practices, the challenges, the concerns, and the problems (Posovac and Carey, 1997).

In order for the main stakeholders to incorporate practices such as cooperation, collaboration and strategic planning approaches into their work with Aboriginal languages, healthy working relationships must be established to lay the foundation for productive and positive working partnerships to develop (Kelly, 2000). The language programs produced will then be more cohesive, more apt to compliment each other and operate at optimally productive levels while collectively striving towards the vision.

Dr. Eber Hampton, “the question is not the development of partnerships as they are already there. We are partners. It may be that the partnerships are deemed inhibited or dysfunctional, but they are there. The real question is then the quality of the partnership.” (cited in Kelly, 2000, p.46)

Language research also recommends the development of a community based language team with the purpose of guiding, advising, supporting and providing direction for language initiatives (NWT Literacy Council, 1999 and Ignace, 1998). This group could also ensure that language initiatives are on track in terms of continuously moving towards achievement of the language community’s vision and goals. The community based team could also serve as a linkage to the central service providers by providing them with community based information such as the language community’s needs, goals, aspirations, successes and challenges. It is essential that the composition of such a team or committee contain individuals that are passionate, hard working and committed to reversing the language shift in their community as well as being a good cross section of the community population and the field of language revitalization (Apps, 1994).

Just as with the centrally located service providers, it is also important that the community based team collaborate with other local program and service providers that have either direct or indirect involvement in the local language revitalization activities. The collaborative efforts will increase overall programming efficiency as there would be less duplication and competition, and increased levels of cost sharing and positive feelings around collectively moving towards making the vision become a reality and hopefully even a decrease in the workload.

Comprehensive Long Term Planning Approaches

Establishing a community based language team, cooperation and collaboration amongst stakeholders, strategic planning is only part of the picture for reviving a language that is near extinction. Long term planning around effective language revival is complex and involves a number of initiatives that should occur almost simultaneously or parallel to the planning and delivery of language revitalization programs. For example, language teams need training; language teachers need more opportunities for professional development; school language programs must be further developed or revised; parent fluency levels must be increased; strategies aimed at increasing language use in the community must be developed; legislation such as the applicable policies and acts will need to be reviewed and probably revised; a means for accommodating modern words and concepts needs to be further developed; curriculum and materials need to be developed; finances must be secured; political partnerships and supports must be established and a promotion campaign for the community must occur.

Community Driven

Research and reports from all directions generally advise and stress that language revitalization initiatives should be directed, driven and operated by the community (NWT Literacy Council, 1999 and Kelly, 2000). This guiding principle recognizes and respects that it is the community that was gifted with the language, that has held onto the language, and it is also the community that has the inherent responsibility to continue to nurture, develop and sustain the language into the future. Thus, it is the members of the community that must decide the priority of the various language initiatives with consideration given to their unique situation and context, and most especially their “resource reality”. Resource reality being defined as the number of fluent speakers you have; the amount of language already preserved in audio, visual, print or digital formats; and the political and the financial supports you have for preservation activities, training initiatives, curriculum development, resource materials development and so on. The community input and perspective can easily be further incorporated into language programming through consultations and collaborative sessions with the central service providers.

PROVEN PRACTICES FOR LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

Restore the Natural Cycle

Both Fishman (1991) and Ignace (2002) stress that at stages of language health, where there are few if any children that can speak the language, that it is imperative that the intergenerational transmission of culture and language be immediately re-established. Research identifies the process of children learning the language from family members in a natural environment, such as in the home, as a core factor needed for successful language revitalization. The language must be used throughout the community and in the homes as a natural means of communication and the children must begin to learn the language in the home from their parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents. Further, these children must be raised in such a manner that they mature into First Nation citizens committed to the responsibility of passing on their culture and language to their children and to their grandchildren.

Immediate Preservation

The recommendation for languages that are closest to extinction is to tend to the immediate preservation in conjunction with intensive language immersion programming aimed at producing speakers as quickly as possible (Fishman, 1991).

One particular preservation strategy that is currently becoming of great interest to many Aboriginal and Indigenous groups around the world is a method of digitizing the language that has the potential to connect the elderly speakers to the younger generation of speakers while preserving the language and providing access to the language regardless of where you live in the world. The First Peoples Cultural Foundation in British Columbia has created a website named First Voices with the purpose of providing, “a group of web based tools and services designed to support aboriginal people engaged in language archiving, language teaching & culture revitalization.” (<http://www.firstvoices.ca>). First Voices provides language communities with the opportunity to document: words, phrases, songs, prayers, stories and so on, while using a variety of media such as print, with pictures or video, and with audio or sound. As well, language communities will not only have

worldwide access to their language (which is password protected), but they will also be able to manipulate the language in its digital form. This means that it will become easier and certainly more cost efficient to produce noun books, verb books, lesson plans, dictionaries, etc. that can be useful in teaching situations.

Although there are numerous methods to preserving language, such as with print or text in books and dictionaries; in audio format on tapes or CD's; and in digital format on computers; research does emphasize that the only sure way to ensure that a language survives is for the speaking generations to pass on the language to the generations behind them. Furthermore, that the sense of responsibility to pass on the culture and language is instilled within the minds and hearts of children, youth, and elders (Fishman, 1991). It is only within the minds and hearts of the people, that the language will remain a living language for all generations to come. It is only the fluent speakers that can give this gift to younger and future generations.

Written Language

Research strongly recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be represented in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. The schooling experiences of today largely teach through a variety of discourses about the many aspects the world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the youth are exposed to, and eventually will ultimately frame their own thoughts within and around, reflect the unique and distinct ideas, perspectives and views of their own First Nation people. This particular way of viewing the world is embedded within their ancestral language. Therefore, it is vital that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the people of today and of tomorrow.

Language Immersion Programs

Master Teacher – Apprentice Program

Research based on effective language programming, in terms of producing speakers, recommends the establishment of two types of immersion programs. The first type is aimed at producing adult speakers and it involves intensive one-to-one instruction using immersion methods. This method is often referred to as a *mentoring or master-apprentice program* (http://www.cr.nps.gov/aad/cg/fa_1999/Language.html) and it is a highly recommended approach for languages that are close to extinction, or in other words have only a few elderly speakers remaining. The master-apprentice method involves a planned language program, whereby a fluent speaker teaches the language to a very dedicated learner. Both the learner and the teacher are involved in planning the methods and the content. The age of the learner is irrelevant in this case, as the main qualifications for a “learner” candidate would be motivation, dedication, passion, and commitment to learn his/her ancestral language.

Dr. Leanne Hinton, a well known language scholar from California, has documented the achievement of basic conversational levels in one year with near fluency being achieved after three to four years of commitment to a minimum of 10-20 hours per week of language study with a fluent speaker. A model such as Dr. Hinton's Master Apprentice Program (2002) would be effective in terms of immediately increasing the fluency levels of individuals that are ready, willing and committed to learning the language. Increasing the fluency levels of these individuals would immediately benefit the community as the new speakers would be able to share the gift of speaking their ancestral language. In addition to improved fluency and a higher level of language knowledge, the new speakers would also be able to incorporate the teaching methods of one-to-one or team-to-one teacher immersion into their very own teaching practices should they want to help others learn.

Leanne Hinton's book, *How To Keep Your Language Alive*, is a useful reference and can be a guide for producing speakers, as she discusses the master-apprentice model in depth (Hinton, 2002). Accredited university master-apprentice or mentoring courses are offered through the Simon Fraser University (<http://www.secwepemc.org/fnlanguage.html>) in partnership with various First Nation groups and through the Alaska Native Language Center (<http://www.uaf.edu/anlc/dena/CareerLadder2002Brochure.pdf>.)

Language Nest Program

The second method of immersion programming that focuses on producing speakers is pre-school immersion programs or language nests. This particular type of immersion program focuses on producing children that can speak their ancestral language upon entry to school. The program is widely known as the *Language Nest*, which was pioneered by the Maori peoples of New Zealand. In only a few years the Maori people were able to go from a handful of children learning the Maori language at home to producing thousands of school aged children that were able to speak their language in a natural and spontaneous manner upon entry to school (Ignace, 1998). Although the Language Nest model is essentially an artificial way of restoring the language maintenance cycle, the results are stunning in terms of producing school aged fluent speakers of an Indigenous language. Ignace (2002) notes that the Language Nests of the Maori peoples is a program that is successful, although artificial, in terms of creating a situation in which culture and language are being passed on in a manner that involves youth and fluent speakers, whom are usually of the elderly population.

The language nest is similar to a preschool program; however, the nest is a place where the children hear only their ancestral language and where teachers speak no English. The children are taught the language using approaches conducive to their learning style, and through cultural experiences, such as story telling. The teachers are fluent speakers sometimes paired with childcare workers. The childcare workers also experience the benefit of being in an environment that uses only their ancestral language as the means of communication, as their personal language abilities are increased alongside that of the children.

According to Ignace, the Language Nest initiatives undertaken by the Maori, Hawaiians, Navajos, and Shuswaps show that there are key success factors to ensuring positive results from the implementation of language nests. There are three general areas that are vital to the success of language nests and essential to ensuring that the newly acquired language is maintained and furthered as is outlined by Ignace, 2002.

First of all, the program staff as a whole must be able to (as a team or unit) communicate fully in the language and/or have abilities to develop, implement and evaluate learning activities. Thus, it is important that a training program for those implementing the program, specifically the fluent

speakers and the child care workers, be designed with the input of the workers themselves. For example, those at the front line delivery may require training in the teaching methods for early childhood, immersion and second language programs or they may need a workshop on one-to-one immersion aimed at increasing the fluency level of the childcare workers. The training needs and aspirations will vary depending on the specific situational needs and resource realities of the unique community they are working in.

Secondly, the community, and most importantly the parents, must fully understand the importance and significance of the program. It is also important that parents are not only involved in “sending” their children to the nest, but that they are knowledgeable about the program, believe in the program’s potential and goals, and are involved in and committed to the program. Parents can contribute to the success of the program by not speaking English, by volunteering time, by ensuring their children are well rested, and most of all by taking the initiative to learn the language themselves. They must be involved in providing the children with an opportunity to speak and hear the language they are exposed to at the nest. Thus, there is a demonstrated need for programs aimed at developing communicative competencies at the parent level that are based on the language topics that the children are exposed to.

Finally, there must be a language nest team (or perhaps even the local language committee itself) working to support and monitor the language nest so as to keep everything operating smoothly and to ensure that the program is always on track in terms of meeting the goal of producing school aged children that can speak and understand the language. This team of people also addresses the area of staff training; plans for outside opportunities for the children to use and hear the language; initiates programming for parents to learn the language; ensures adherence to the “ancestral” language only policy; and also ensures that financial, material, physical, moral and political supports are in place to strengthen and nourish the program. In addition the “team” would also maintain positive and collaborative working relationships with the main community language committee and other service providers involved in language revitalization activities so as not to duplicate, to plan for cohesiveness and connections, and most of all to compliment and perhaps contribute to the achievement of the overall vision and goals.

If language nest programs are implemented with the no English policy; have work teams that include trained childcare workers and/or fluent teachers; have parents that are “on board”; are supported by a core group of committed people; and teach through the culture, they can be successful and have proven to be so, for many languages in countries from all over the world such as New Zealand, United States, Wales, and Scotland (Ignace, 2002). Again..., the Maori people of New Zealand were able to increase the number of children that could speak and understand the Maori language upon entry to kindergarten level of schooling, from a handful to thousands within a five year period of time, (Ignace, 2002).

Second Language Acquisition

In terms of providing learning programs for those that are committed to learning their language, both young and old, it is important to recognize that most will be learning their ancestral language as a second language. Research on second language acquisition shows that results are more immediate and dramatic if focus is placed on those that understand the language at some level (those who can hear the language) as opposed to those who have little or no understanding at all.

Although it is widely recognized that the true language experts on Aboriginal languages are those that are able to speak and understand it fluently, research emphasizes the need to avoid making the assumption that just because an individual speaks a language fluently that they can teach the language as a second language. In order to shed further light on this common assumption one just needs to ask the question, am I able and qualified to teach English (or whatever language you speak) simply because I can speak it?

Research around successful second language programming shows that it is essential that language teachers be nurtured and develop a firm grounding in the methodology of teaching second languages and in managing contemporary teaching situations. It is important that teaching programs focus on developing a younger generation of good to excellent speakers and that the language acquisition is carried out in conjunction with a good teaching program that emphasizes proven methods for teaching second languages. It is also important to remember that the Elders strongly recommend that culture and language are interdependent and should not be separated for the purpose of instruction (Voices of the Talking Circle, 1991).

Dialects

Although there may be a fair number in the resource pool of good to excellent speakers, a different picture develops when you examine the language by dialect. With each dialect the number of fluent speakers becomes fewer and the capacity to instruct others in the language, while respecting dialects, weakens. All too often language studies only show the entire language group and in turn fail to show the number of speakers by dialect. This results in language groups appearing healthier and stronger than they actually are.

Many First Nation groups consider their language in terms of the specific dialect and the dialect also shows specific cultural identity within a larger cultural group. Merely by stating the dialect you speak you will be informing others of the specific town or camp that you and your people originate from. Dialect is closely linked to details concerning one's identity. Thus, many First Nation peoples deem that dialect is very important to preserve and maintain.

Standardization of a Language

When considering the numerous challenges involved in reversing language shift, it is interesting to note that some Indigenous groups have moved their language forward through the benefits of standardization. Standardizing a language usually involves having only one version of the written language and this process is largely undertaken to make it easier to document and teach the language. Standardizing a language may involve the production, promotion and use of only one orthography, dictionary, etc. to be passed on to future generations, which is quite similar to what has happened to many languages around the world. Standardization also transcends into the classroom as the program taught to students will then involve the use and promotion of only one dialect of the language, and thus only one writing system.

Having only one version of a language also helps to produce resource materials faster as you need only produce one version of the language, and it is also more cost efficient as fewer versions need to be produced. Standardization also affects teaching programs as not as much breadth would be covered in terms of the many dialects of a language; however the teacher can be trained more in depth if it is only required to be fluent in one version of the language.

Standardization will reduce the diversity within a language group resulting in specific identities not being represented equally within the language group. The concept of standardization is often an issue discussed by Aboriginal peoples with great passion and concern as well as contention. Whether or not a language becomes standardized will be a difficult decision that many language communities may come to face with in the future.

Right and Responsibility to Speak

Research indicates that languages lose their strength and vitality largely because the fluent speakers are not exercising their right and responsibility to speak their ancestral language and therefore are not providing an opportunity for others to hear it being used. Those that speak the language fluently must commit themselves to passing on the language. This will involve a process that encourages fluent speakers to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak their Aboriginal language daily to all their people they encounter.

Use it or Lose it

It is essential that opportunities be provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. Research strongly emphasizes that an important aspect of keeping your language alive is using the language in the home and throughout the community. The expression, "use it or lose it" is only too true when applied to the current situation of revitalizing and perpetuating Yukon's First Nation languages. Research emphasizes that fluent speakers must use their ancestral language everyday, wherever they go, and furthermore, they need to speak it around and to those that do not know the language. The language learners must be able to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers. The fluent speakers need to commit themselves to sharing the gift of their language.

Prestige of Language

Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language. The

language must have respect, prestige and purpose across all sectors of the community and throughout the home beyond the symbolic level. In other words, it is wonderful that the language is used in prayers, to open and close meetings and at potlatch and funeral speeches, but equally important, the language needs to have a functional and practical level of use as well. Functional and practical use goes beyond memorized conversation and expressions, such as describing weather and greetings, as it includes language that can be used naturally and spontaneously in regular day-to-day activities experienced in normal life. The children need to have the opportunity to live, breathe and play in the language of their ancestors.

Promotion Campaign

The purpose of a promotion campaign, whether by means of announcements, moccasin telegraph, meetings, media or advertising, is to build awareness, understanding and support for the programs in place. A promotion campaign is an important success factor in the area of language programming as it provides the foundational understandings, values and beliefs that are needed to support and sustain programs for the long term (NWT Literacy Council, 1999).

It is through such a campaign that people might really begin to understand the realities behind what is lost when an ancestral language is lost, as an individual, a community, a nation and a country. People need to believe that their languages are important and have a purpose just as much in today's contemporary world as it did in the past world of their ancestors. The promotion campaign would assist in developing a critical mass of people with the mind set that goes beyond the symbolism and the rhetoric. In other words, beyond simply saying that their language is important and a part of whom they are, to actually taking the steps to becoming a fluent speaker that uses the language in their home and speaks it to the children.

Culture and Language are One

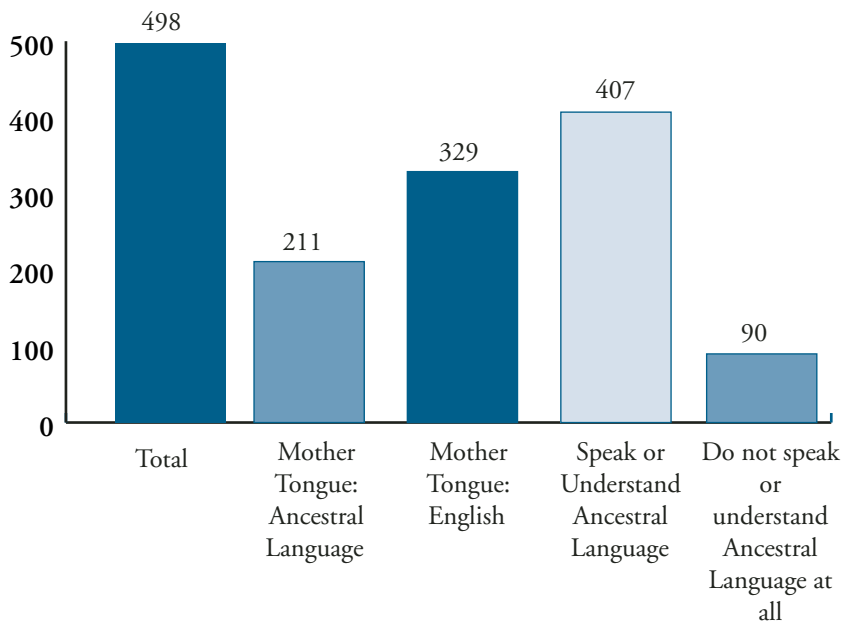
Being that the main purpose of language is to provide a method of communicating in a world in which it was created from, the culture and the heritage should be learned alongside that of the language. As to really understand the language and to use it to its fullest extent would require one to know everything about the world in which that language was designed.

Otherwise many aspects of the language could remain forever lost, such as certain views, perspectives, ideas, and concepts that are unique to only that culture. This is especially true if the language is only learned in the context of today's cosmopolitan and technological world. It is as so many Elders put it, *language is connected to and interdependent with the culture. The two should not be separated.*



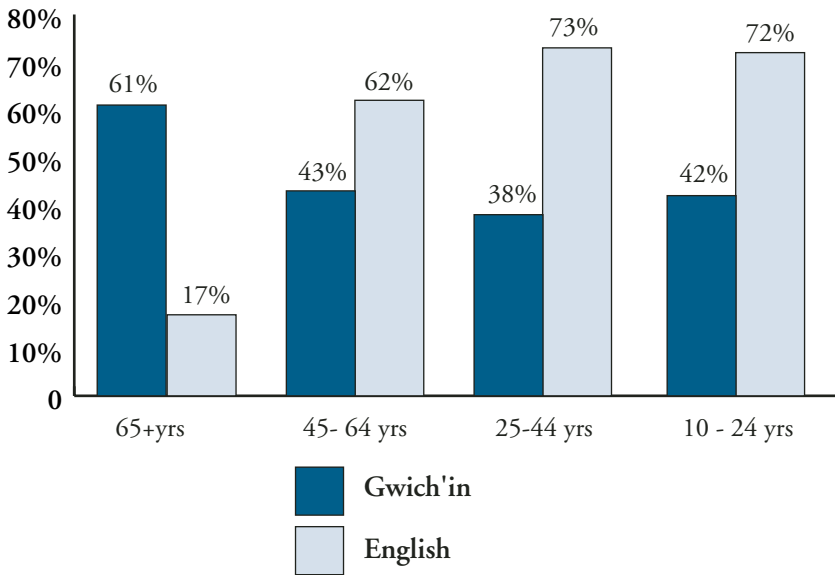
Gwich'in Language Profile

OVERVIEW



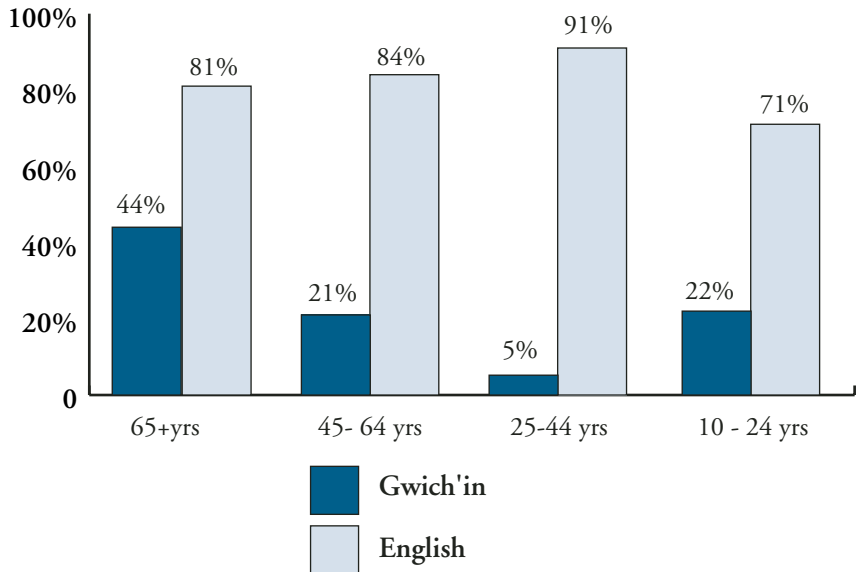
One in five Gwich'in people do not speak their ancestral language at all. However, higher numbers of Gwich'in people report being able to speak or understand their ancestral language as compared to those that reported the Gwich'in language as their mother tongue. Although, the graph illustrates that English is the strongest language amongst the Gwich'in people, over 80% of the Gwich'in respondents indicate that they are able to speak or understand their language to some degree. This shows that there are a fair number of Gwich'in language speakers that are learning their ancestral language as a second language, and this is a positive indication of the work individuals are doing to reverse the language shift.

GWICH'IN LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE



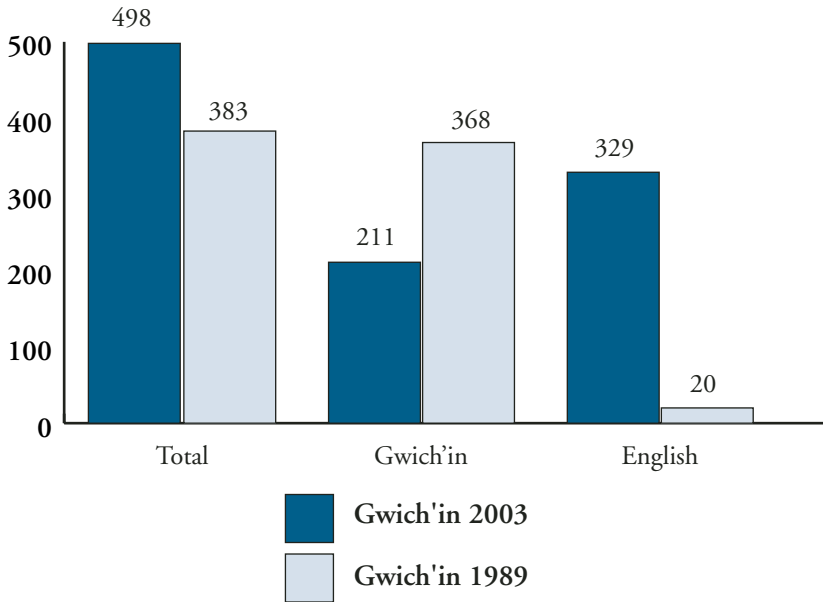
Gwich'in respondents between the ages of 10 and 64 years report that the English language continues to strengthen as more Gwich'in people learn the English language as the first language they learn. Of the Gwich'in population 65 years and older approximately 3 in 4 individuals still report the Gwich'in language as their mother tongue. It is with this 75% of the elderly Gwich'in population that the main supply of wealth exists in terms of knowledge about the Gwich'in culture, heritage and language.

GWICH'IN LANGUAGE GROUP: SPEAK MOST OFTEN



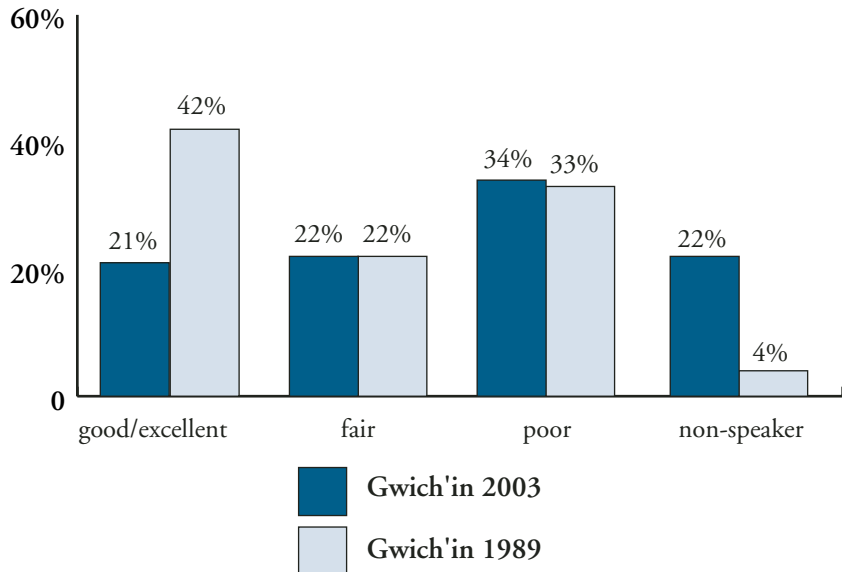
For the most part, the Gwich'in language is largely being replaced by the English language as the main language of use. Those individuals that have their Gwich'in language as their mother tongue are not using the language as much as they possibly could in their everyday lives. (This graph also illustrates that the greater majority of those that are most fluent in the language, the population 65 years or older, are in fact using the English language as their main language for communicating). This information is greatly concerning, as language learners are not being provided the opportunities to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers.

GWICH'IN LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



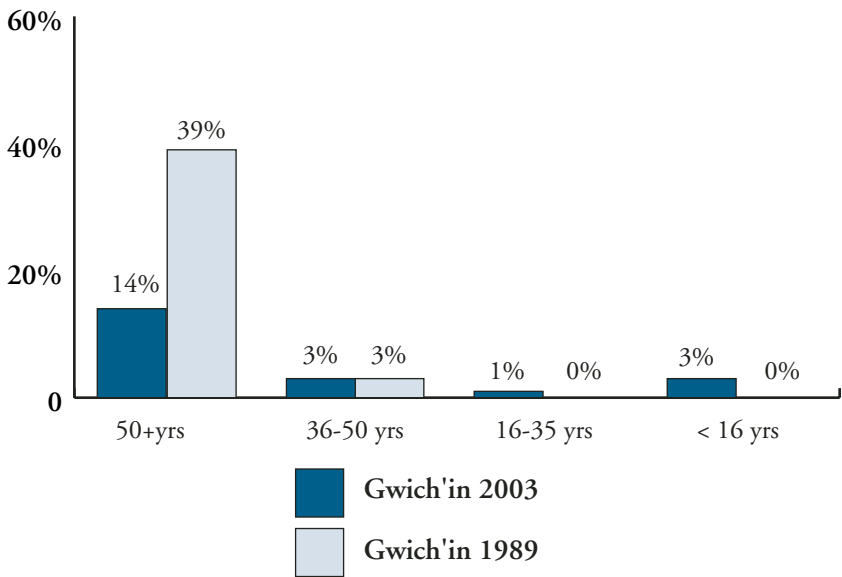
Between 1989 and 2003 there is a significant decrease in the number of Gwich'in people reporting their ancestral language as their mother tongue. In addition, there is a tremendous increase since 1989 in terms of the number of Gwich'in people that report the English language as their mother tongue. Clearly this demonstrates that the Gwich'in language is declining in strength and vitality. As long as the English language continues to replace the Gwich'in language as the mother tongue, the language will continue to weaken and the degrees of danger, in terms of becoming an extinct language, will only increase and intensify.

FLUENCY COMPARISON 1989 – 2003



The numbers of good to excellent Gwich'in speakers has rapidly declined since the 1989 assessment on Yukon First Nation languages. The self reported fluency rates show us that there are many more non-speakers in 2003 than there were in 1989. The rate of non-speakers has increased by 40% in a period of 13 years. Those Gwich'in speakers that rate themselves with fair to poor fluency levels remains relatively stable with a slight increase in the number of poor speakers.

GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKER COMPARISON



There has been an estimated 50% decrease in the main pool of good to excellent speakers for the Gwich'in language group. The Gwich'in language group continues to lose their most fluent speakers at a rapid rate. Time is limited in terms of preserving the Gwich'in language and reversing the shift to the English language.

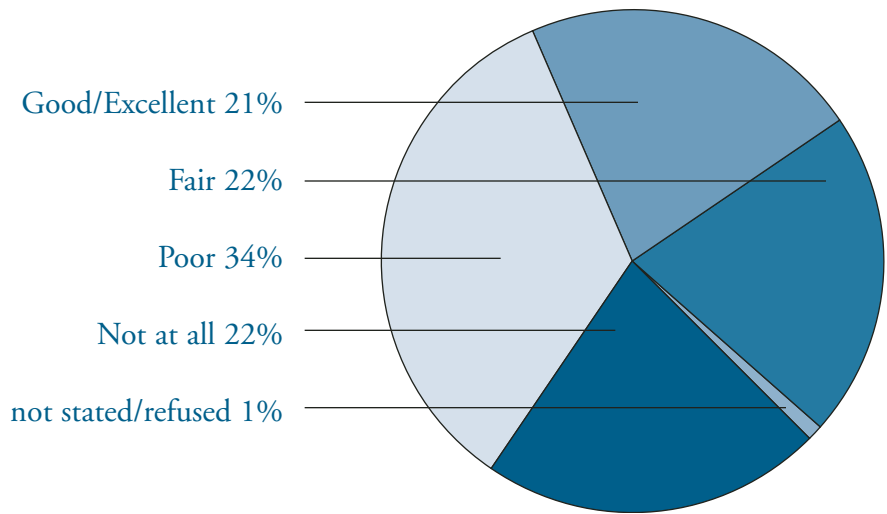
It is the elderly speakers that retain the most authentic form of Gwich'in cultural knowledge and the highest levels of fluency in the Gwich'in language. As the elderly speakers pass on, the supply of highly fluent speakers must be replaced with a younger generation of equally fluent speakers, thus ensuring that a stable number of fluent speakers is maintained, thus replenished on a continuous basis. The picture portrayed in the graph shows that the process of creating a new supply of fluent speakers is not happening within the Gwich'in language group.

The number of good to excellent speakers in the 36-50 year age range remains stable. However decreasing numbers of good to excellent speakers overall leads us to believe that within a very short period of time, the number of good to excellent speakers will be greatly reduced and this trend will place the Gwich'in language in even greater danger.

The higher number of good to excellent speakers that are under 16 years of age, as compared to the 16-35 age range, provides glimmers of hope for language revival. The data shows us that the language is being learned by the younger generation of the Gwich'in people.

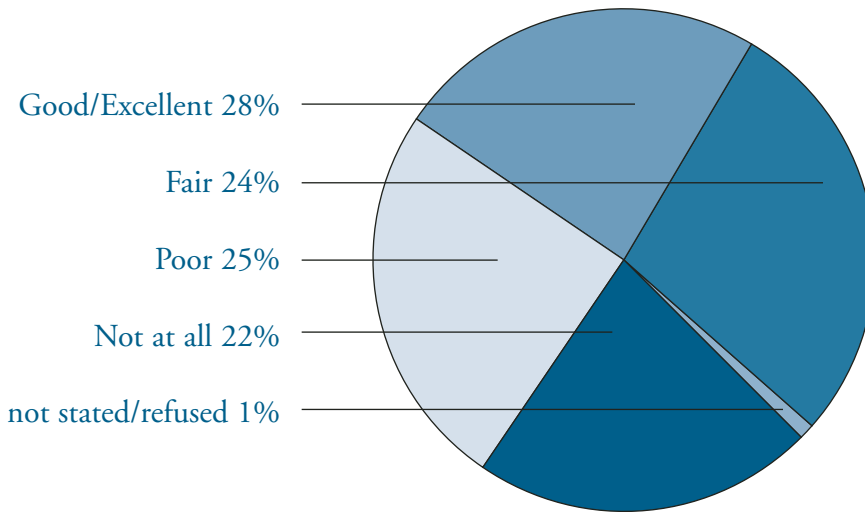
SELF-REPORTED FLUENCY LEVELS

How well do we say we speak?



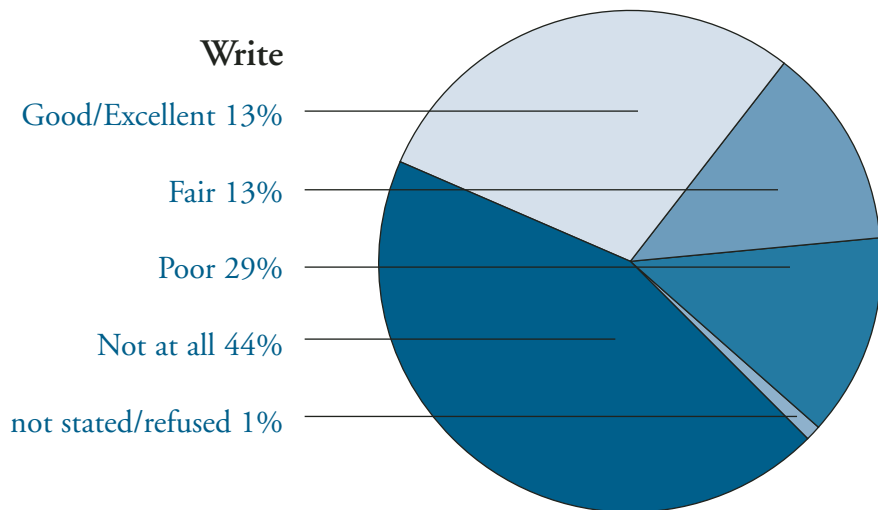
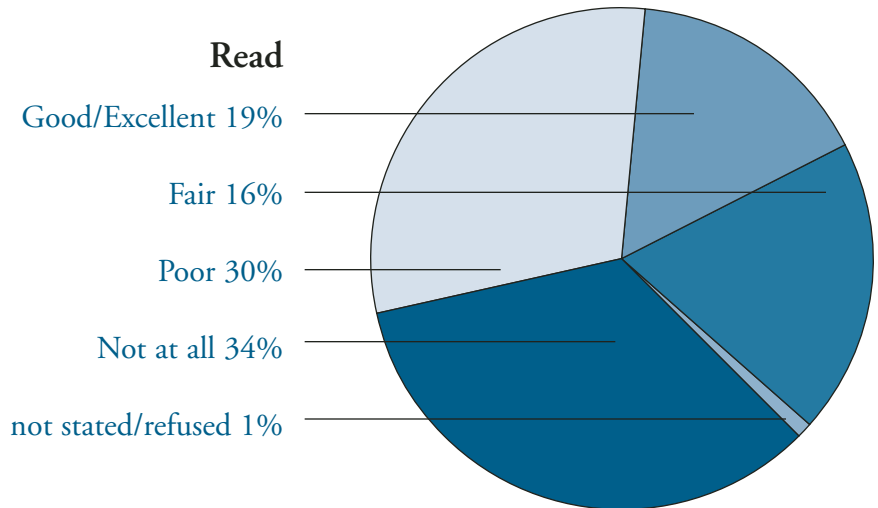
Over three quarters of the Gwich'in speakers report their speaking fluency level within the fair to non-speaker range. Approximately 1 in 5 Gwich'in people are able to speak the language at a level that would enable them to pass on the Gwich'in language to those that have lower levels of speaking abilities. This means that about 20% of the Gwich'in population is in a position in which they are able to contribute to maintaining the Gwich'in peoples' most valuable resources, which essentially is the Gwich'in language, as their language provides access to their authentic culture and to their unique and distinct heritage.

How well do we say we understand?



The reported results show that more than half of the Gwich'in speakers rate themselves as being able to understand their ancestral language within the fair to excellent range, which is a higher number than those that reported themselves as speakers in this range. The difference in the number of speakers and those that can understand shows that there are a large number of Gwich'in people who can hear and understand their language better than they can speak it. This specific population of Gwich'in speakers are a prime group for language learning as research indicates that it is far easier to learn to speak a language if you can understand it first.

How well do we say we read and write?

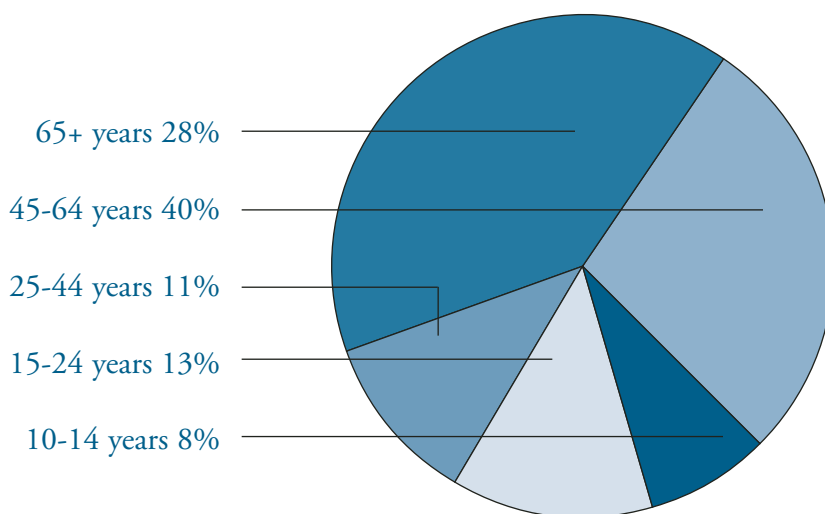


Far fewer Gwich'in speakers are able to read and write their ancestral language as compared to those that are able to speak and understand it. Research strongly recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be represented in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the

Gwich'in youth are exposed to and eventually will ultimately frame their own thoughts within and around, reflect the unique and distinct ideas, perspectives and views of their own Gwich'in people. It is vital that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the Gwich'in people of today and of tomorrow.

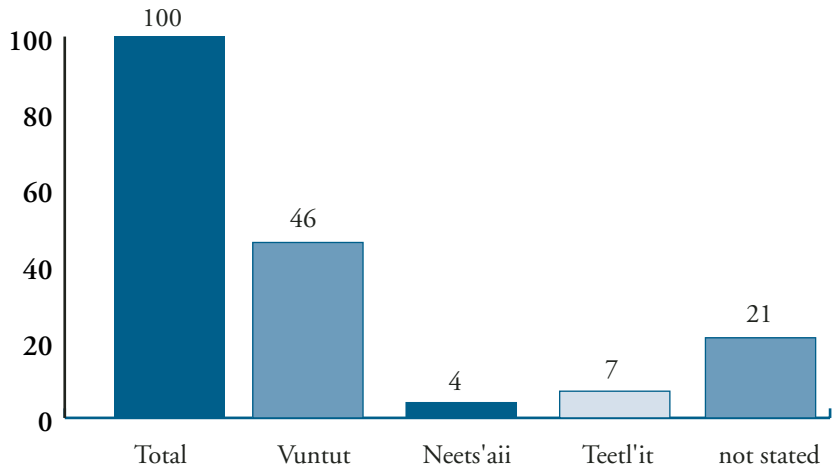
GWICH'IN LANGUAGE GROUP: POTENTIAL INSTRUCTORS BASED ON GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKERS

Profile of those who could potentially instruct others in the Gwich'in language, that is 'good-excellent' speakers.



This graph shows that a sensible target age range to focus on for the training of Gwich'in language teachers should be the 15 to 44 year range. Although the main supply of good to excellent speakers is within the 46 years and older range, it is hardly feasible to train these people to be teachers of school aged children largely because of their close proximity to retirement age. However it is this specific population that is ideal for teaching the language to a younger generation of teachers and for providing one-to-one language instruction for increasing fluency levels of individual learners or small teams of two or more language learners.

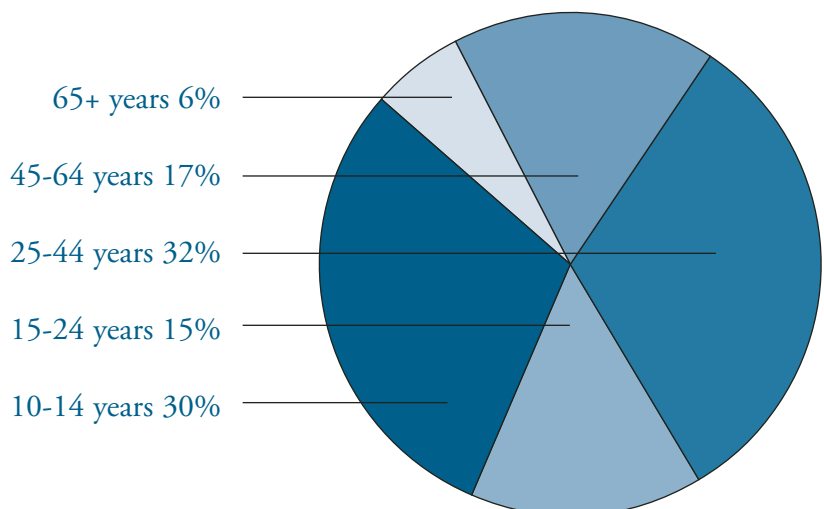
DIALECTS OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY INSTRUCT OTHERS IN THE LANGUAGE



The dialect graph illustrates the distribution of the three dialects reported by the Gwich'in in good to excellent range language speakers. The graph also shows that the majority of good to excellent speakers reported Vuntut as the main dialect spoken.

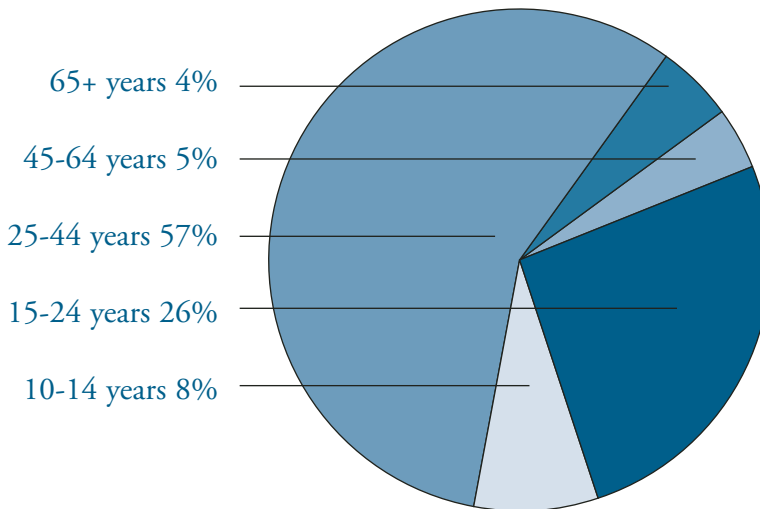
PROFILE OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME FLUENT QUICKLY

(poor to fair speakers or those non-speakers with good-excellent understanding)



Those that are most ideal or prime for learning the Gwich'in language can be found in all age ranges, although the majority is in the 10-14 and 25-44 age ranges. As was indicated previously, research on second language acquisition shows that it is far easier to teach those that understand a language at some level than it is to teach a person who has little or no understanding at all.

PROFILE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK NOR UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE AT ALL.



The parent generation, or those that are between the 25 to 44 age range, has the largest proportion of people that do not speak or understand the Gwich'in language at all as compared to all other age groupings. This is very concerning as it is within this age grouping that the major pool of potential teachers exists. Equally concerning is the fact that it is also within this age grouping that most parents can be categorized into. This shows that most Gwich'in children do not have access to a parent that is able to pass the language on to them.

SUMMARY

The fluency assessment illustrates that Gwich'in language group is in great danger. The English language has replaced the Gwich'in language as the main method of communicating. Being that the majority of the Gwich'in fluent speakers are over the age of 50 years, it is of critical importance that the language be preserved immediately in as natural of a form as is possible.

Although there are a fair number of fluent speakers within the Gwich'in language group, many that have their language are not using the language as their main language of communication. For the Gwich'in language group, those that speak the language fluently, primarily those over 50 years of age, must commit themselves to passing on the language. This will involve a process that encourages the fluent speakers to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak the Gwich'in language to all Gwich'in people they might encounter on a daily basis.

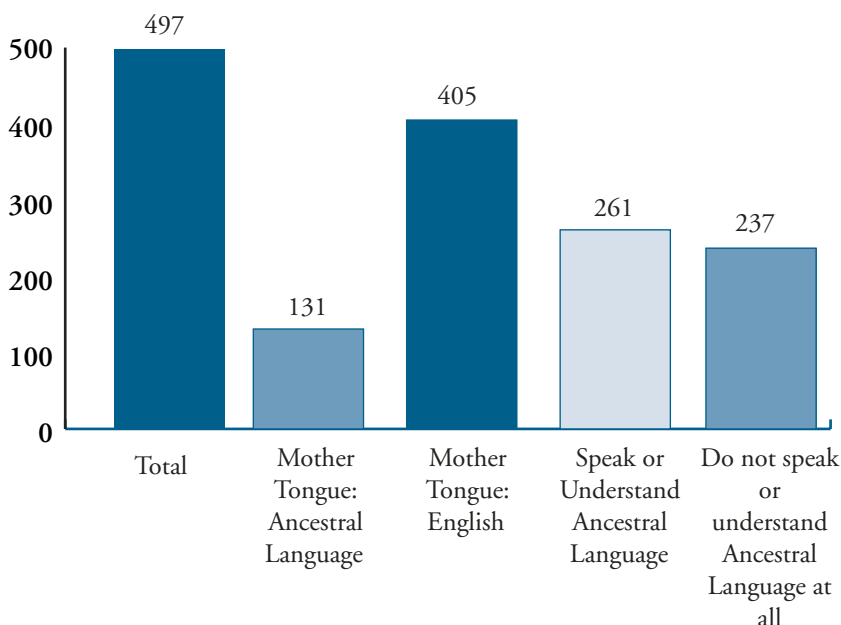
It is essential that opportunities are provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language.

The indication of the younger generation learning the language provides hope for the Gwich'in language. The interest and motivation of the youth is a foundation that can be built upon in establishing future language programming.



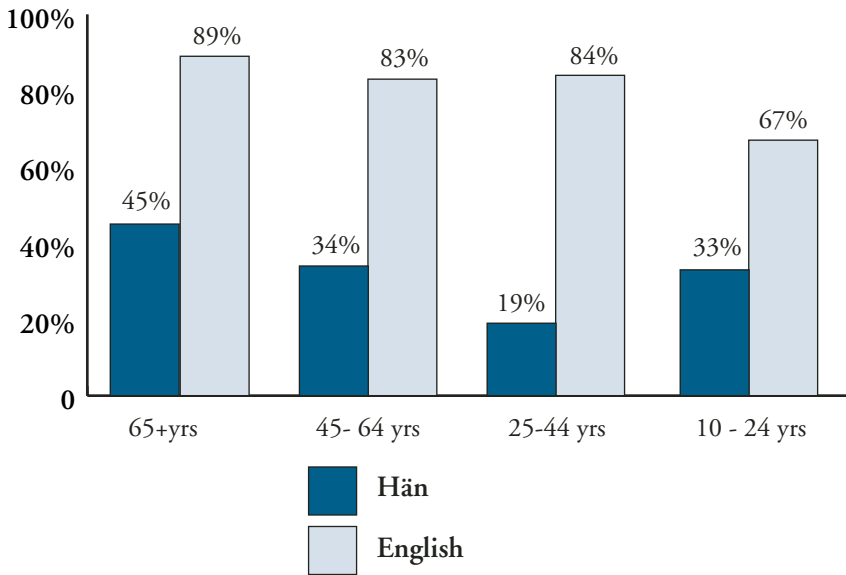
Hän Language Profile

OVERVIEW



Approximately 50% of the Hän people reported that they do not speak their ancestral language at all. Although, the graph illustrates that the English language is the strongest language amongst the Hän people, approximately 26% of the respondents report the Hän language as the first language they learned and still understand, and the even higher numbers, over 50%, of respondents that report that they can speak or understand the Hän language, shows that there are a significant number of Hän people learning their ancestral language as a second language. The information around second language learners is a positive indication of the work individuals are doing to reverse the language shift.

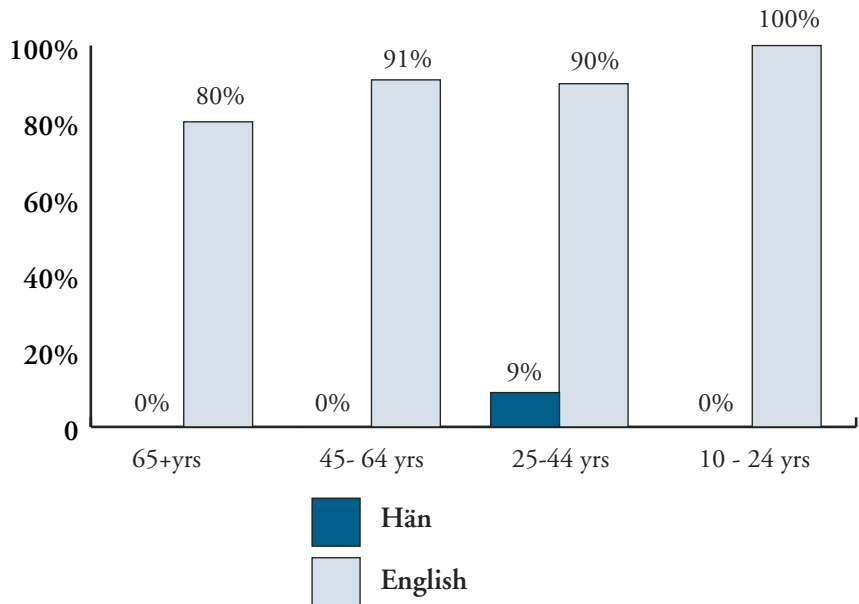
HÄN LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE



Hän respondents for all age ranges, including the elders that are 65 years and older, report that the English language continues to be the dominant language. Most Hän people reported that they are more apt to learn the English language as their first language learned and this trend is present across all generations. The younger generation of Hän respondents does show a slight reversal in the trend. A greater proportion of the respondents in the 10-24 year age range report the Hän language to be their mother tongue, as compared to the two generations before them in the 25 to 64 year ranges.

The majority of the elderly Hän population report the English language as their mother tongue, however a large number also report the Hän language as their mother tongue as well, perhaps indicating that they learned the two languages simultaneously. It is with the elderly Hän population that reported the Hän language as their mother tongue that the main supply of wealth exists for the Hän language group, that is, in terms of knowledge about the Hän culture, heritage and language.

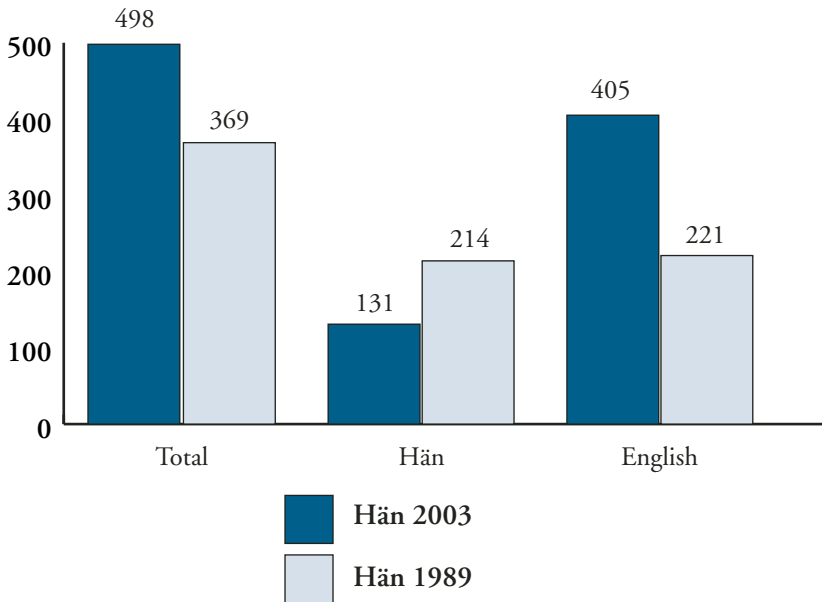
HÄN LANGUAGE GROUP: SPEAK MOST OFTEN



This graph shockingly illustrates that the Hän language is almost completely replaced by the English language as the main language of use across all generations, including the elderly. This information demonstrates that the Hän language has deteriorated to the point that it is very close to extinction. Language experts warn that if a language is not spoken; if a language is not heard; it is no longer a language that is alive. Those individuals that have their Hän language as their mother tongue are not using the language as much as they possibly could in their everyday lives.

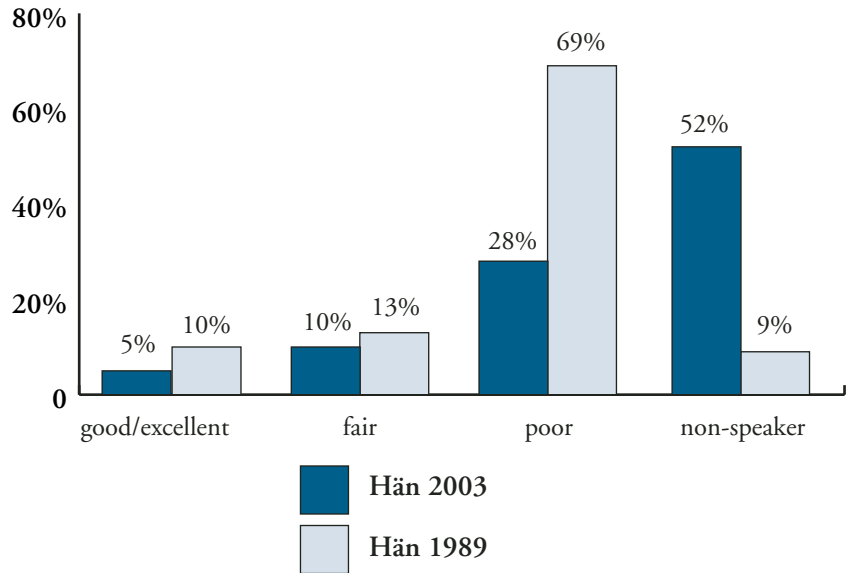
This information is greatly concerning, as language learners are not being provided with as many opportunities as is possible, to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers.

HÄN LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



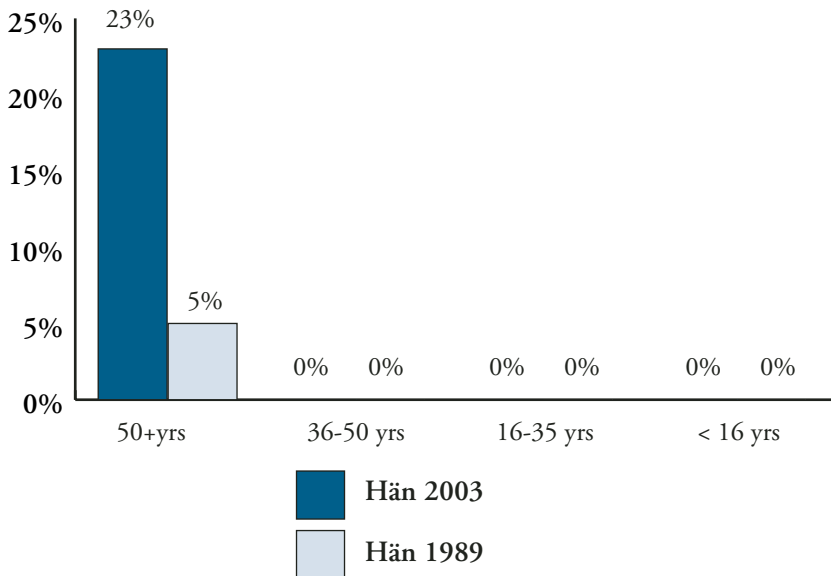
Between 1989 and 2003 there is a significant decrease in the number of Hän people reporting their ancestral language as their mother tongue. As well the number of Hän people that report the English language as their mother tongue has almost doubled in 13 years. This clearly demonstrates that the Hän language is rapidly giving way to the English language. As long as the English language continues to replace the Hän language as the mother tongue, the language will continue to weaken and the degrees of danger, in terms of becoming an extinct language, will only increase and intensify.

FLUENCY COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



All ranges of fluency, except for non-speakers, show a decrease since the 1989 assessment on Yukon First Nation languages. The self reported fluency rates also show a dramatic increase of almost 800% in the number of non-speakers in 2003 as compared to the 1989 assessment. This shows a rapid decrease in the strength and vitality of the Hän language.

GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKER COMPARISON

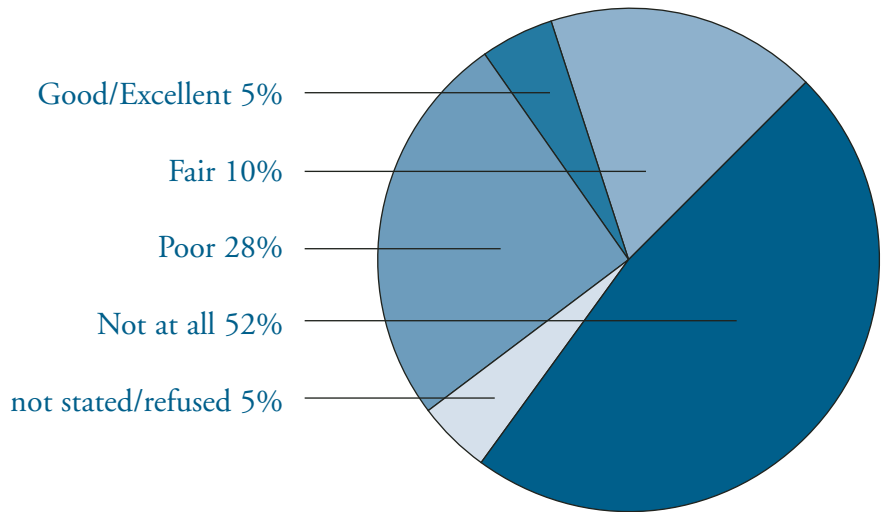


The Hän language good to excellent speakers can only be found in the Hän population that is 50 years of age and older. The numbers of good to excellent Hän speakers in this age range has increased considerably since the 1989 assessment on Yukon First Nation languages. The increase may in fact be illustrating that the last of the middle aged good to excellent Hän language speakers have aged and are now in the elderly age range. Fishman (1991) characterizes languages in stage 8, with only a few elderly speakers remaining, as languages utterly close to extinction. Language experts from around the world recommend that for languages so close to language death, that immediate preservation is completed and that drastic measures are taken to produce fluent speakers through one-to-one language immersion programs with the elderly speakers.

It is the elderly good to excellent speakers that retain the most authentic form of Hän cultural knowledge and the highest levels of fluency in the Hän language. As the elderly speakers pass on, the supply of highly fluent speakers must be replaced with a younger generation of equally fluent speakers, thus ensuring that a stable number of fluent speakers is maintained and replenished on a continuous basis. The picture portrayed in the graph shows that the process of creating a new supply of fluent speakers is not occurring in the Hän language group.

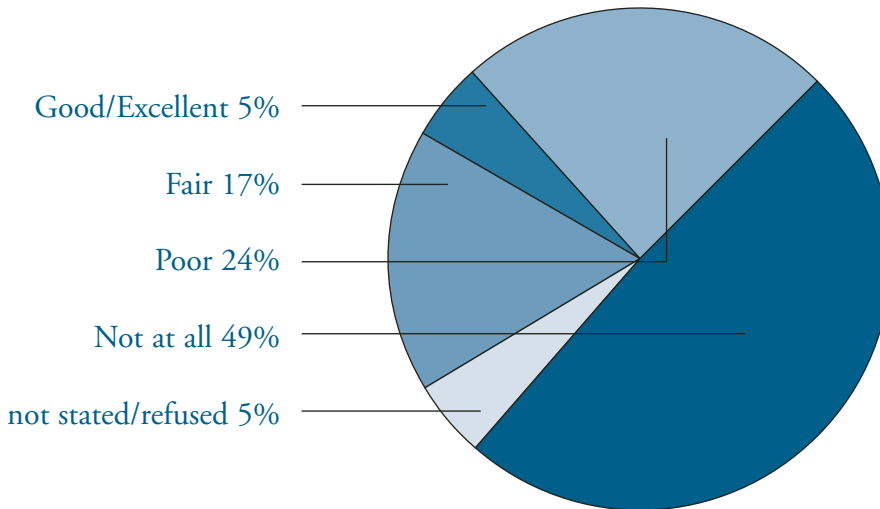
SELF-REPORTED FLUENCY LEVELS

How well do we say we speak?



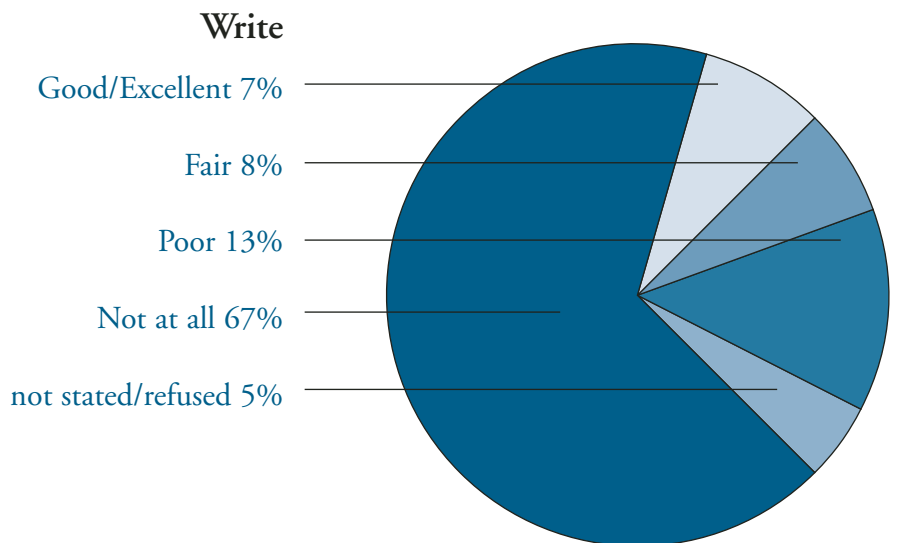
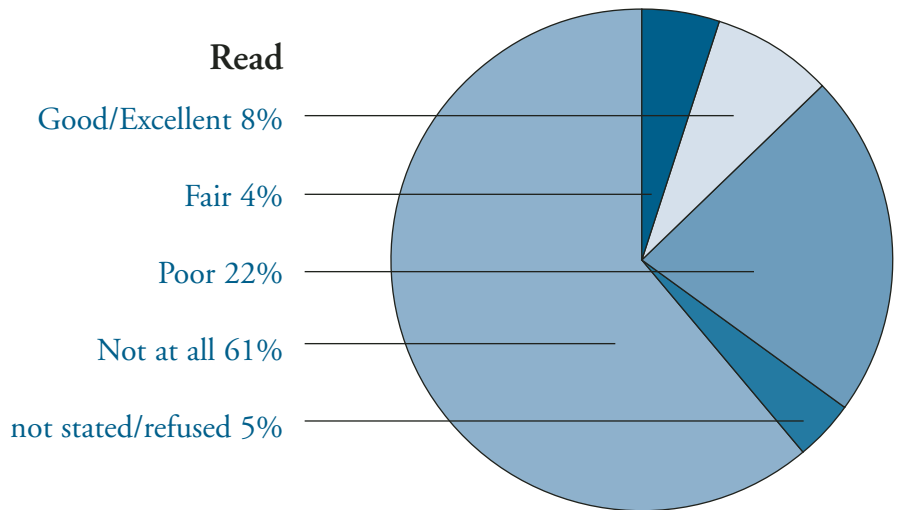
Over half of the Hän respondents report not being able to speak their ancestral language at all. Almost 40% Hän speakers report their speaking fluency level within the fair to poor range. Very few Hän people are able to speak the language at a level that would qualify them to pass on the Hän language to those that have lower levels of speaking abilities. This means that only a handful of the Hän population are able to contribute to maintaining the Hän respondents' most valuable resources, which essentially is the Hän culture and language, as their language provides access to their authentic culture and to their unique and distinct heritage.

How well do we say we understand?



The reported results show almost half of the Hän speakers rate themselves as being able to understand their ancestral language within the poor to excellent range, which is a slightly higher number than those that reported themselves as speakers in this range. This particular difference in the number of speakers and those that can understand shows that there are a number of Hän people that can hear and understand their language better than they can speak it. This specific population of Hän speakers is a prime group for language learning as research indicates that it is far easier to learn to speak a language if you can understand it first.

How well do we say we read and write?

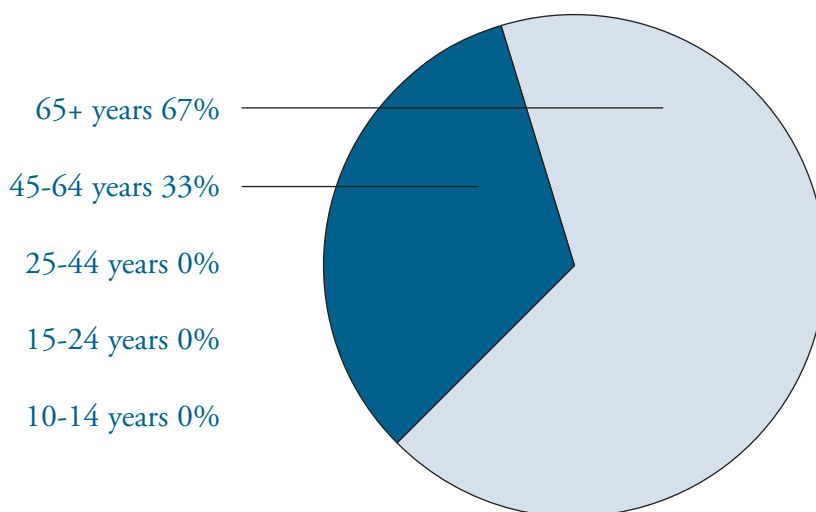


Far fewer Hän people are able to read and write their ancestral language as compared to those that are able to speak and understand it. Research strongly recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be represented in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the Hän youth are exposed to and eventually will ultimately frame their own thoughts

within and around, reflect the unique and distinct ideas, perspectives and views of their own Hän people. It is vital that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the Hän people of today and of tomorrow.

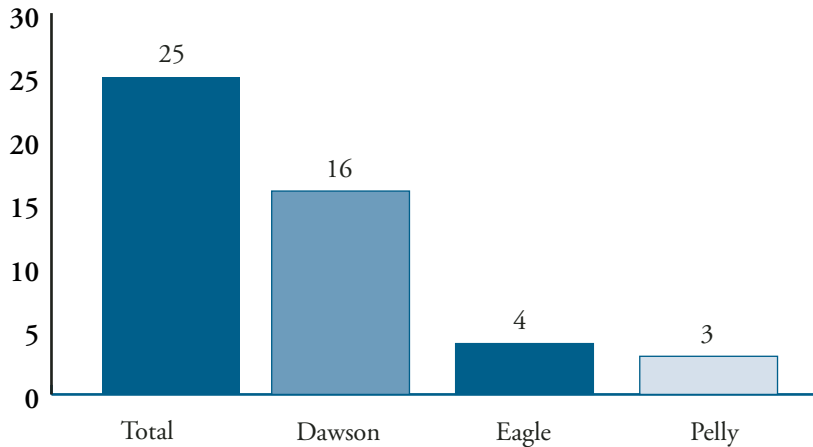
HÄN LANGUAGE GROUP: POTENTIAL INSTRUCTORS BASED ON GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKERS

Profile of those who could potentially instruct others in the Hän language, those with ‘good to excellent’ speaking skills.



Although the main supply of good to excellent speakers, thus potential instructors, is within the 45 years and older range, it is hardly feasible to train these people to be teachers of school aged children largely because of their close proximity to retirement age. However it is this specific population that is ideal for teaching the language to a younger generation of teachers and for providing one-to-one language instruction for increasing fluency levels of individual learners or small teams of two or more language learners. The good to excellent Hän language speakers are in a position to have positive and direct impact upon increasing the number of fluent speakers in the Hän language group.

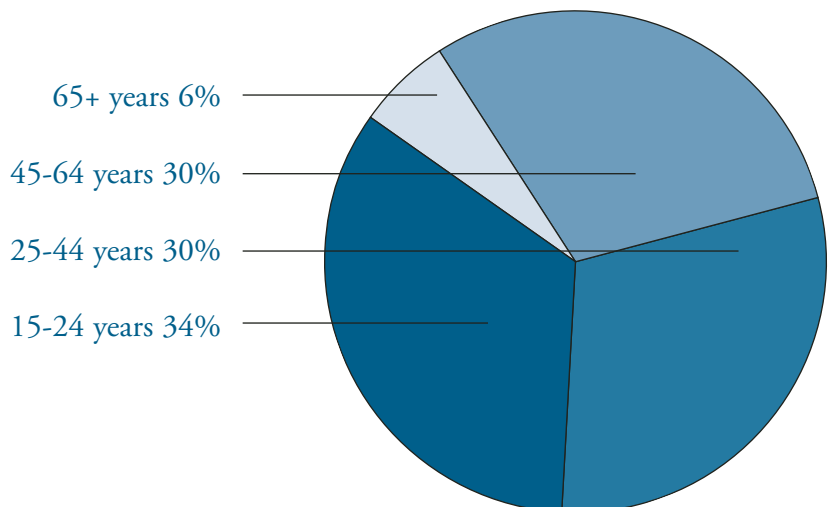
DIALECTS OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY INSTRUCT OTHERS IN THE LANGUAGE



The dialect graph illustrates the distribution of three dialects reported by the Hän good to excellent range language speakers. The graph also shows that the majority of good to excellent speakers reported the Dawson Hän dialect as the main dialect spoken.

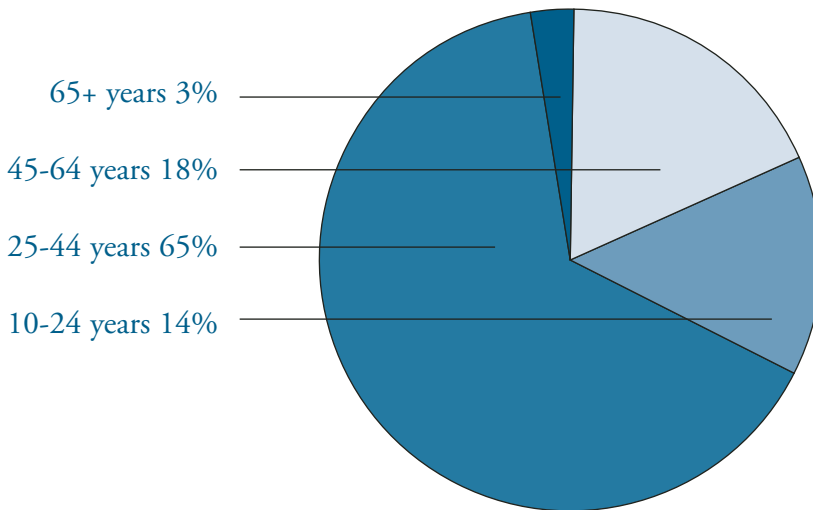
PROFILE OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME FLUENT QUICKLY

(That is poor to fair speakers or those non-speakers with good-excellent understanding.)



Those that are most ideal or prime for learning the Hän language can be found in all age ranges, except the very elderly, as the distribution of potential fluent speakers is quite even throughout the 10 to 64 year age span. As was previously discussed, research on second language acquisition shows that it is far easier to teach those that understand a language at some level than it is to teach a person who has little or no understanding at all.

PROFILE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK NOR UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE AT ALL.



The parent generation, or those that are between the 25 to 44 age range, has the largest proportion of people that do not speak or understand the Hän language at all as compared to all other age groupings. When combined, the respondents between the ages of 10 and 44 years account for almost 80% of the non-speaking population within the Hän language group. This is very concerning as it is within this age grouping that the major pool of potential teachers exists. Equally concerning is the fact that it is also within this age grouping that most parents fall into. This shows that there are many Hän children that do not have access to a parent that is able to pass the language on to them.

SUMMARY

The fluency assessment illustrates that Hän language group is in a state that is very near extinction, as is illustrated by the decreasing numbers of good to excellent speakers; the elderly age of the good to excellent speakers; the significantly higher numbers of people that report English as their mother tongue as compared to the Hän language; and the tendency to using the English language as the main method of communication. Being that the majority of the good to excellent Hän speakers are 50 years or older, it is of critical importance that the language be preserved immediately in as natural of a form as is possible and that measures are taken to produce fluent speakers in the younger generation of Hän speakers.

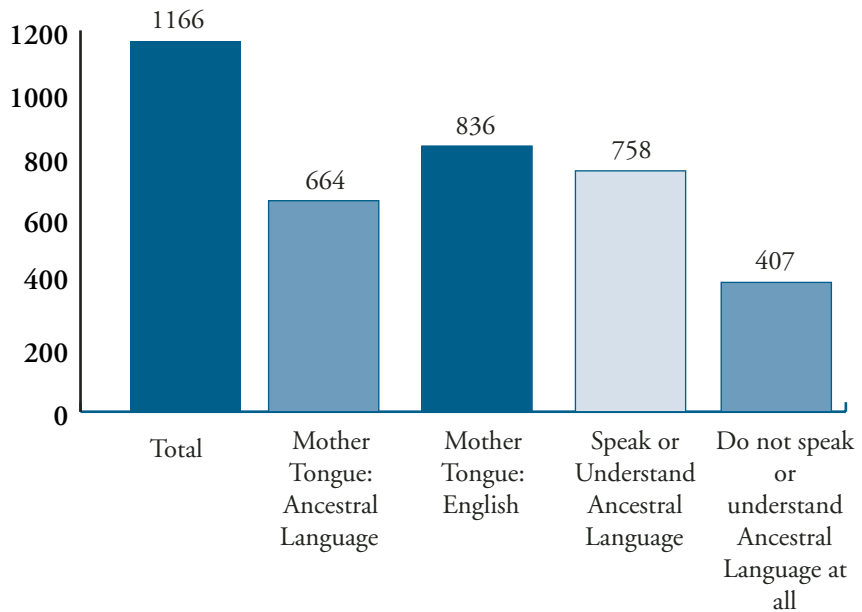
Although there are a fair number of speakers within the Hän language group across all age ranges that report the Hän language as their mother tongue, they have also reported that they do not use the language as their main language of communication. For the Hän language group, those that speak the language most fluently must commit themselves to passing on the language. This will involve a process that encourages the fluent speakers to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak the Hän language to all Hän people they might encounter on a daily basis.

It is essential that opportunities are provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. The expression, "use it or lose it" is only too true when applied to the current situation of revitalizing and perpetuating the Hän language. Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language.



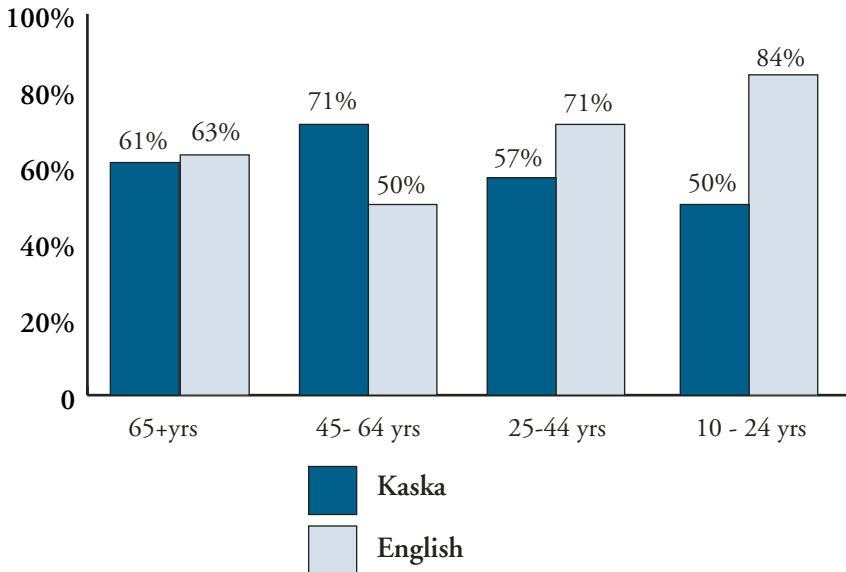
Kaska Language Profile

OVERVIEW



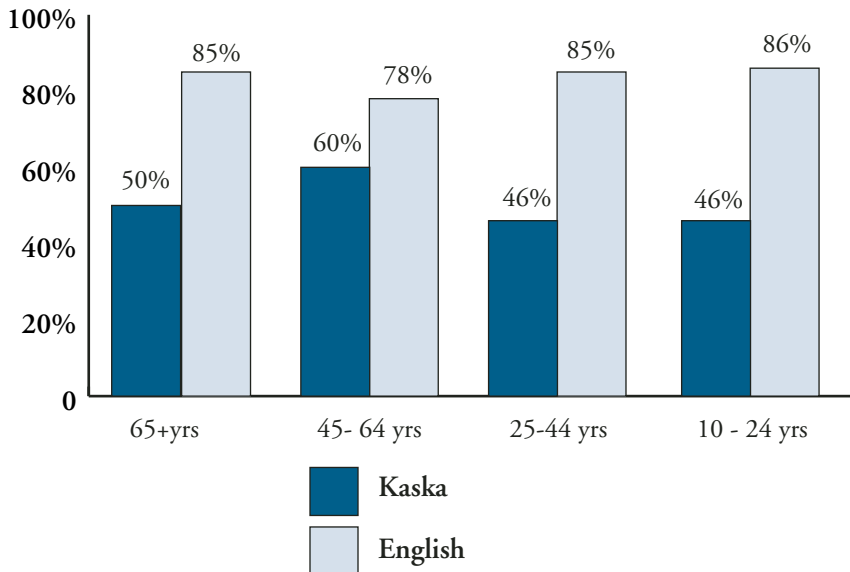
Approximately 1 in 3 Kaska people do not speak their ancestral language at all. Although, the graph illustrates that English is the strongest language amongst the Kaska people, over half of the respondents report the Kaska language as being the first language they learned and still understand, and the even higher numbers of respondents that report that they can speak or understand the Kaska language, shows that there are a significant number of Kaska people learning their ancestral language as a second language. The information around second language learners is a positive indication of the work individuals are doing to reverse the language shift.

KASKA LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE



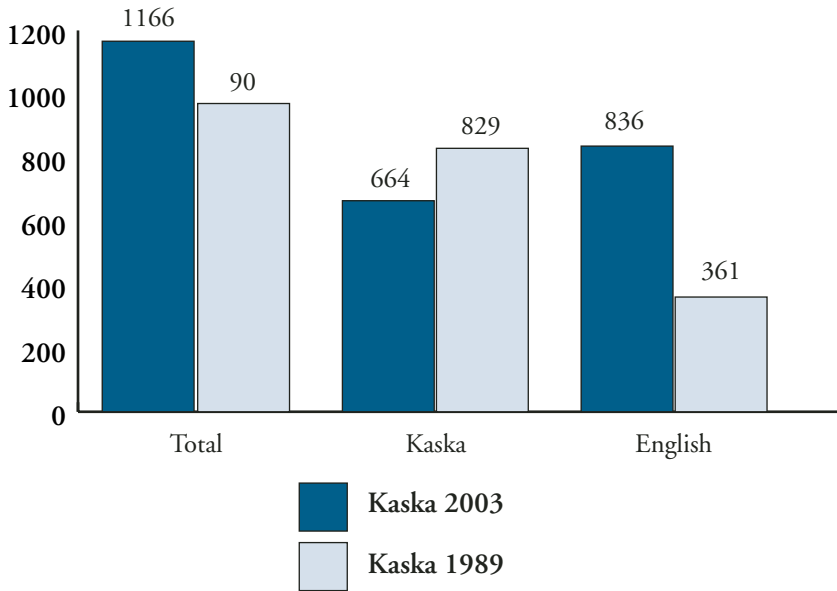
Kaska respondents for all age ranges, with the exception of those that are between the ages of 45 and 64 years report that the English language is the dominant language as most Kaska people, even the elderly, are more apt to learn the English language as their first language. Across all generations a significant number of Kaska respondents reported both the Kaska and English languages as their mother tongue, this may show that perhaps people learned the two languages simultaneously as children. It is with the fluent speaking Kaska population that the main supply of wealth exists in terms of knowledge about the Kaska culture, heritage and language. Of significance to note is that the mother tongue graph illustrates that the number of Kaska people between the ages of 45 and 64 years are the only age grouping to report the Kaska language as the dominant mother tongue, as do close to half of those people in the younger generation. This graph shows us that the Kaska language group has a fairly strong resource pool of people that have their ancestral language as their mother tongue.

KASKA LANGUAGE GROUP: SPEAK MOST OFTEN



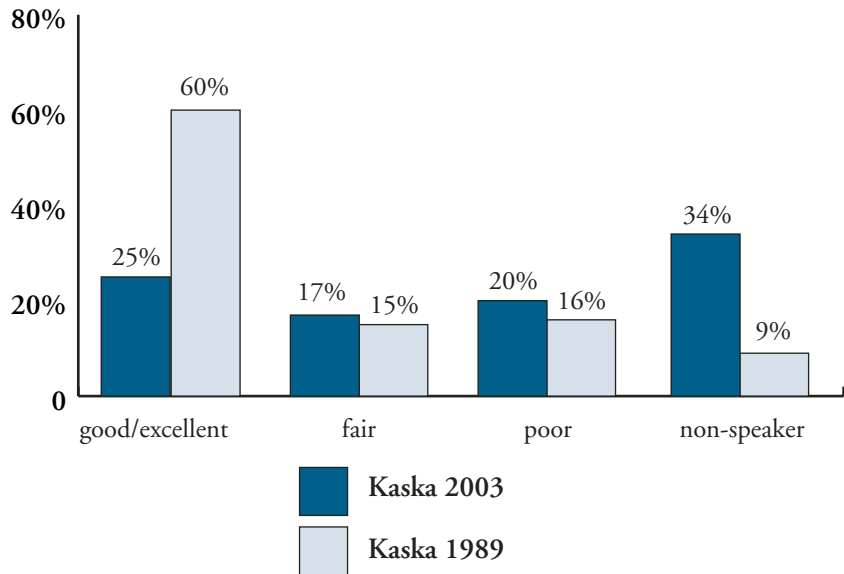
For the most part and across all age groups including the elderly population, the Kaska language is largely being replaced by the English language as the main language of use. Those individuals that have their Kaska language as their mother tongue are not using the language as much as they possibly could in their everyday lives. This information is greatly concerning, as language learners are not being provided with as many opportunities as is possible, to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers. The 45 to 64 year age range of Kaska respondents appear to be the strongest age range for the Kaska language, that is in terms of the number of people that have the Kaska language as their mother tongue and the numbers of individuals that are committing themselves to using the language as their main language of communication.

KASKA LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



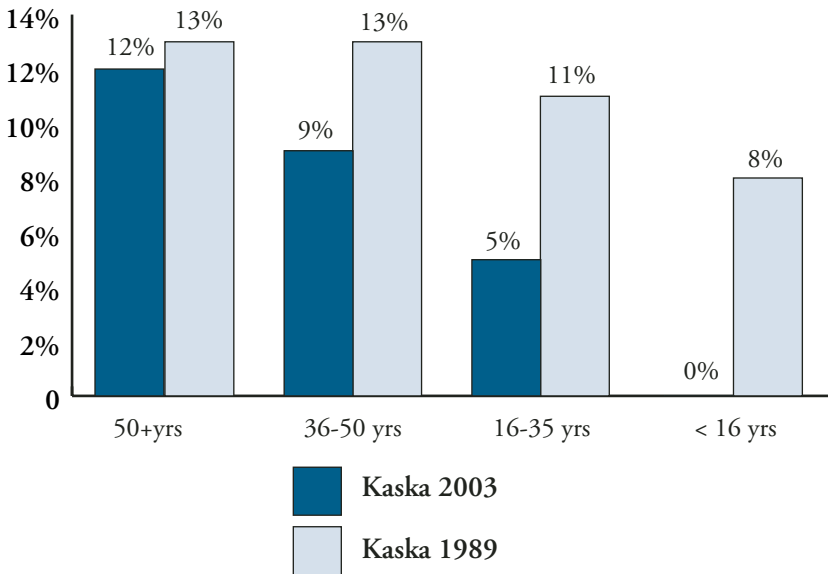
Between 1989 and 2003 a decrease is seen in the number of Kaska people reporting their ancestral language as their mother tongue, the language they first learned and still understand. Accompanying this decrease is a tremendous increase in the number of Kaska people that report the English language as their mother tongue. This number has increased significantly since 1989, as it has more than doubled. This shows that the Kaska language is largely giving way to the English language. As long as the English language continues to replace the Kaska language as the mother tongue, the language will continue to weaken and the degrees of danger, in terms of becoming an extinct language, will only increase and intensify.

FLUENCY COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



The numbers of good to excellent Kaska speakers has greatly declined since the 1989 assessment on Yukon First Nation languages, as it has been more than slashed in half, in a period of only 13 years. The Kaska speakers that rated themselves within the range of fair and poor fluency levels have slightly increased since 1989. The self reported fluency rates also show us that there are almost 400% more non-speakers in 2003 than there were in 1989. The overall decrease in highly fluent speakers, the increase in fair to poor speakers and the tremendous increase in non-speakers demonstrates a steady decline in strength and further deterioration in the Kaska language group.

GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKER COMPARISON

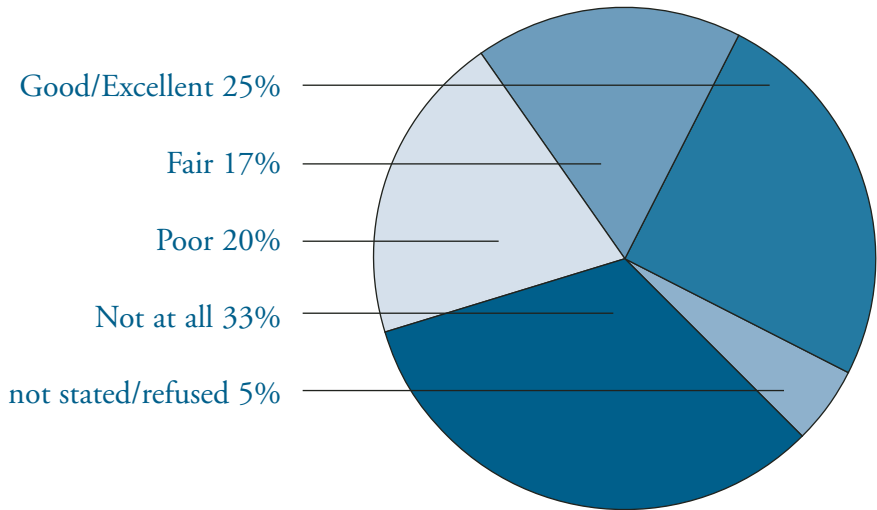


The Kaska language group is experiencing a decline in their most fluent speakers across all generations of Kaska people. As with other language groups, time is limited in terms of ensuring thorough preservation of the Kaska language and reversing the shift to the English language. Research shows that it takes two generations of non-speakers to produce an extinct language.

It is the elderly speakers over 50 years that retain the most authentic form of Kaska cultural knowledge and the highest levels of fluency in the Kaska language. As the elderly speakers pass on, the supply of highly fluent speakers must be replaced with a younger generation of equally fluent speakers, thus ensuring that a stable number of fluent speakers is maintained, thus replenished on a continuous basis. The picture portrayed in the graph shows that the process of creating a new supply of fluent speakers is steadily deteriorating within the Kaska language group.

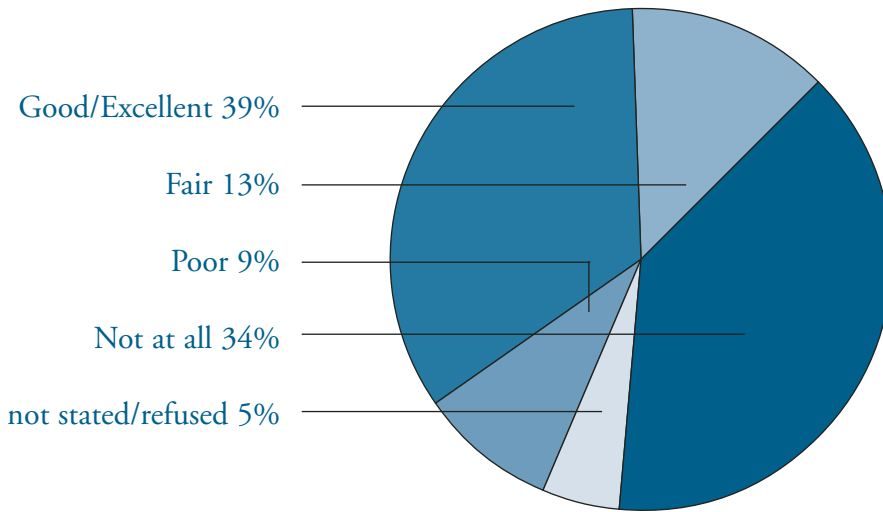
SELF-REPORTED FLUENCY LEVELS

How well do we say we speak?



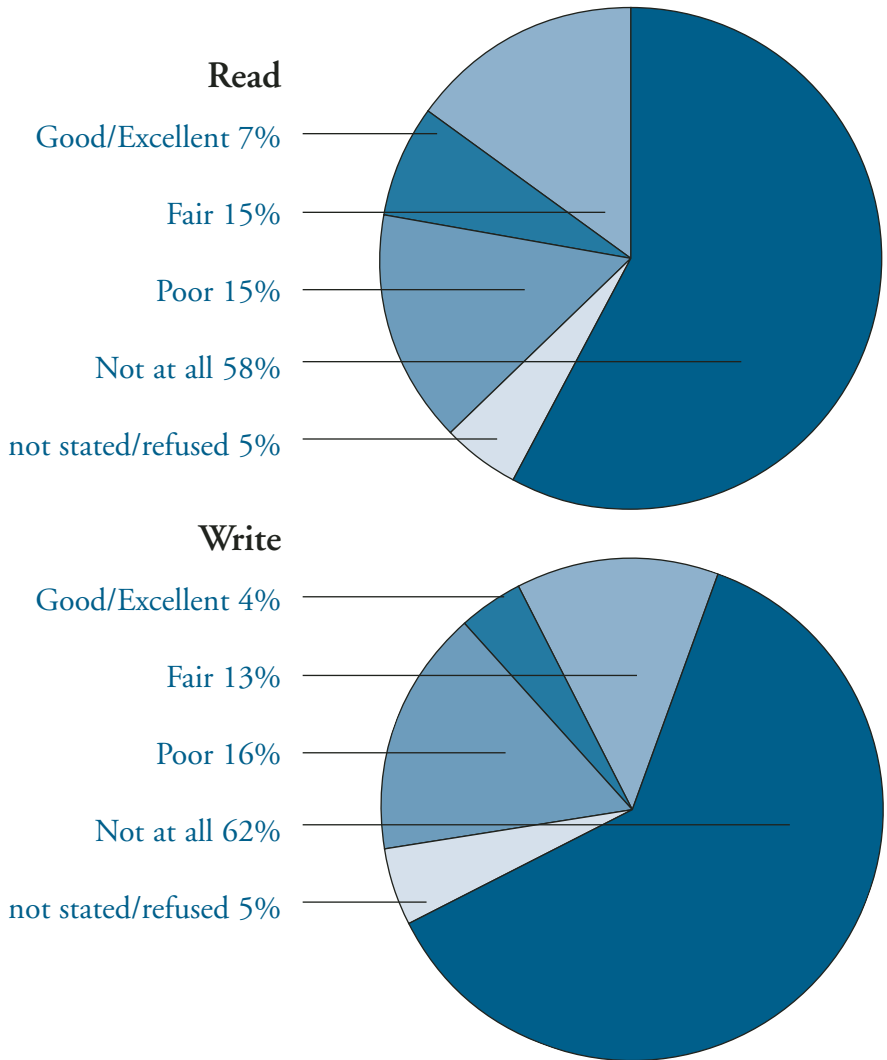
One third of the Kaska respondents report not being able to speak their ancestral language at all. Approximately 1 in 3 Kaska speakers report their speaking fluency level within the fair to poor range. Approximately 1 in 4 Kaska people are able to speak the language at a level that would enable them to pass on the Kaska language to those that have lower levels of speaking abilities. This means that almost 25% of the Kaska population is in a position in which they are able to contribute to maintaining the Kaska respondents' most valuable resources, which essentially is the Kaska language, as their language provides access to their authentic culture and to their unique and distinct heritage.

How well do we say we understand?



The reported results show that just over half of the Kaska speakers rate themselves as being able to understand their ancestral language within the fair to excellent range, which is a significantly higher number than those that reported themselves as speakers in this range. This particular difference in the number of speakers and those that can understand shows that there are a number of Kaska people that can hear and understand their language better than they can speak it. This specific population of Kaska speakers are a prime group for language learning as research indicates that it is far easier to learn to speak a language if you can understand it first.

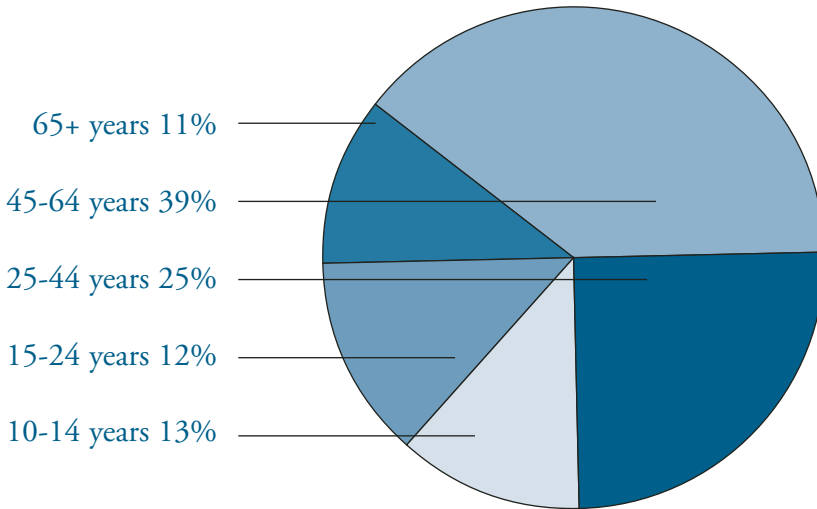
How well do we say we read and write?



Far fewer Kaska speakers are able to read and write their ancestral language as compared to those that are able to speak and understand it. Research strongly recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be available in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the Kaska youth are exposed to and eventually will ultimately frame their own thoughts within and around, reflect the unique and distinct ideas, perspectives and views of their own Kaska people. It is important that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the Kaska people of today and of tomorrow.

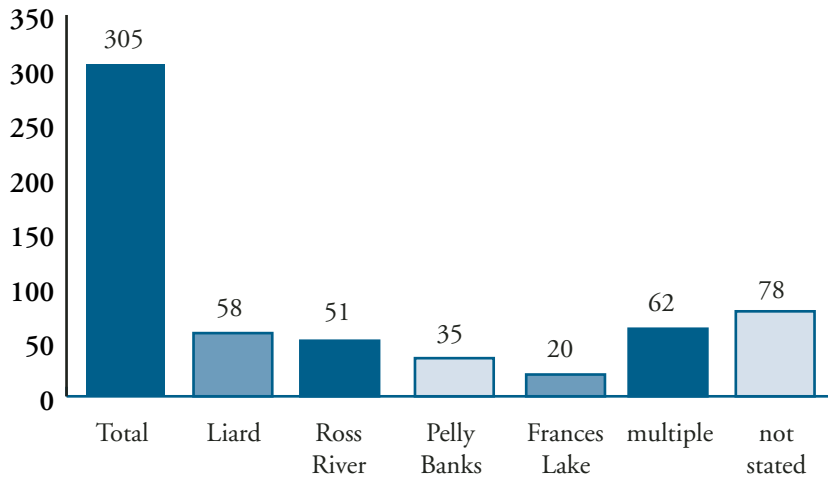
KASKA LANGUAGE GROUP: POTENTIAL INSTRUCTORS BASED ON GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKERS

Profile of those who could potentially instruct others in the Kaska language, those with 'good to excellent' speaking skills.



This graph shows that a sensible target age range to focus on for further preparation and training of Kaska language teachers should be the 15 to 44 year range, which accounts for more than one third of the good to excellent speakers in the Kaska language group. Although the main supply of good to excellent speakers is within the 45 years and older range, it is hardly feasible to train these people to be teachers of school aged children largely because of their close proximity to retirement age. However it is this specific population that is ideal for teaching the language to a younger generation of teachers and for providing one-to-one language instruction for increasing fluency levels of individual learners or small teams of two or more language learners. The good to excellent Kaska language speakers are in a position to have positive and direct impact upon increasing the number of fluent speakers in the Kaska language group.

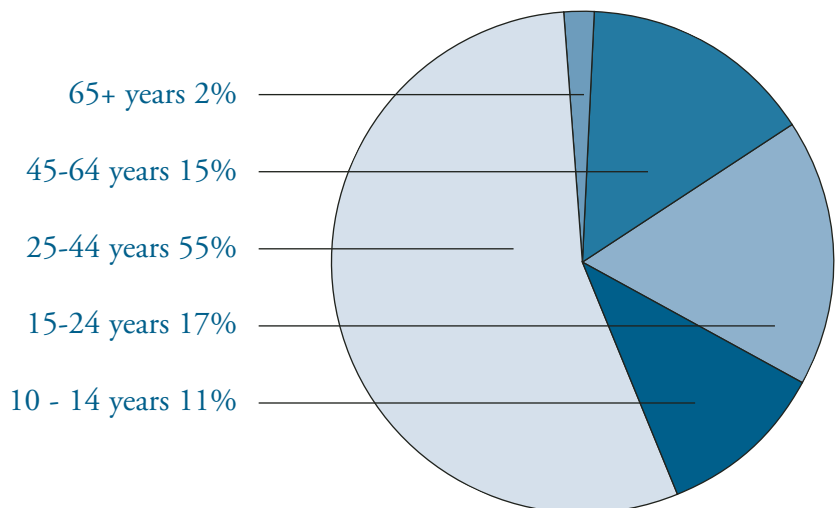
DIALECTS OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY INSTRUCT OTHERS IN THE LANGUAGE



The dialect graph illustrates the distribution of the four dialects reported by the Kaska good to excellent range language speakers. The graph also shows that the majority of good to excellent speakers reported multiple dialects as the main dialects spoken. Interestingly, the majority of good to excellent speakers did not state any dialect at all.

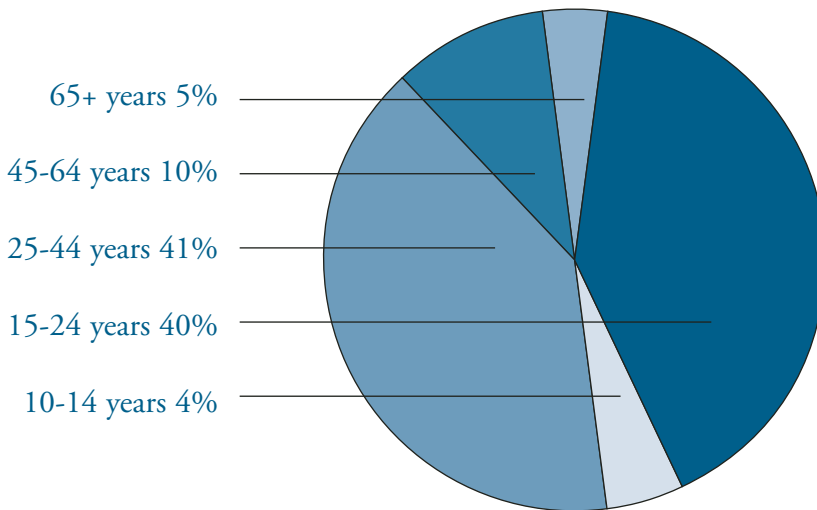
PROFILE OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME FLUENT QUICKLY

That is poor to fair speakers or those non-speakers with good-excellent understanding.



Those that are most ideal or prime for learning the Kaska language can be found in all age ranges, although the majority is in the 25 to 44 age range. As was indicated previously, research on second language acquisition shows that it is far easier to teach those that understand a language than it is to teach a person who has little or no understanding at all.

PROFILE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK NOR UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE AT ALL.



Those that are between the 25 to 44 age range have the largest proportion of people that do not speak or understand the Kaska language at all as compared to all other age groupings. When combined the respondents between the ages of 15 and 44 years account for 81% of the non-speaking population within the Kaska language group. This is very concerning as it is within this age grouping that the major pool of potential teachers exists. Equally concerning is the fact that it is also within this age grouping that most parents fall into. This shows that there are many Kaska children that do not have access to a parent that is able to pass the language on to them.

SUMMARY

The fluency assessment illustrates that Kaska language group is in a steady decline which is illustrated by the decreasing numbers of good to excellent speakers, the increasing numbers of people that have English as their mother tongue and the shift to using the English language as the main method of communication. Being that the half of the good to excellent Kaska speakers are between the ages of 45 to 64 years, it is important that the language be preserved immediately in as natural of a form as is possible and that measures are taken to produce higher levels of fluency in the younger generation of Kaska speakers.

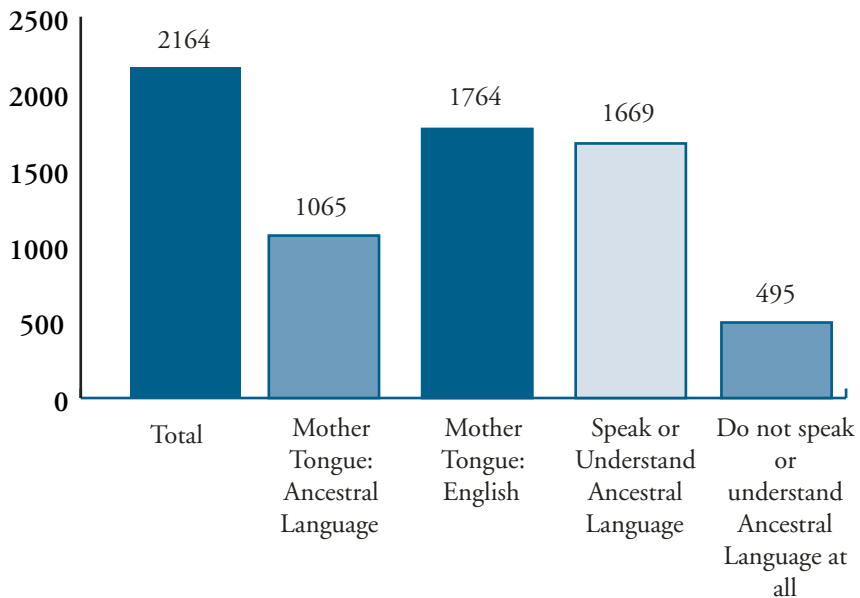
Although there are a fair number of fluent speakers within the Kaska language group, those that have their language are not using the language as their main language of communication. For the Kaska language group, those that speak the language most fluently must commit themselves to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak the Kaska language to all Kaska people they might encounter on a daily basis.

It is essential that opportunities are provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language. This will involve taking a close look at where the language is used, how it is used and why it is used. Essentially an investigation into the status and prestige of the language.



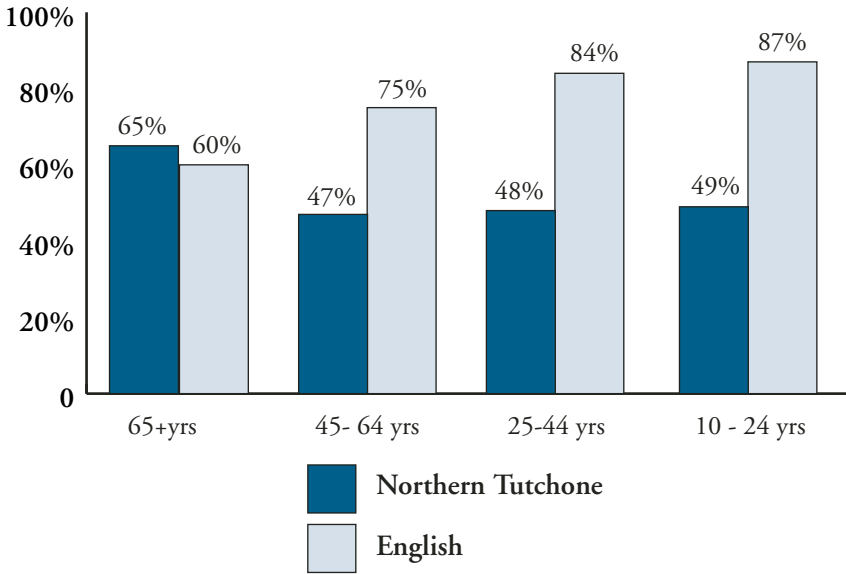
Northern Tutchone Language Profile

OVERVIEW



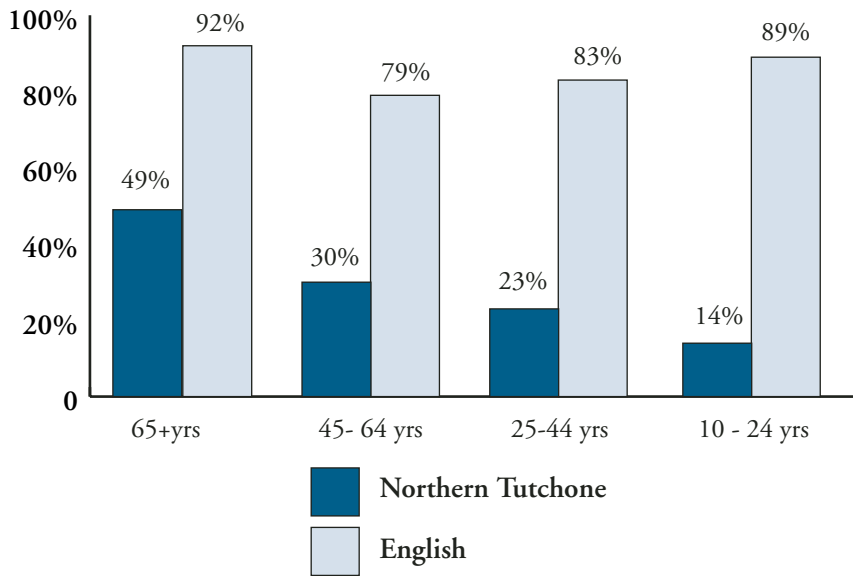
Approximately one in four Northern Tutchone people do not speak their ancestral language at all. Although, the graph illustrates that English is the strongest language amongst the Northern Tutchone people, nearly half of the respondents report the Northern Tutchone language as being the first language they learned and still understand, and over 75% of the Northern Tutchone respondents indicate that they are learning their ancestral language as a second language. The higher numbers of speakers/understanders as compared to mother tongue figures show that a large number of Northern Tutchone people are learning their ancestral language. The information around second language learners is a positive indication of the work individuals are doing to reverse the language shift.

NORTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE



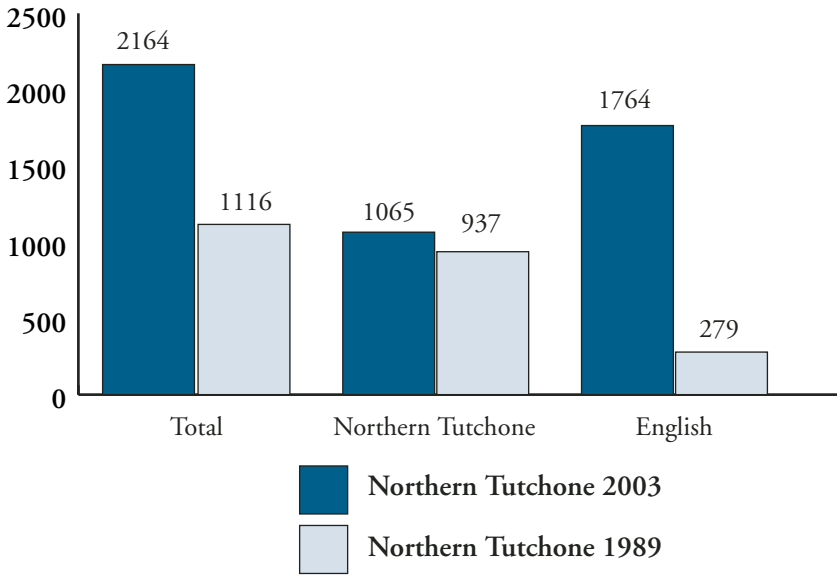
Northern Tutchone respondents between the ages of 10 and 64 years report that the English language is the dominant language as Northern Tutchone people in this age range more frequently learn the English language as their mother tongue. Of the Northern Tutchone population 65 years and older, just over half of the elderly population report the Northern Tutchone language as their mother tongue. It is with this 60% of the elderly Northern Tutchone population that the main supply of wealth exists in terms of knowledge about the Northern Tutchone culture, heritage and language. Of significance to note is that the mother tongue graph illustrates that the number of Northern Tutchone people that report their ancestral language as their mother tongue is similar across all age ranges, the numbers increase with respect to the English language.

NORTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: SPEAK MOST OFTEN



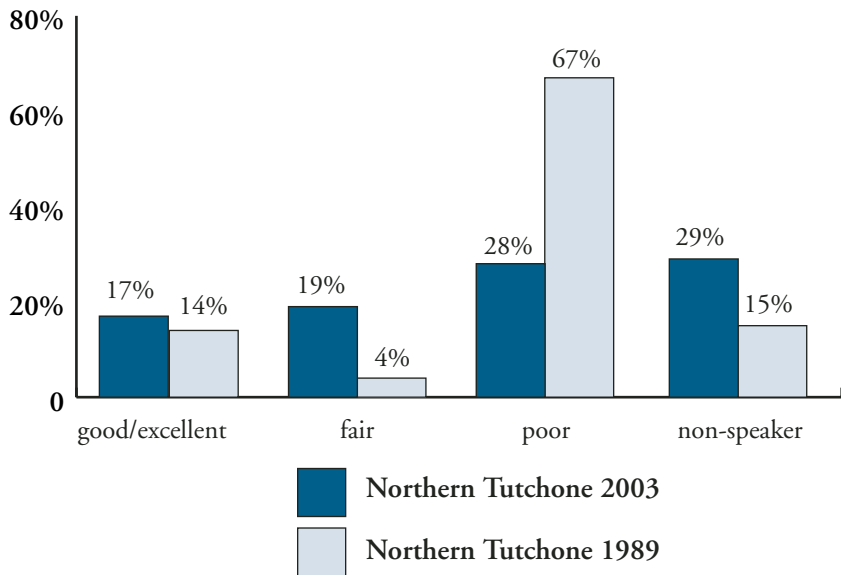
For the most part and across all age groups including the elderly population, the Northern Tutchone language is largely replaced by the English language as the main language of use. Those individuals that can speak their Northern Tutchone language are not using the language as much as they possibly could in their everyday lives. This graph also illustrates that the greater majority of those that are most fluent in the language, the population 65 years or older, are for the most part using the English language as their main language for communicating. This information is greatly concerning, as language learners are not being provided with as many opportunities as is possible, to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers. This particular graph also clearly illustrates the consistent deterioration of the Northern Tutchone language as the use of the language as a practical, daily language steadily decreases through the generations from the elderly to the young.

NORTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



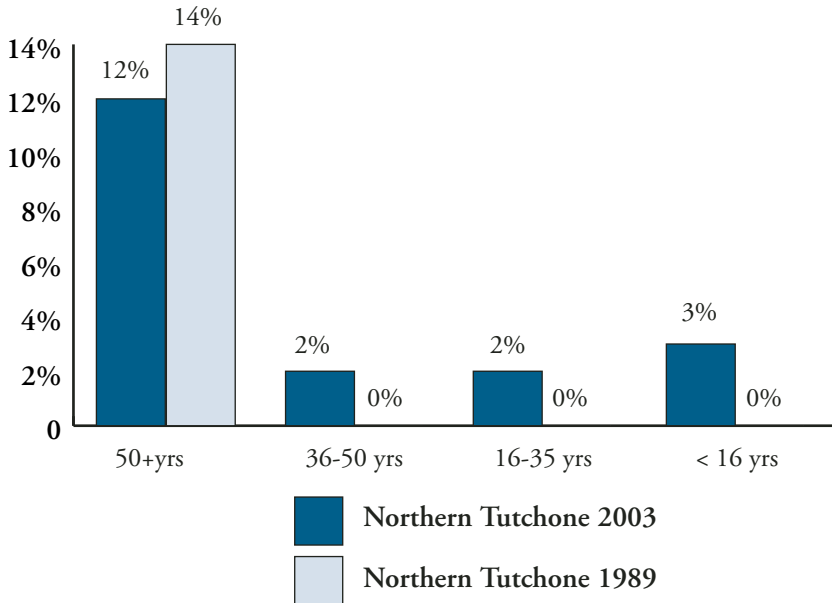
Between 1989 and 2003 there is a significant decrease in the number of Northern Tutchone people reporting their ancestral language as their mother tongue. As well, the number of Northern Tutchone people that report the English language as their mother tongue has increased by about 600%. This shows that the Northern Tutchone language is giving way to the English language. As long as the English language continues to replace the Northern Tutchone language as the mother tongue, the language will continue to weaken and the degrees of danger, in terms of becoming an extinct language, will only increase and intensify.

FLUENCY COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



The numbers of good to excellent Northern Tutchone speakers has experienced a slight increase since the 1989 assessment on Yukon First Nation languages. The Northern Tutchone speakers that rated themselves with fair fluency levels have grown tremendously since 1989. There were more than twice the number of Northern Tutchone speakers that rated themselves at poor fluency levels in 1989 than in the 2003 assessment. The self reported fluency rates also show us that there are almost twice the number of non-speakers in 2003 than there were in 1989.

GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKER COMPARISON



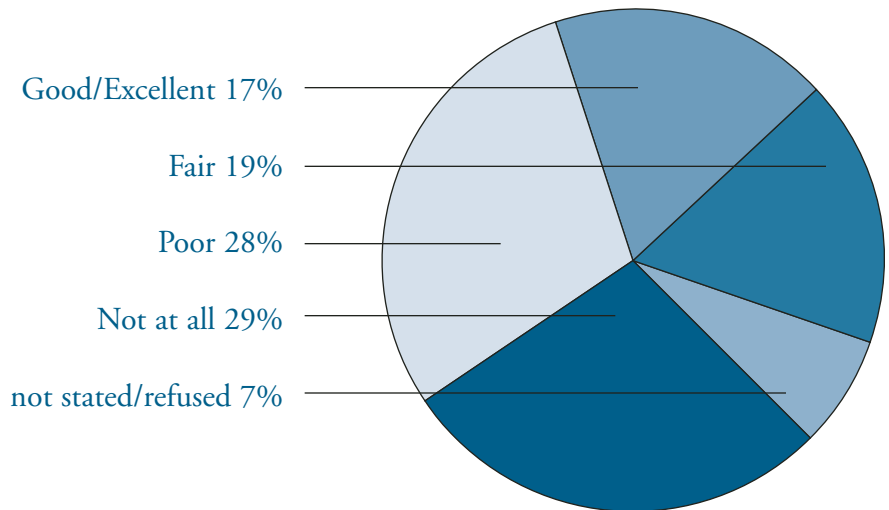
Although there has been an increase in the number of good to excellent speakers for the younger generation of Northern Tutchone speakers, the Northern Tutchone language group is experiencing a decline in their most fluent speakers, those over 50 years of age. As with other language groups, time is limited in terms of ensuring thorough preservation of the Northern Tutchone language and reversing the shift to the English language.

It is the elderly speakers that retain the most authentic form of Northern Tutchone cultural knowledge and the highest levels of fluency in the Northern Tutchone language. As the elderly speakers pass on, the supply of highly fluent speakers must be replaced with a younger generation of equally fluent speakers, ensuring that a stable number of fluent speakers is maintained, and replenished on a continuous basis. The picture portrayed in the graph shows that the process of creating a new supply of fluent speakers is occurring within the Northern Tutchone language group, however the question to ask is whether the fluent speakers are being replenished at a rapid enough rate to reverse the language shift?

The appearance of good to excellent speakers that are under 50 years of age provides glimmers of hope for language revival. The data shows us that the language is being learned by the younger generations of the Northern Tutchone people.

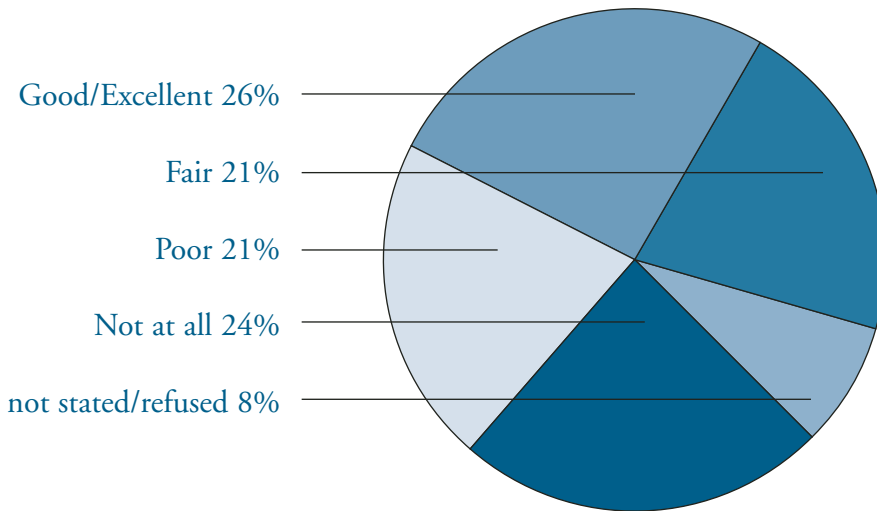
SELF-REPORTED FLUENCY LEVELS

How well do we say we speak?



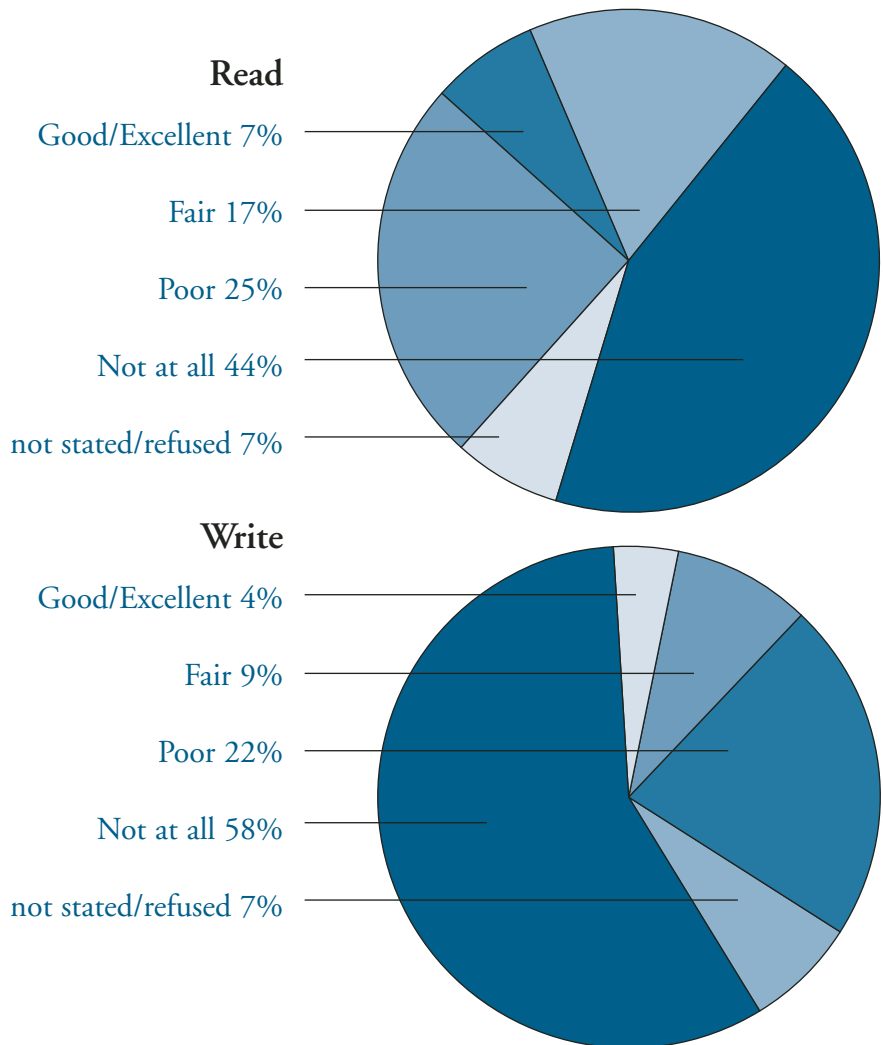
Over three quarters of the Northern Tutchone speakers report their speaking fluency level within the fair to non-speaker range. Approximately 1 in 5 Northern Tutchone people are able to speak the language at a level that would enable them to pass on the Northern Tutchone language to those that have lower levels of speaking abilities. This means that almost 20% of the Northern Tutchone population is in a position in which they are able to contribute to maintaining the Northern Tutchone respondents' most valuable resources, which essentially is the Northern Tutchone language, as their language provides access to their authentic culture and to their unique and distinct heritage.

How well do we say we understand?



The reported results show that almost half of the Northern Tutchone speakers rate themselves as being able to understand their ancestral language within the fair to excellent range, which is a significantly higher number than those that reported themselves as speakers in this range. This particular difference in the number of speakers and those that can understand shows that there are a large number of Northern Tutchone people that can hear and understand their language better than they can speak it. This specific population of Northern Tutchone speakers are a prime group for language learning as research indicates that it is far easier to learn to speak a language if you can understand it first.

How well do we say we read and write?

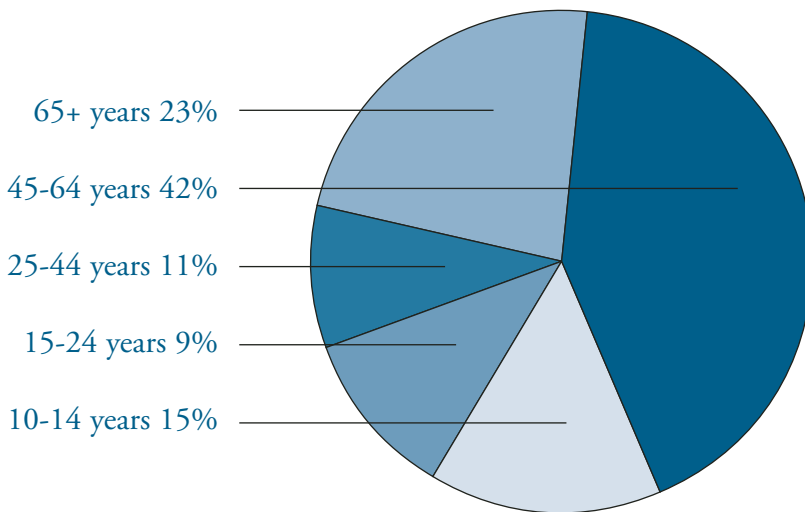


Far fewer Northern Tutchone speakers are able to read and write their ancestral language as compared to those that are able to speak and understand it. Research recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be represented in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the Northern Tutchone youth are exposed to and eventually will ultimately frame their own thoughts within and around, reflect the unique and distinct

ideas, perspectives and views of their own Northern Tutchone people. It is important that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the Northern Tutchone people of today and of tomorrow.

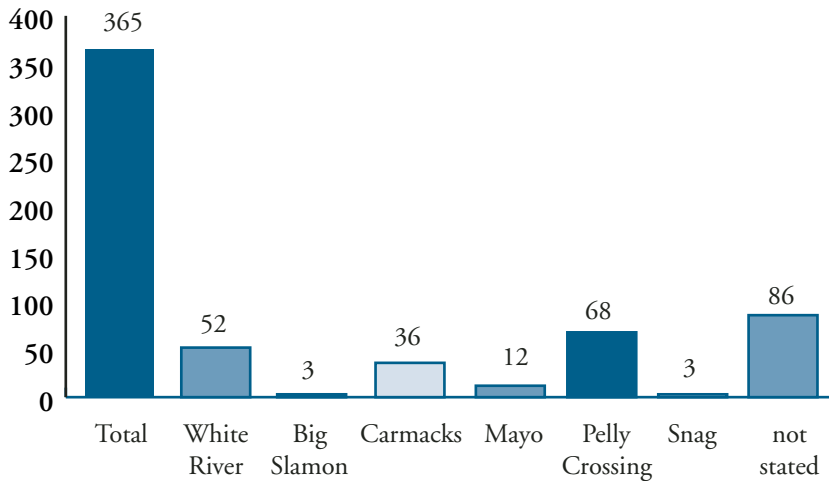
NORTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: POTENTIAL INSTRUCTORS BASED ON GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKERS

Profile of those who could potentially instruct others in the Northern Tutchone language, that is 'good-excellent' speakers.



This graph shows that a sensible target age range to focus on for the training of Northern Tutchone language teachers should be the 15 to 44 year range. Although the main supply of good to excellent speakers is within the 46 years and older range, it is hardly feasible to train these people to be teachers of school aged children largely because of their close proximity to retirement age. However it is this specific population that is ideal for teaching the language to a younger generation of teachers and for providing one-to-one language instruction for increasing fluency levels of individual learners or small teams of two or more language learners.

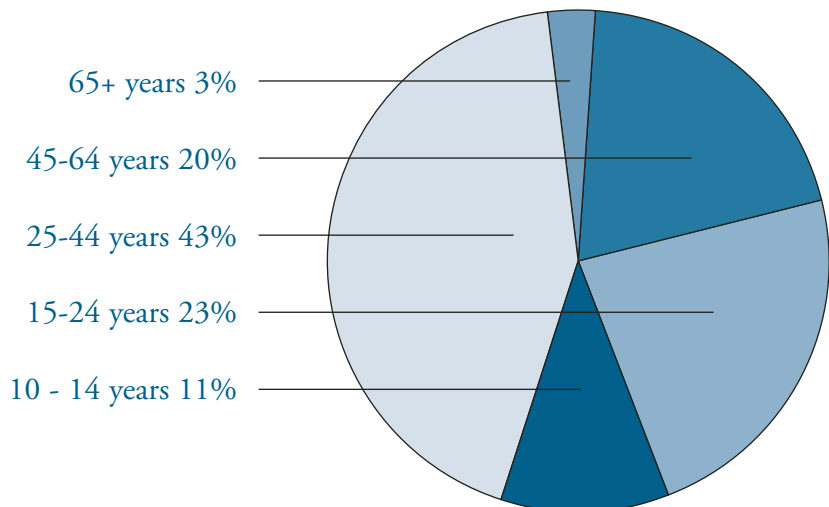
DIALECTS OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY INSTRUCT OTHERS IN THE LANGUAGE



The dialect graph illustrates the distribution of the six dialects reported by the Northern Tutchone good to excellent range language speakers. The graph also shows that the majority of good to excellent speakers reported the Pelly, White River and Carmacks dialects as the main dialects spoken. Interestingly, the largest number of Northern Tutchone did not state any dialect at all.

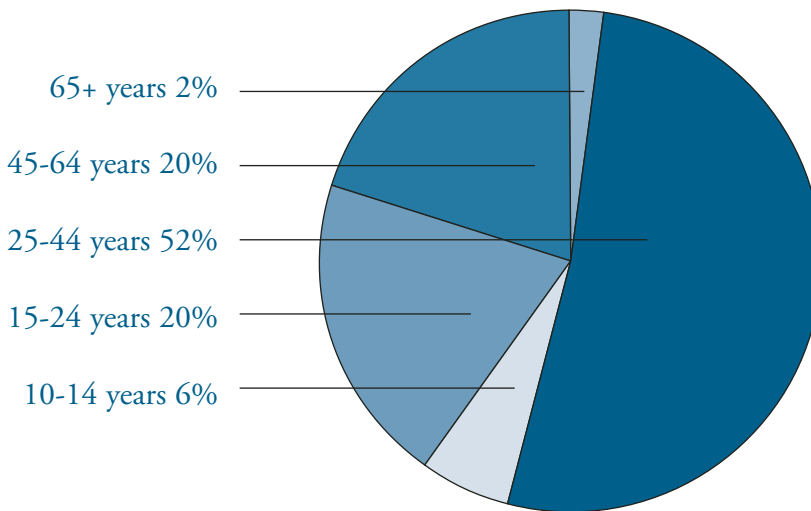
PROFILE OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME FLUENT QUICKLY

(Poor to fair speakers or those non-speakers with good-excellent understanding)



Those that are most ideal or prime for learning the Northern Tutchone language can be found in all age ranges, although the majority is in the 25 to 44 age range. As was indicated previously, research on second language acquisition shows that it is far easier to teach those that understand a language at some level than it is to teach a person who has little or no understanding at all.

PROFILE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK NOR UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE AT ALL.



The 25 to 44 age range has the largest proportion of people that do not speak or understand the Northern Tutchone language at all as compared to all other age groupings. This is very concerning as it is within this age grouping that the major pool of potential teachers exists. Equally concerning is the fact that it is also within this age grouping that many parents fall into. This shows that there are many Northern Tutchone children that do not have access to a parent that is able to pass the language on to them.

SUMMARY

The fluency assessment illustrates that Northern Tutchone language group is in a steady decline which is illustrated by the decreasing numbers of Northern Tutchone people learning their ancestral language as their mother tongue; the increasing numbers of people that learn English as their mother tongue and the shift to using the English language as the main method of communication. Being that the majority of the highly fluent Northern Tutchone fluent speakers are over the age of 50 years, it is important that the language be preserved immediately in as natural of a form as is possible and that measures are taken to produce higher levels of fluency in the younger generation of Northern Tutchone speakers.

Although there are a fair number of fluent speakers within the Northern Tutchone language group, those that have their language are not using the language as their main language of communication. For the Northern Tutchone language group, those that speak the language most fluently, primarily those over 50 years of age, must commit themselves to passing on the language. This will involve a process that encourages the fluent speakers to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak the Northern Tutchone language to all Northern Tutchone people they might encounter on a daily basis.

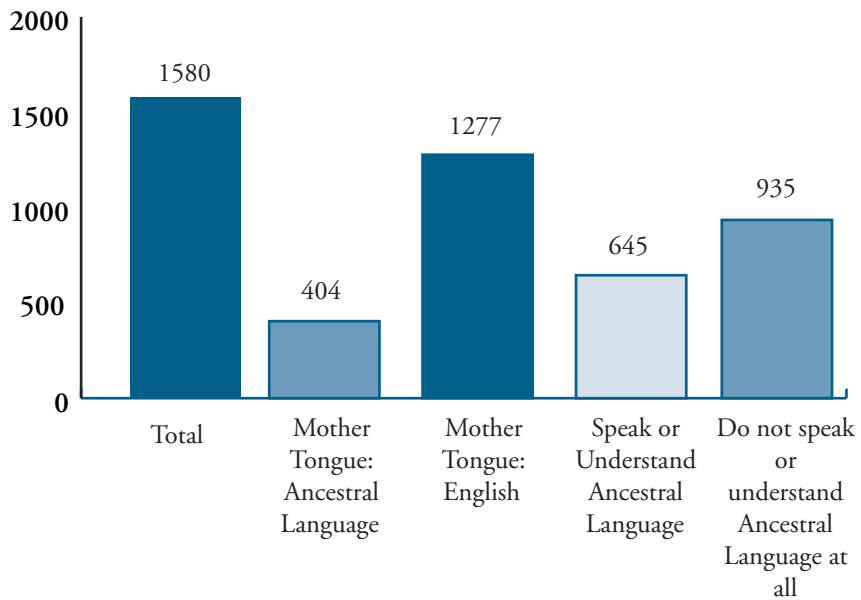
It is essential that opportunities are provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language. This may involve taking a closer look at the levels of prestige and status given to the language at the local level.

The younger generations of the Northern Tutchone people provide hope for the language as there has been an increase in the number of good to excellent speakers since the last YFN language assessment. This shows that language initiatives practised by the Northern Tutchone peoples are making a difference and should be viewed as successful models for other YFN language groups for to draw upon.



Southern Tutchone Language Profile

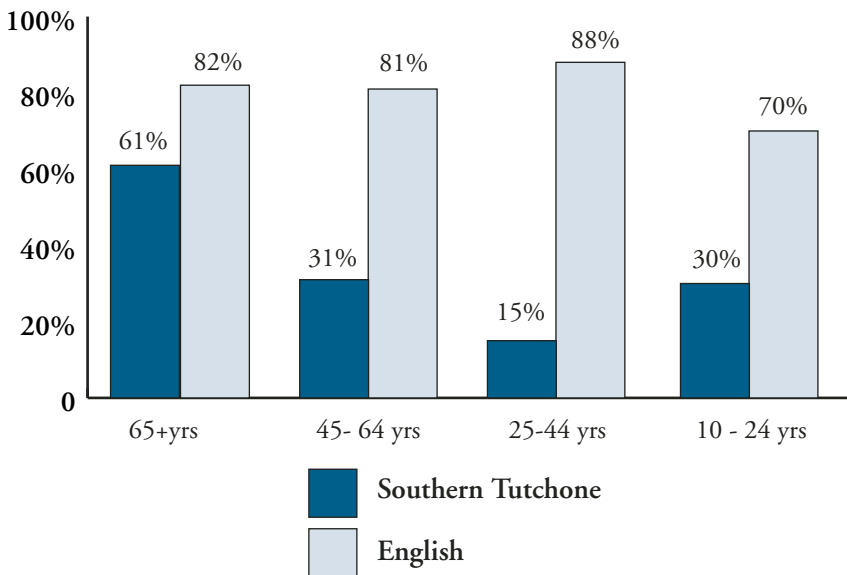
OVERVIEW



Well over half of the Southern Tutchone people reported that they do not speak their ancestral language at all. However, significantly higher numbers of Southern Tutchone people report being able to speak or understand their ancestral language as compared to those that reported the Southern Tutchone language as their mother tongue. Although, the graph illustrates that the English language is the strongest language amongst the Southern Tutchone people, approximately 1 in 4 of the respondents report the Southern Tutchone language as being the first language they learned and still understand. The even higher numbers (about 40%) of respondents that report that they can speak or understand the Southern Tutchone language,

shows that there are a significant number of Southern Tutchone people learning their ancestral language as a second language. The information around second language learners is a positive indication of the work individuals are doing to reverse the language shift.

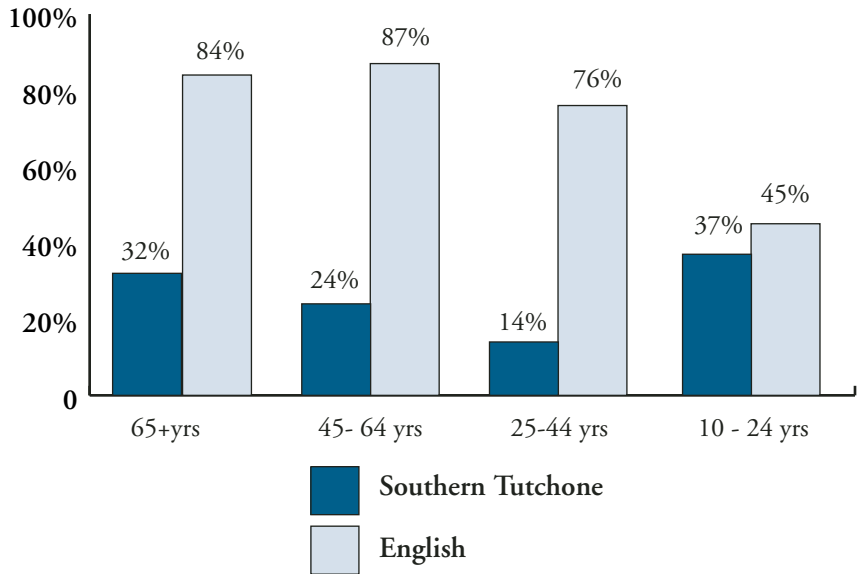
SOUTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE



Southern Tutchone respondents for all age ranges, including the elders that are 65 years and older, report that the English language is the dominant language, as most Southern Tutchone people reported that they are more apt to learn the English language as their first language and this trend is present across all generations.

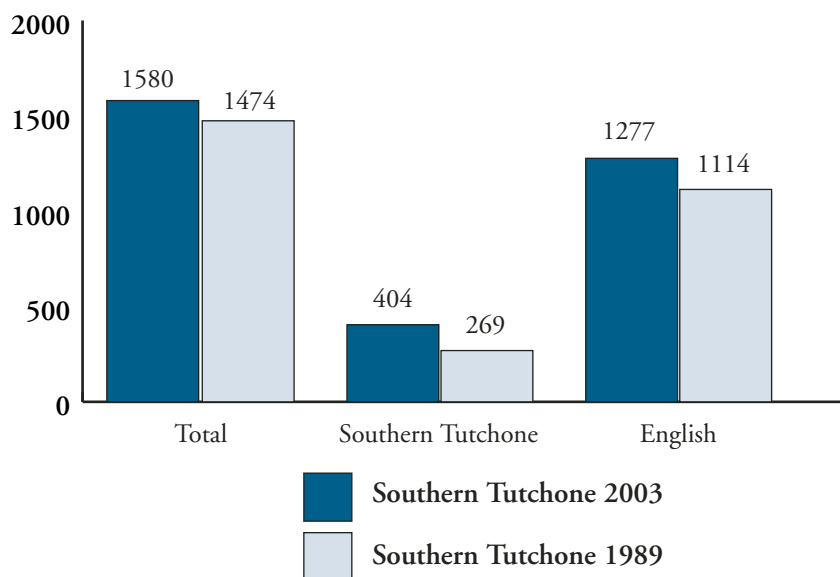
Although the majority of the elderly Southern Tutchone population report the English language as their mother tongue, a large number also report the Southern Tutchone language as their mother tongue as well, perhaps indicating that they learned the two languages simultaneously. It is with the fluent speaking Southern Tutchone population that reported the Southern Tutchone language as their mother tongue, that the main supply of wealth exists for the Southern Tutchone language group that is in terms of knowledge about the Southern Tutchone culture, heritage and language.

SOUTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: SPEAK MOST OFTEN



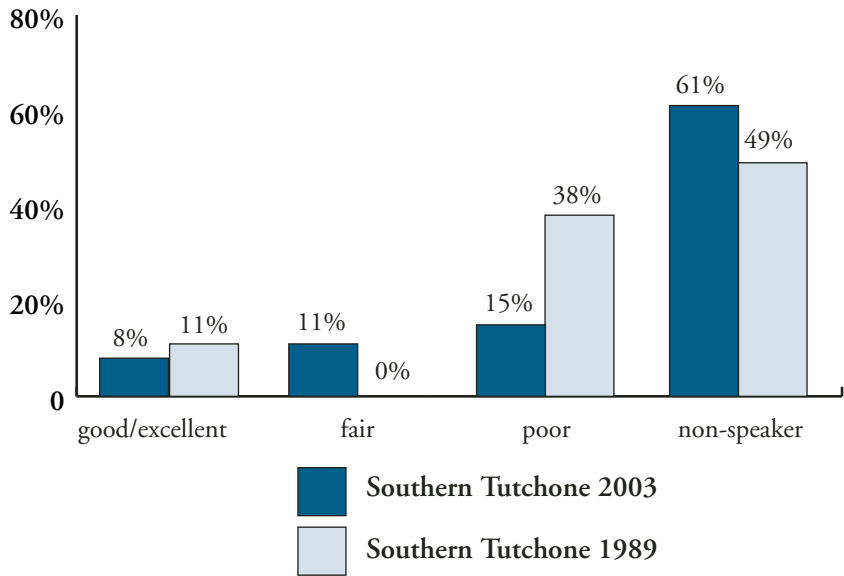
For the most part, and across all age groups including the elderly population, the Southern Tutchone language is largely replaced by the English language as the main language of use. Those individuals that have their Southern Tutchone language as their mother tongue are not using the language as much as they possibly could in their everyday lives. This graph also illustrates that the greater majority of those that are most fluent in the language are for the most part using the English language as their main language for communicating. This information is greatly concerning, as language learners are not being provided with as many opportunities as is possible, to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers. The Southern Tutchone speakers that are 24 years of age and younger provide glimmers of hope for the Southern Tutchone language group as more than 1 in 3 Southern Tutchone youth report speaking their ancestral language more often than the English language. This statistic is another indication that the Southern Tutchone language initiatives are making a positive difference.

SOUTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE COMPARISON 1989 – 2003



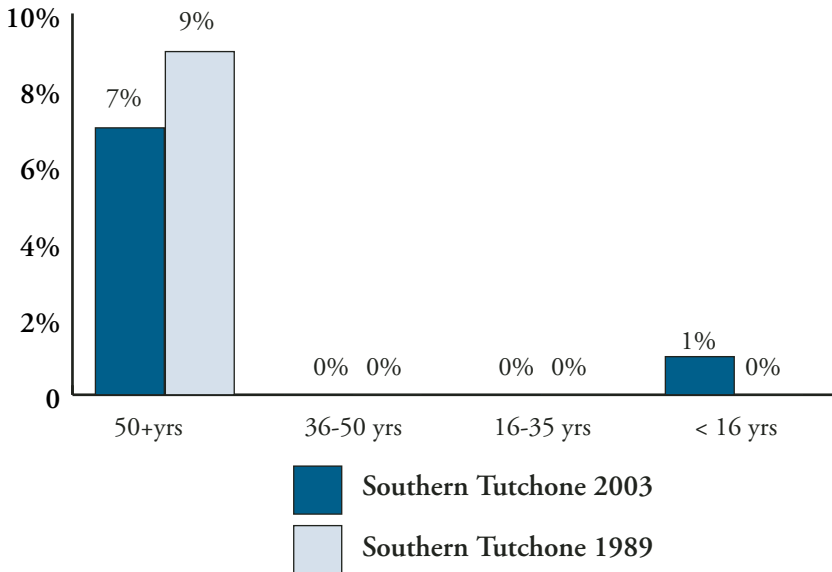
Between 1989 and 2003 the number of Southern Tutchone people reporting their ancestral language as their mother tongue has remained relatively constant at around 20% to 25%. The number of Southern Tutchone people that report the English language as their mother tongue continues to remain significantly higher, 75% - 80%. The English language has largely replaced the Southern Tutchone language as the mother tongue for the majority of those who affiliate themselves with the Southern Tutchone language group. There is hope in the finding of an increased number of Southern Tutchone people reporting their ancestral language as their mother tongue. However the language does remain weak relative to the English language.

SOUTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: FLUENCY COMPARISON 1989 – 2003



The numbers of good to excellent Southern Tutchone speakers has slightly decreased since the 1989 assessment on Yukon First Nation languages. The Southern Tutchone speakers that rated themselves within the fair fluency range have greatly increased since 1989. Southern Tutchone speakers that rated themselves at a poor level of fluency have clearly decreased since 1989. The shift from poor to fair levels may actually reflect an increase in fluency levels due to language training. The self reported fluency rates also show a significant increase in the number of non-speakers in 2003 as compared to the 1989 assessment.

GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKER COMPARISON

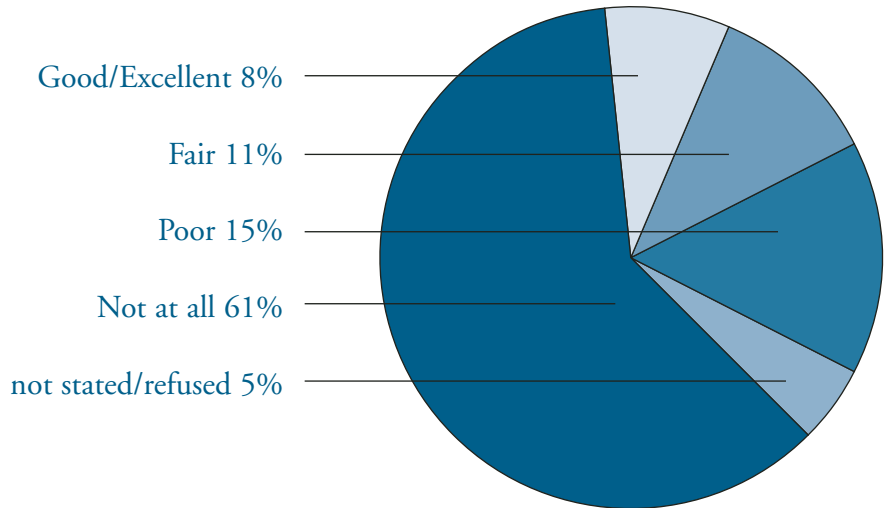


The Southern Tutchone language shows a slight decrease in the number of good to excellent speakers that are over 50 years or more, however there is an increase in the speaking abilities of the younger generation. This clearly shows that there are a number of young Southern Tutchone people that are increasing their fluency levels in their ancestral language

It is the elderly good to excellent speakers that retain the most authentic form of Southern Tutchone cultural knowledge and the highest levels of fluency in the Southern Tutchone language. As the elderly speakers pass on, the supply of highly fluent speakers must be replaced with a younger generation of equally fluent speakers, thus ensuring that a stable number of fluent speakers is maintained and replenished on a continuous basis. The picture portrayed in the graph shows that the process of creating a new supply of fluent speakers has only strengthened in the younger generation. The question to ask however, is... are the numbers of good to excellent speakers being replenished at a fast and steady enough rate to keep the language strong and viable?

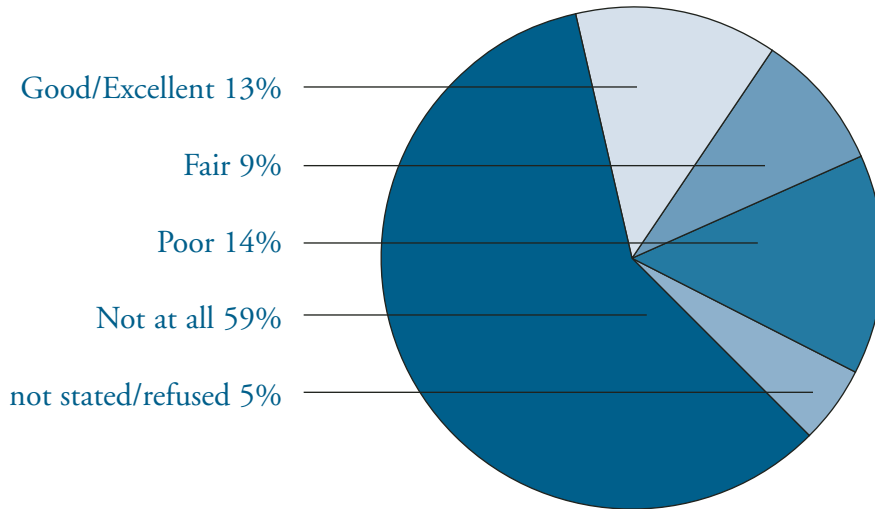
SELF-REPORTED FLUENCY LEVELS

How well do we say we speak?



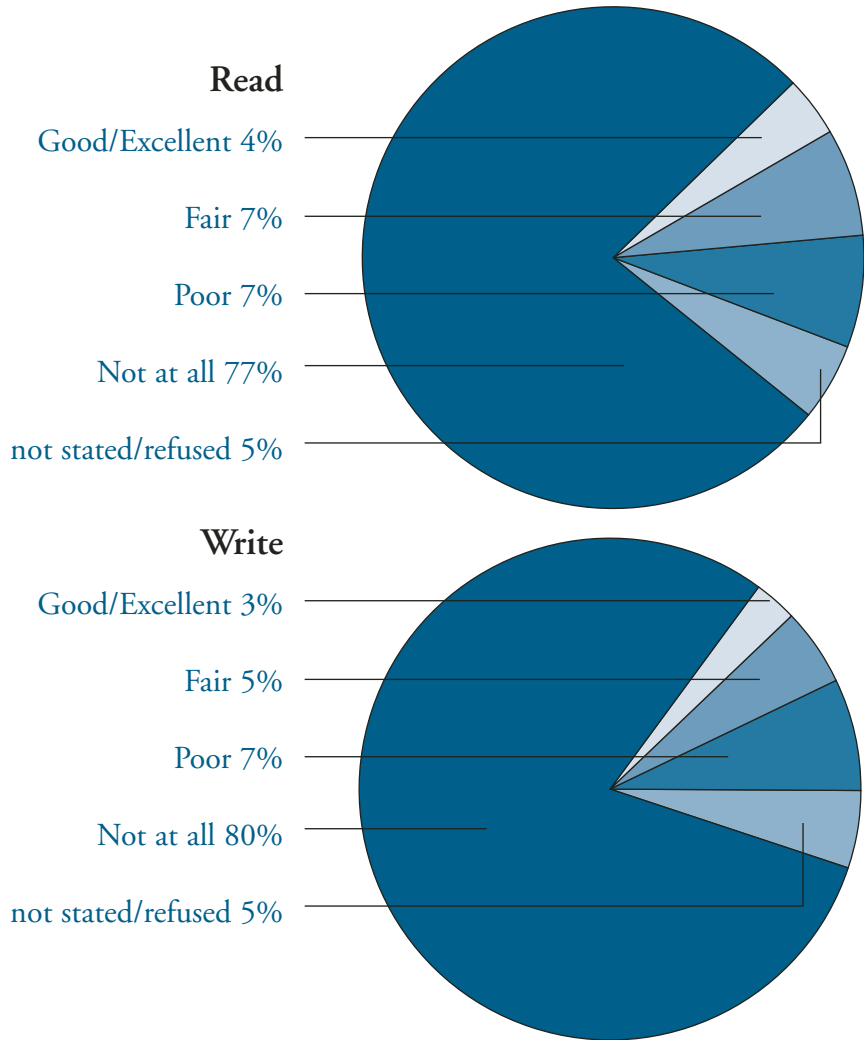
Well over half of the Southern Tutchone respondents report not being able to speak their ancestral language at all. Almost 25% Southern Tutchone speakers report their speaking fluency level within the fair to poor range. Approximately 1 in 10 Southern Tutchone people are able to speak the language at a level that would qualify them to pass on the Southern Tutchone language to those that have lower levels of speaking abilities. This means that 10% of the Southern Tutchone population is in a position in which they are able to contribute to maintaining the Southern Tutchone respondents' most valuable resources, which essentially is the Southern Tutchone language, as their language provides access to their authentic culture and to their unique and distinct heritage.

How well do we say we understand?



The reported results show that just over 1/3 of the Southern Tutchone speakers rate themselves as being able to understand their ancestral language within the poor to excellent range, which is a slightly higher number than those that reported themselves as speakers in this range. This particular difference in the number of speakers and those that can understand shows that there are a number of Southern Tutchone people that can hear and understand their language better than they can speak it. This specific population of Southern Tutchone speakers is a prime group for language learning as research indicates that it is far easier to learn to speak a language if you can understand it first.

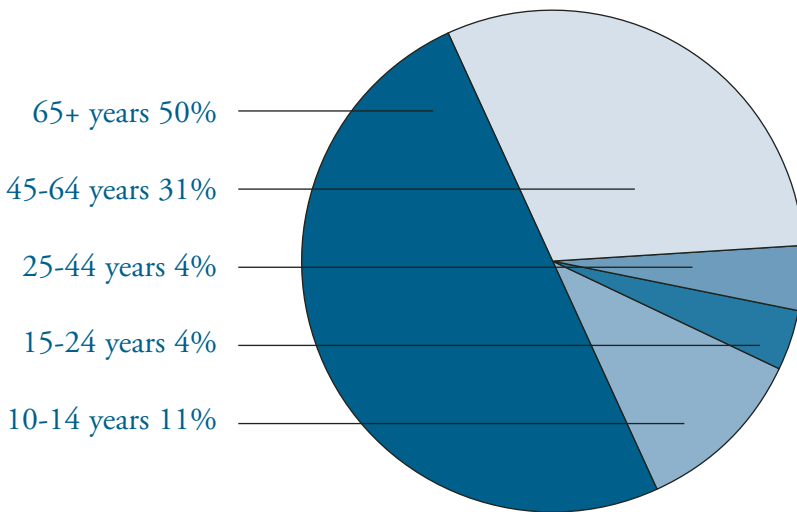
How well do we say we read and write?



Far fewer Southern Tutchone speakers are able to read and write their ancestral language as compared to those that are able to speak and understand it. Research strongly recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be represented in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the Southern Tutchone youth are exposed to and eventually will ultimately frame their own thoughts within and around, reflect the unique

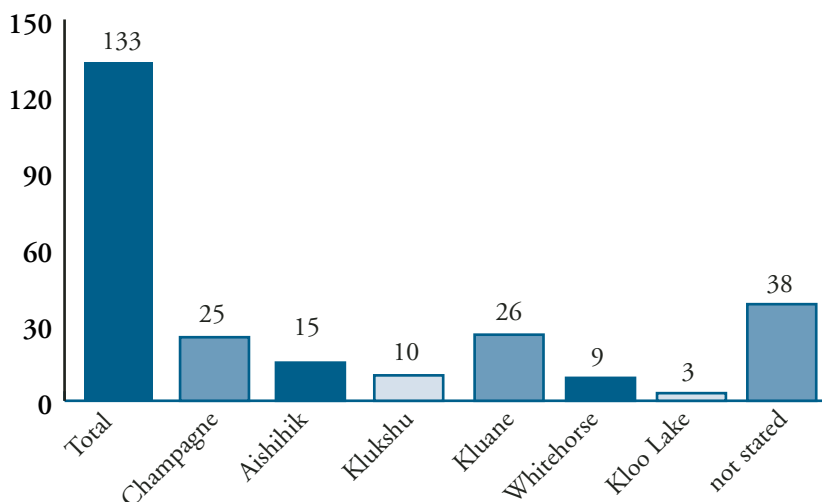
and distinct ideas, perspectives and views of their own Southern Tutchone people. It is significant that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the Southern Tutchone people of today and of tomorrow.

SOUTHERN TUTCHONE LANGUAGE GROUP: POTENTIAL INSTRUCTORS BASED ON GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKERS



Although the main supply of good to excellent speakers is within the 45 years and older range, it is hardly feasible to train these people to be teachers of school aged children largely because of their close proximity to retirement age. However it is this specific population that is ideal for teaching the language to a younger generation of teachers and for providing one-to-one language instruction for increasing fluency levels of individual learners or small teams of two or more language learners. This graph shows that the good to excellent Southern Tutchone language speakers are in a position to have positive and direct impact upon increasing the number of fluent speakers in the Southern Tutchone language group.

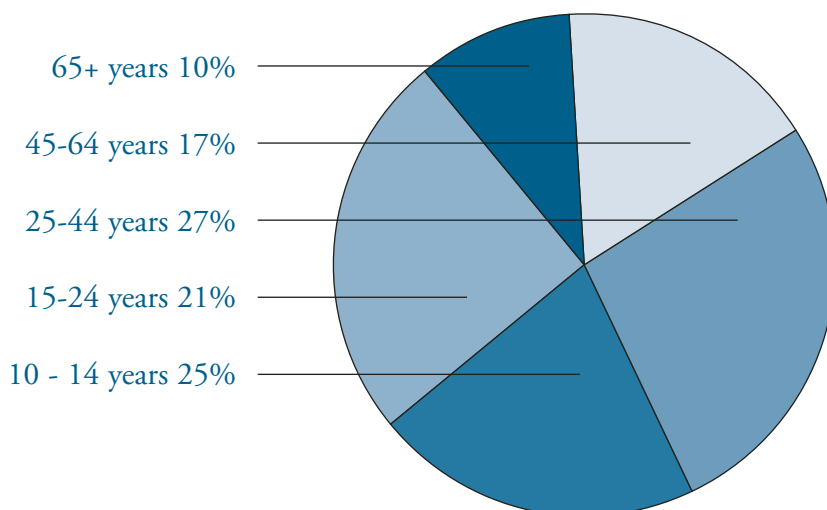
DIALECTS OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY INSTRUCT OTHERS IN THE LANGUAGE



The dialect graph illustrates the distribution of six dialects reported by the Southern Tutchone good to excellent range language speakers. The graph also shows that the majority of good to excellent speakers reported the Kluane and Champagne dialects as the main dialects spoken. It is important to note that greater majority of Southern Tutchone speakers did not report a specific dialect at all.

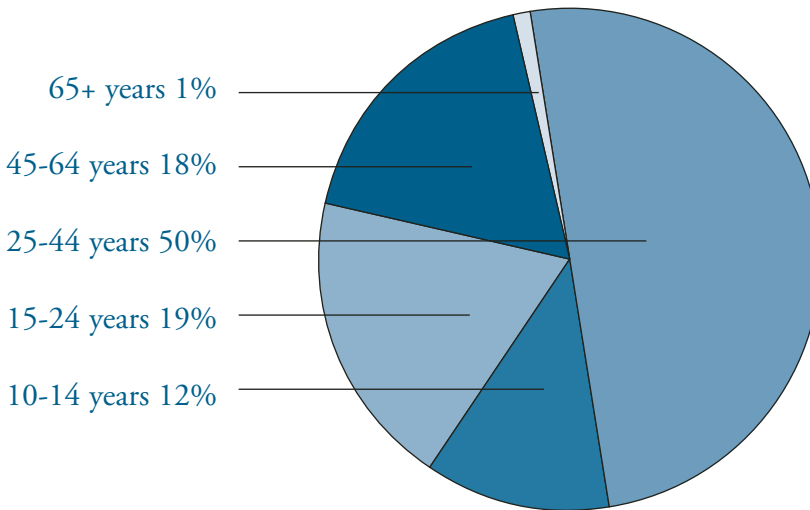
PROFILE OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME FLUENT QUICKLY

(poor to fair speakers or those non-speakers with good-excellent understanding)



Those that are most ideal or prime for learning the Southern Tutchone language can be found in all age ranges. As was indicated previously, research on second language acquisition shows that it is far easier to teach those that understand a language at some level than it is to teach a person who has no understanding at all.

PROFILE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK NOR UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE AT ALL.



Those that are in the 25 to 44 age range, has the largest proportion of people that do not speak or understand the Southern Tutchone language at all, as compared to all other age groupings. When combined the respondents between the ages of 15 and 44 years account for almost 70% of the non-speaking population within the Southern Tutchone language group. This is very concerning as it is within this age grouping that the major pool of potential teachers exists. Equally concerning is the fact that it is also within this age grouping that most parents fall into. This shows that there are many Southern Tutchone children that do not have access to a parent that is able to pass the language on to them.

SUMMARY

The fluency assessment illustrates that Southern Tutchone language group is gradually deteriorating which is illustrated by the decreasing numbers of good to excellent speakers, the higher numbers of people that report English as their mother tongue and the tendency of all generations to using the English language as the main method of communication. Being that the majority of the good to excellent Southern Tutchone speakers are 50 years or older, it is important that the language be preserved immediately in as natural of a form as is possible and that measures are taken to produce higher levels of fluency in the younger generations of Southern Tutchone speakers.

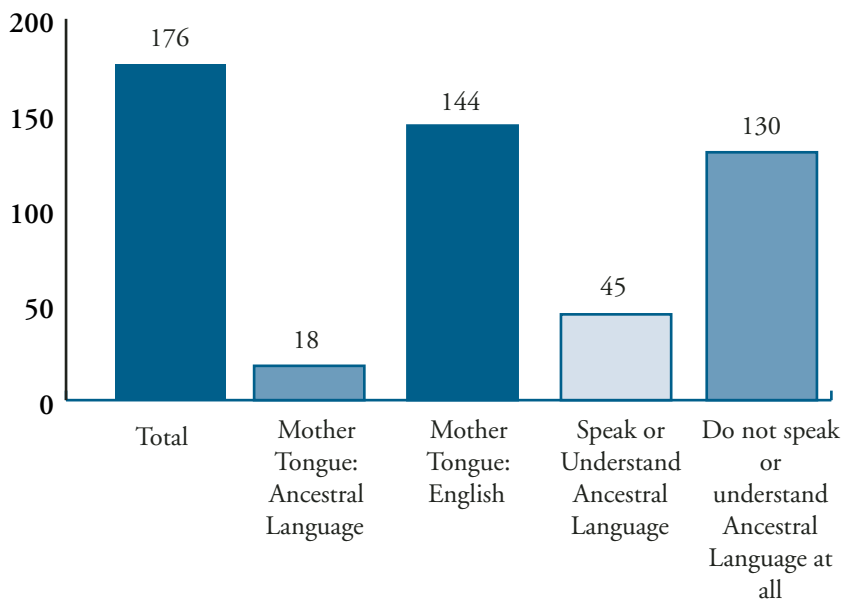
Although there are a fair number of speakers within the Southern Tutchone language group that report the Southern Tutchone language as their mother tongue, they are for the most part, not using the language as their main language of communication. For the Southern Tutchone language group, those that speak the language most fluently must commit themselves to passing on the language. This will involve a process that encourages the fluent speakers to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak the Southern Tutchone language to all Southern Tutchone people they might encounter on a daily basis.

It is essential that opportunities are provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language.



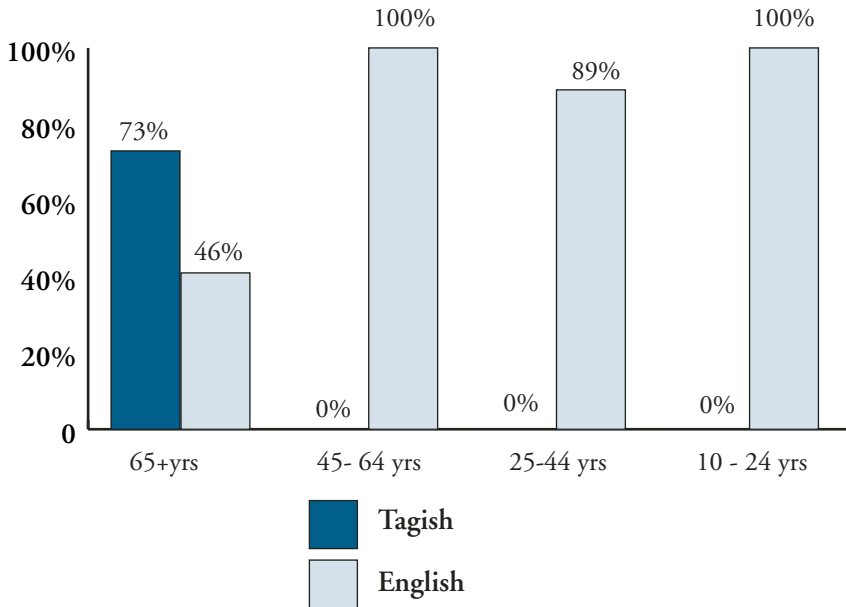
Tagish Language Profile

OVERVIEW



Of the respondents that affiliate themselves with the Tagish language group, 74% reported that they do not speak their ancestral language at all. Although, the graph illustrates that the English language is the strongest language amongst the Tagish people, approximately 10% of the respondents report the Tagish language as the first language they learned and still understand, and the even higher numbers (over 26%) that report that they are able to speak or understand the Tagish language to some degree, shows that there are a few individuals that are learning the Tagish language as a second language. The information around second language learners is a positive indication of the work individuals are doing to reverse the language shift.

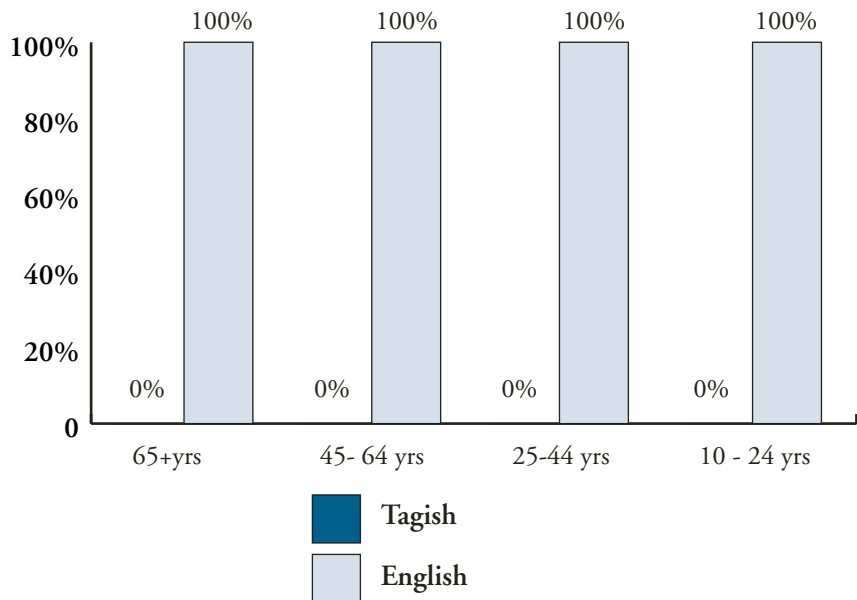
TAGISH LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE



Respondents report that the English language is the dominant language as most indicated that they are more apt to learn the English language as their first language and this trend is present across most generations, with the exception of the elders that are 65 years and older.

The majority of the elderly Tagish population report the Tagish language as their mother tongue, however a large number also report the English language as their mother tongue, perhaps indicating that they learned the two languages simultaneously. It is within the elderly population that reported the Tagish language as their mother tongue that the main supply of wealth exists for the Tagish language group, that is, in terms of knowledge about the Tagish culture, heritage and language.

TAGISH LANGUAGE GROUP: SPEAK MOST OFTEN

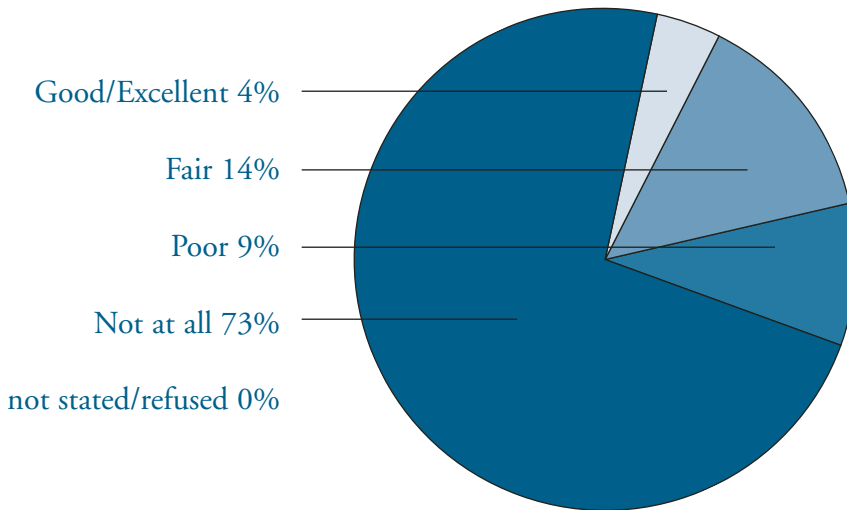


This graph shockingly illustrates that the Tagish language is entirely replaced by the English language as the main language of use across all generations, including the elderly. This information demonstrates that the Tagish language has deteriorated to the point that it is very close to extinction. Language experts warn that if a language is not spoken; if a language is not heard; it is no longer a language that is alive. Those individuals that have their Tagish language as their mother tongue are not using the language as much as they possibly could in their everyday lives. This information is greatly concerning, as language learners are not being provided with as many opportunities as is possible, to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers.

Note: The 1989-2003 fluency comparisons for the Tagish Language Group are not available.

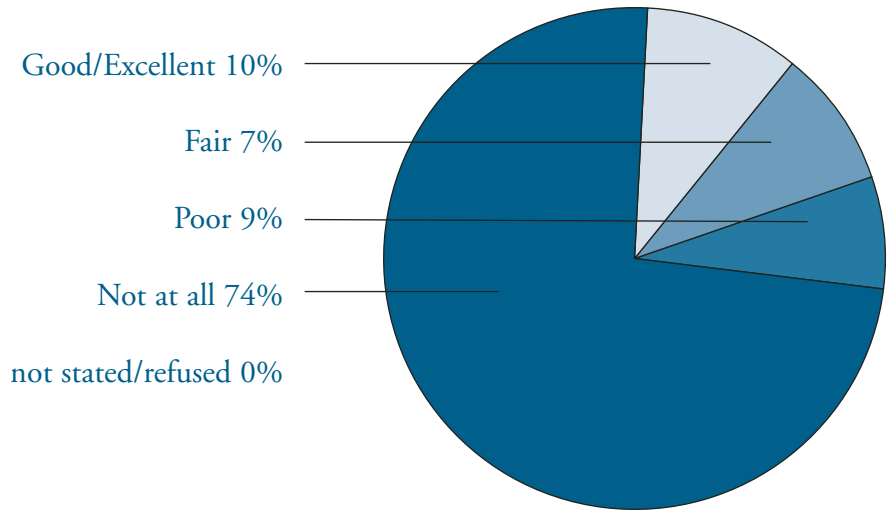
SELF-REPORTED FLUENCY LEVELS

How well do we say we speak?



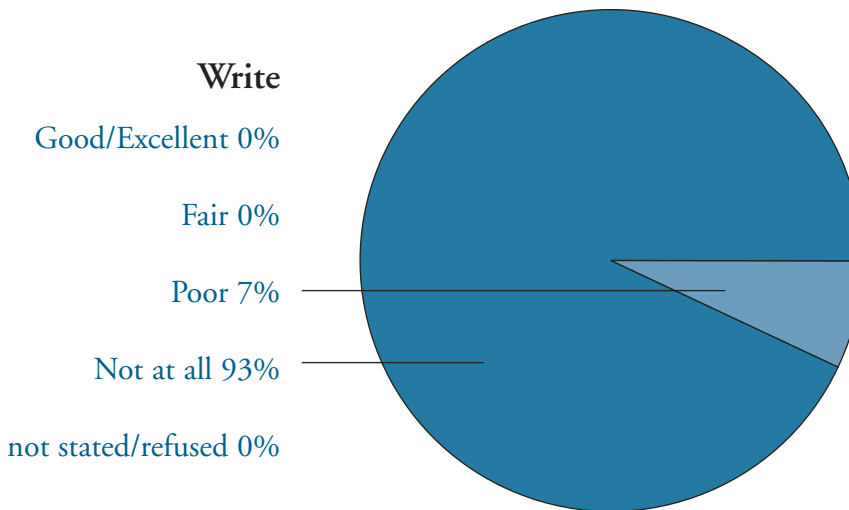
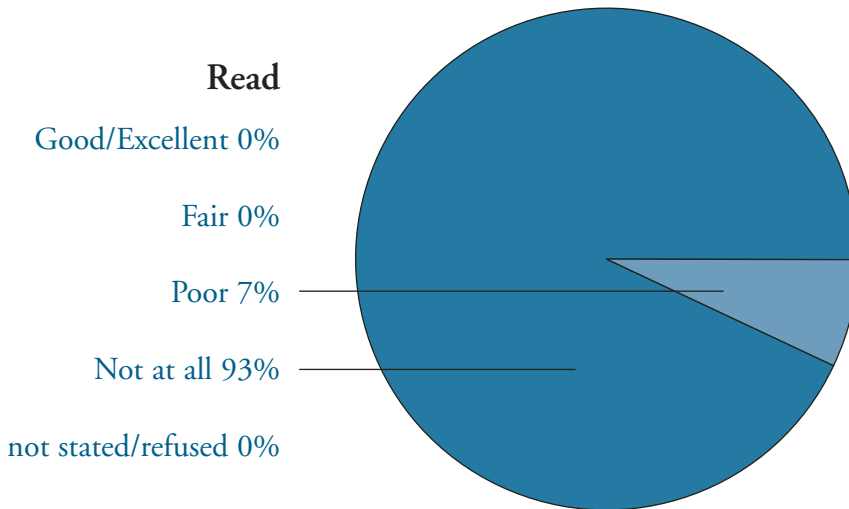
Almost 75% of the respondents report not being able to speak the Tagish language at all. Of the respondents that are able to speak the Tagish language, 23% report their speaking fluency level within the fair to poor range. Very few Tagish people are able to speak the language at a level that would qualify them to pass on the Tagish language to those that have lower levels of speaking abilities. This means that only a handful of the Tagish speaking population are able to contribute to maintaining the Tagish speaking peoples' most valuable resources, which essentially is the Tagish language, as their language provides access to their authentic culture and to their unique and distinct heritage.

How well do we say we understand?



The reported results indicate that Tagish speakers are able to understand their language to a higher degree than they are able to speak it. This particular difference in the number of speakers and those that can understand shows that there are a number of Tagish people that can hear and understand their language better than they can speak it. This specific population of Tagish speakers is a prime group for language learning as research indicates that it is far easier to learn to speak a language if you can understand it first.

How well do we say we read and write?

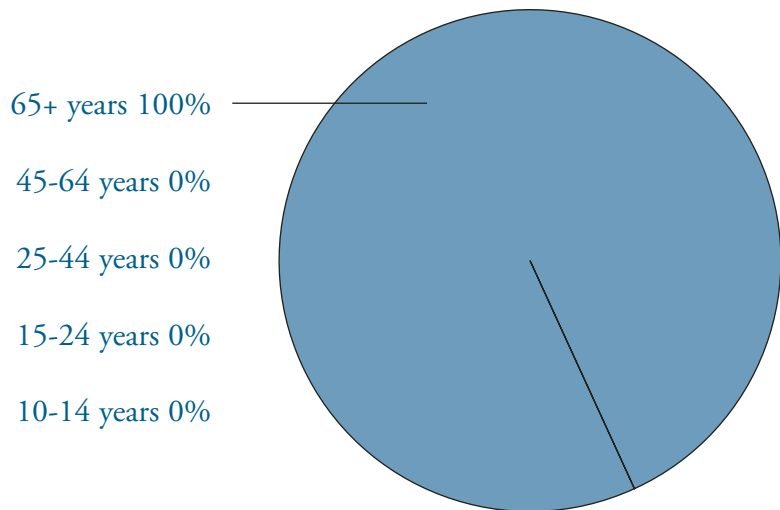


Far fewer respondents are able to read and write their ancestral language as compared to those that are able to speak and understand it. The ability to read and write the Tagish language is almost non-existent other than a few individuals that rated their abilities in the poor range. Research recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be represented in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the Tagish youth are exposed to and

eventually will ultimately frame their own thoughts within and around, reflect the unique and distinct ideas, perspectives and views of their own Tagish people. It is significant that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the Tagish people of today and of tomorrow.

TAGISH LANGUAGE GROUP: POTENTIAL INSTRUCTORS BASED ON GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKERS

Profile of those who could potentially instruct others in the Tagish language, those with “good to excellent” speaking skills.

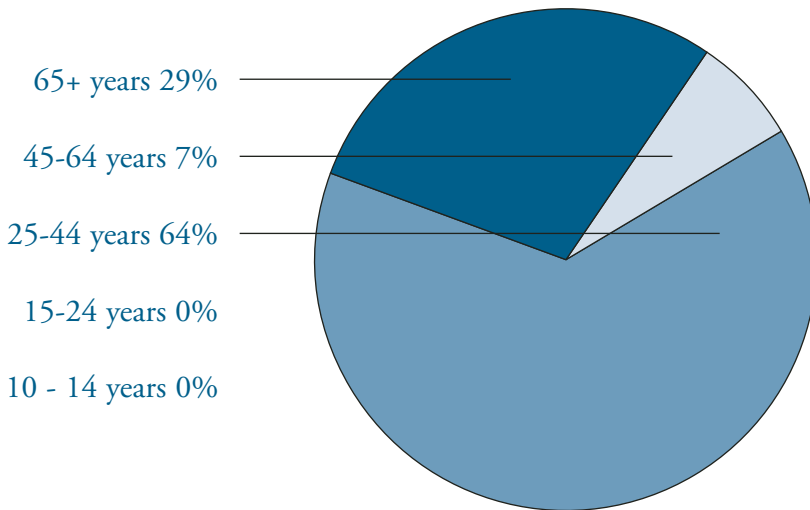


100% of the Tagish language groups’ good to excellent speakers are in the elderly range of 65 years and over. It is hardly feasible to train these individuals to be teachers of school aged children largely because of their elderly age. However it is this specific population that is ideal for teaching the language to a younger generation of teachers and for providing one-to-one language instruction for increasing fluency levels of individual learners or small teams of two or more language learners. The good to excellent Tagish language speakers are in a position to have positive and direct impact upon increasing the number of fluent speakers in the Tagish language group.

Dialects of those who could potentially instruct others in the Tagish language are not available.

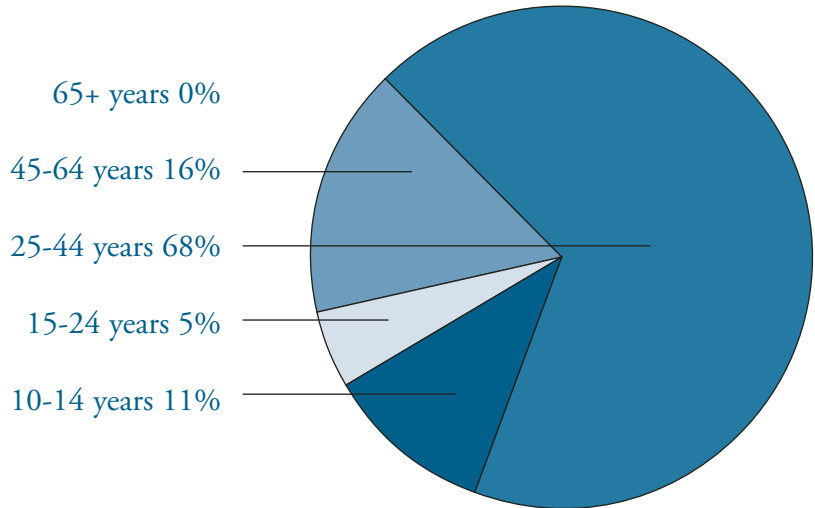
PROFILE OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME FLUENT QUICKLY

That is poor to fair speakers or those non-speakers with good-excellent understanding.



Those that are most ideal or prime for learning the Tagish language can mostly be found in the 25 to 44 year age range, although there are quite a number of potential learners within the elderly population of 65 years and older as well. As was previously discussed, research on second language acquisition shows that it is far easier to teach those that understand a language at some level than it is to teach a person who has little or no understanding at all.

PROFILE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK NOR UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE AT ALL.



The 25 to 44 age range has the largest proportion of people that do not speak or understand the Tagish language at all as compared to all other age groupings. This is very concerning as it is within this age grouping that the major pool of potential teachers exists. Equally concerning is the fact that it is also within this age grouping that many parents fall into. This shows that there are many Tagish children that do not have access to a parent that is able to pass the language on to them.

SUMMARY

The fluency assessment illustrates that Tagish language group is in a state that is very near extinction, as is illustrated by the extremely low numbers and elderly age of good to excellent speakers; the elderly age of those that have the language as their mother tongue; the significantly higher numbers of people that report English as their mother tongue as compared to the Tagish language; and the practice of using the English language as the main method of communication. Being that the majority of the good to excellent Tagish speakers are 65 years or older, it is of critical importance that the language be preserved immediately in as natural of a form as is possible and that measures are taken to produce higher levels of fluency in the younger generation of Tagish speakers.

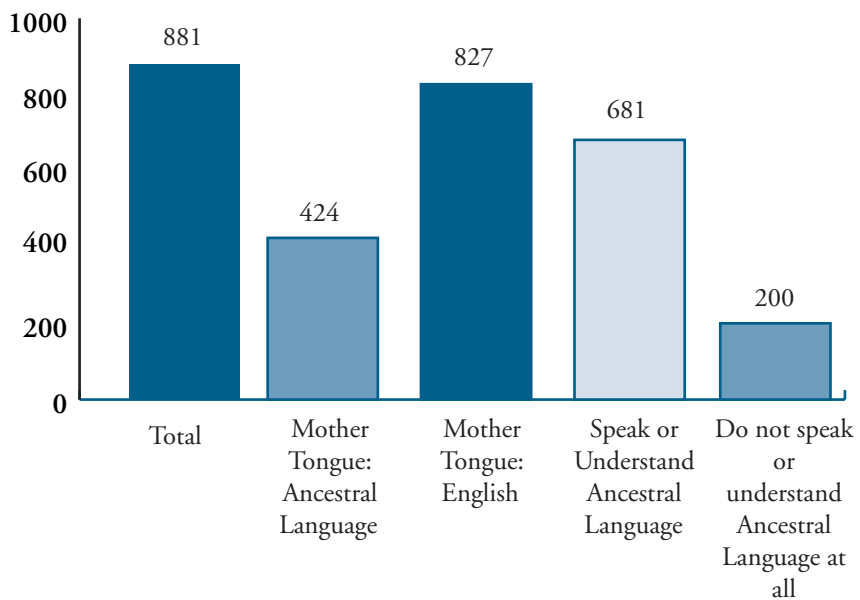
Although there are a number of elderly speakers within the Tagish language group that report the Tagish language as their mother tongue, they have also reported that they do not use the language as their main language of communication. For the Tagish language group, those that speak the language most fluently must commit themselves to passing on the language. This will involve a process that encourages the fluent speakers to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak the Tagish language to all Tagish people they might encounter on a daily basis.

It is essential that opportunities are provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. The expression, "use it or lose it" is only too true when applied to the current situation of revitalizing and perpetuating the Tagish language. Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language.



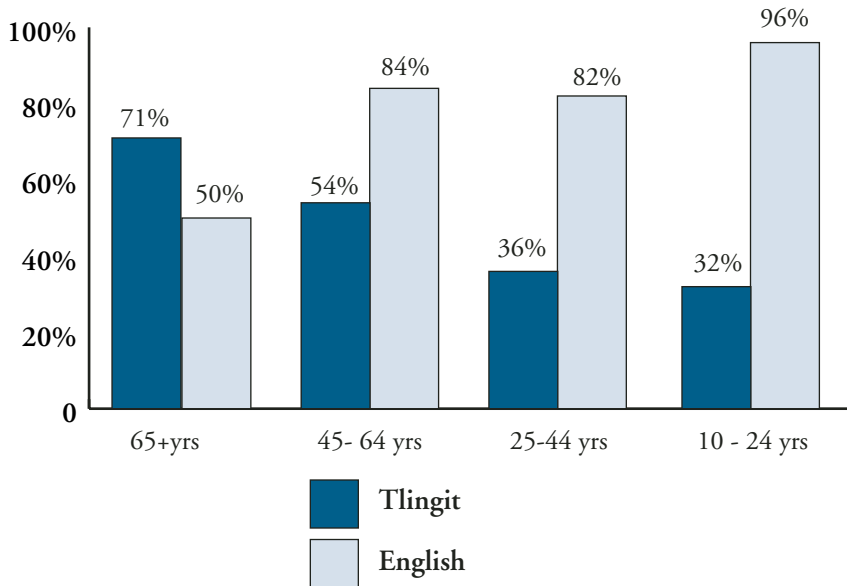
Tlingit Language Profile

OVERVIEW



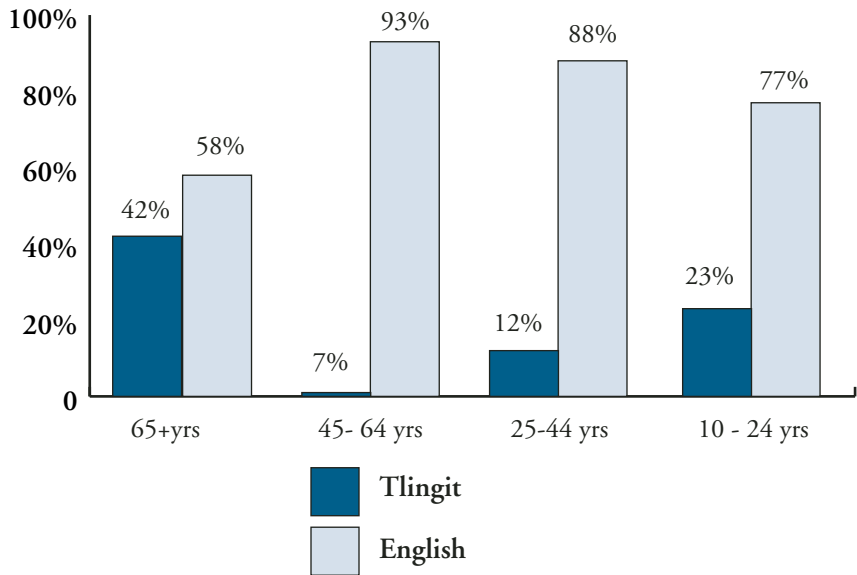
Approximately 1 in 5 Tlingit people do not speak their ancestral language at all. However, significantly higher numbers of Tlingit people report being able to speak or understand their ancestral language as compared to those that reported the Tlingit language as their mother tongue. Although, the graph illustrates that the English language is the strongest language amongst the Tlingit people, almost half of the respondents report the Tlingit language as being the first language they learned and still understand, and the even higher numbers (77%) of respondents that report that they can speak or understand the Tlingit language, shows that there are a significant number of Tlingit people learning their ancestral language as a second language. The information around second language learners is a positive indication of the work individuals are doing to reverse the language shift.

Tlingit Language Group: MOTHER TONGUE



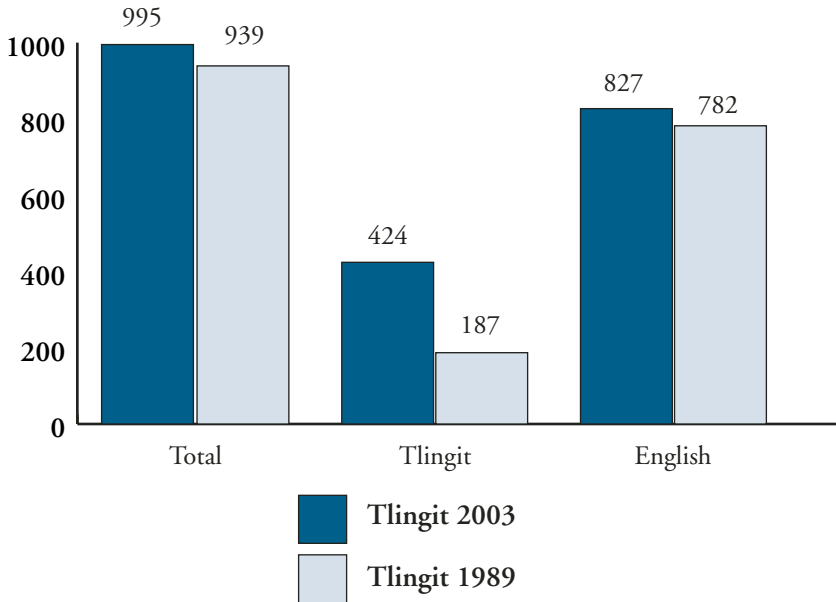
Tlingit respondents for all age ranges, with the exception of those 65 years and older, report that the English language continues to be the dominant language as most Tlingit people are more apt to learn the English language as their first language and this process continues to strengthen with each new generation. The majority of the elderly population report the Tlingit language as their mother tongue, however it appears that a significant number of Tlingit elders report the English language as their mother tongue as well, perhaps indicating that they learned the two languages simultaneously. It is with the fluent speaking Tlingit population that reported the Tlingit language as their mother tongue, that the main supply of wealth exists for the Tlingit language group, that is in terms of knowledge about the Tlingit culture, heritage and language.

Tlingit Language Group: Speak Most Often



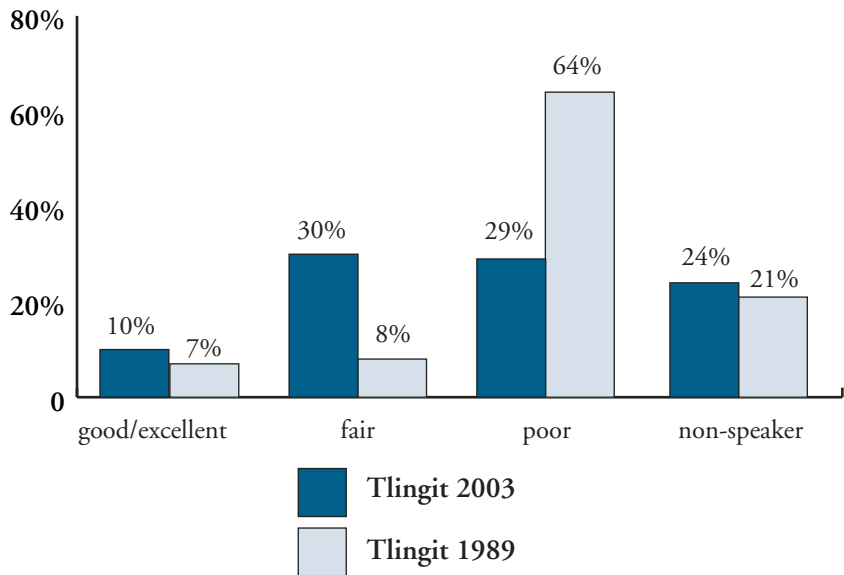
For the most part and across all age groups including the elderly population, the Tlingit language is largely replaced by the English language as the main language of use. Those individuals that have their Tlingit language as their mother tongue are not using the language as much as they possibly could in their everyday lives. This graph also illustrates that the greater majority of those that are most fluent in the language are for the most part using the English language as their main language for communicating. This information is greatly concerning, as language learners are not being provided with as many opportunities as is possible, to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers. The Tlingit speakers that are 24 years of age and younger provide glimmers of hope for the Tlingit language group as almost 1 in 4 Tlingit youth report speaking their ancestral language more often than the English language.

TLINGIT LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



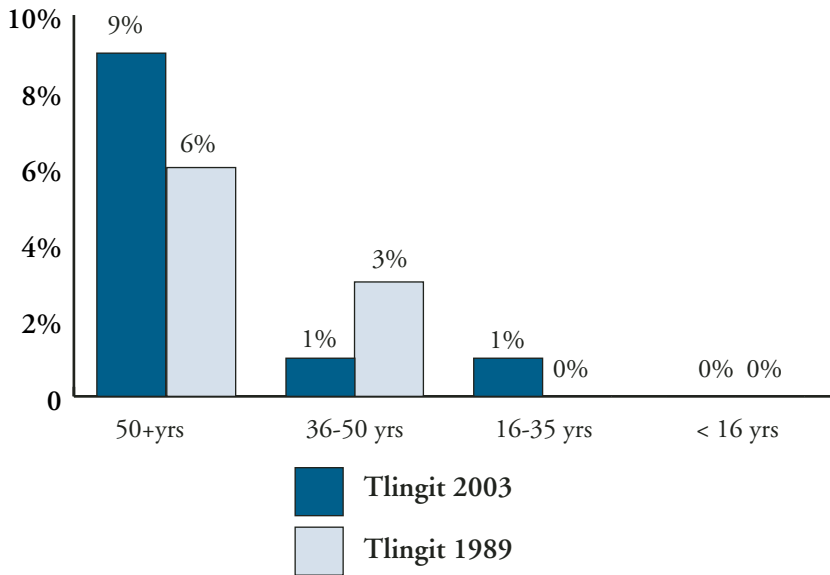
Since 1989 there is an increase in the number of Tlingit people reporting their ancestral language as their mother tongue, the language they first learned and still understand. The number of Tlingit people that report the English language as their mother tongue has slightly increased since 1989. The Tlingit language appears to be slowly reversing the shift to the English language. As long as this trend continues and the English language does not replace the Tlingit language as the mother tongue, the Tlingit language has good chances of reversing the language shift.

FLUENCY COMPARISON 1989 - 2003



The numbers of good to excellent Tlingit speakers has slightly increased since the 1989 assessment on Yukon First Nation languages. The Tlingit speakers that rated themselves within the fair fluency range has greatly increased since 1989. Tlingit speakers that rated themselves at a poor level of fluency has greatly decreased since 1989. The shift from poor to fair levels may actually reflect an increase in fluency levels due to language training. The self reported fluency rates also show us that there are slightly more non-speakers in 2003 than there were in 1989, however for the most part the non-speaker population remains relatively stable.

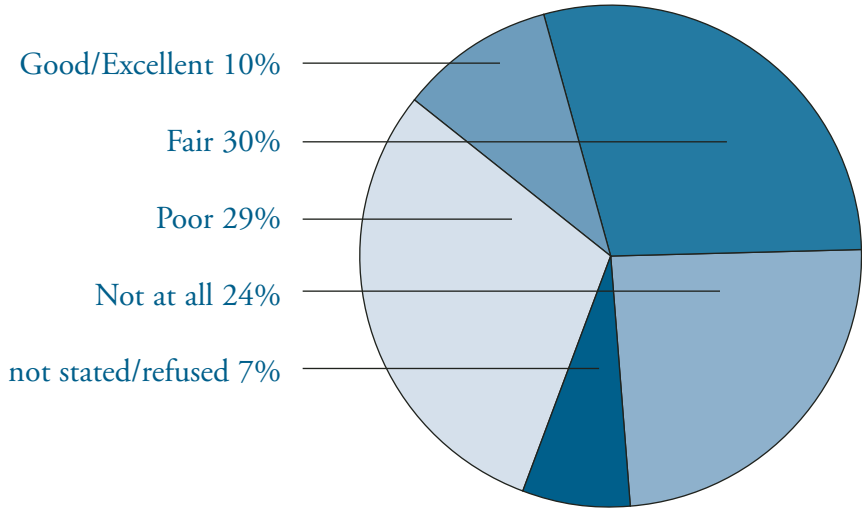
GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKER COMPARISON



The Tlingit language shows an increase in the number of good to excellent speakers that are over 50 years or more and with those that are between the ages of 16 and 35 years. It is the good to excellent speakers that retain the most authentic form of Tlingit cultural knowledge and the highest levels of fluency in the Tlingit language. As the elderly speakers pass on, the supply of highly fluent speakers must be replaced with a younger generation of equally fluent speakers, thus ensuring that a stable number of fluent speakers is maintained and replenished on a continuous basis. The picture portrayed in the graph shows that the process of creating a new supply of fluent speakers has somewhat strengthened since 1989 within the 16 - 35 year age range; however it is the younger Tlingit generation that will in time; sketch out the details of this hazy picture.

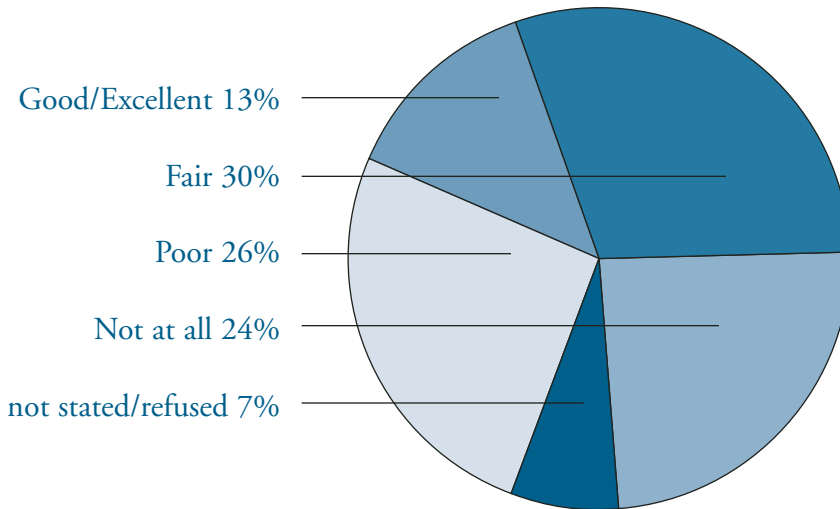
SELF-REPORTED FLUENCY LEVELS

How well do we say we speak?



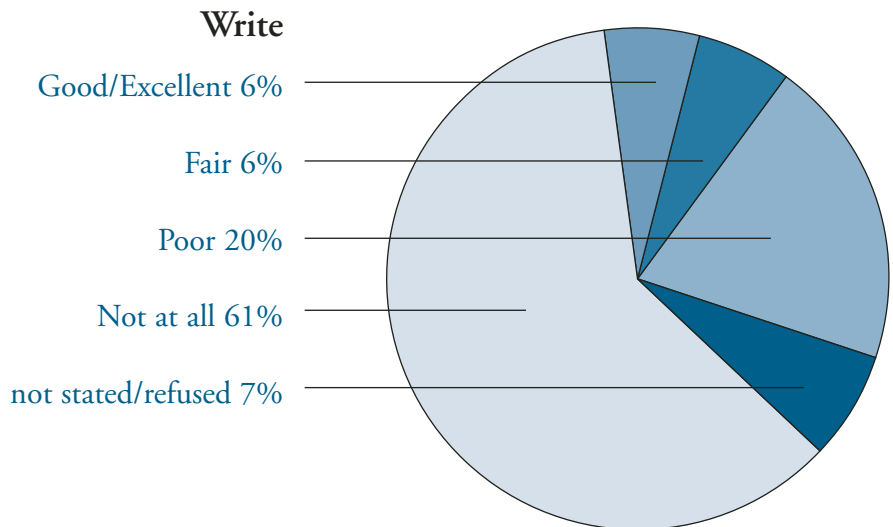
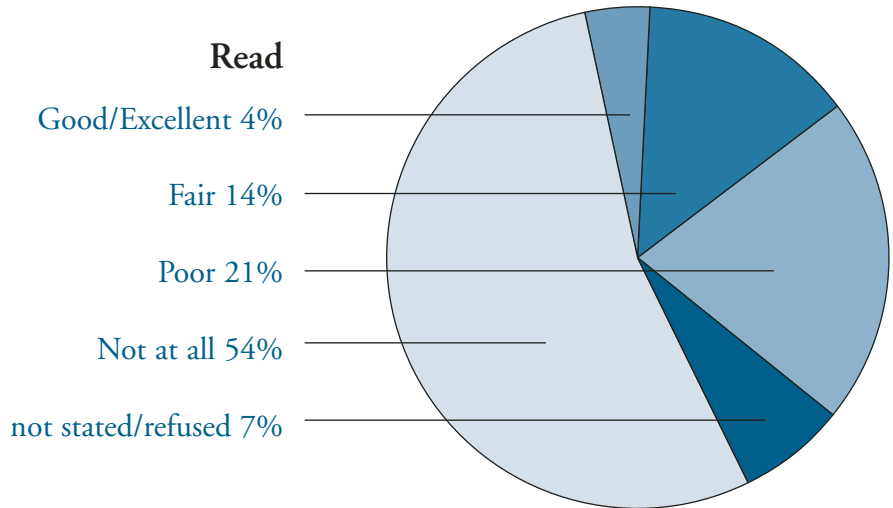
Approximately 1 in 4 of the Tlingit respondents report not being able to speak their ancestral language at all. Almost 60% Tlingit speakers report their speaking fluency level within the fair to poor range. Approximately 1 in 10 Tlingit people are able to speak the language at a level that would enable them to pass on the Tlingit language to those that have lower levels of speaking abilities. This means that 10% of the Tlingit speakers are in a position in which they are able to contribute to maintaining the Tlingit respondents' most valuable resources, which essentially is the Tlingit language, as their language provides access to their authentic culture and to their unique and distinct heritage.

How well do we say we understand?



The reported results show that approximately 40% of the Tlingit speakers rate themselves as being able to understand their ancestral language within the fair to excellent range, which is a slightly higher number than those that reported themselves as speakers in this range. This particular difference in the number of speakers and those that can understand, shows that there are a number of Tlingit people that can hear and understand their language better than they can speak it. This specific population of Tlingit speakers are prime for language learning as research indicates that it is far easier to learn to speak a language if you can understand it first.

How well do we say we read and write?

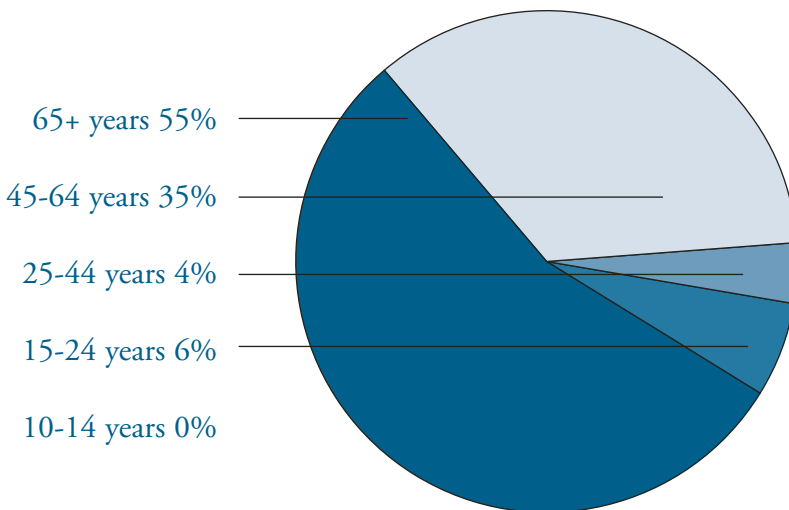


Far fewer Tlingit speakers are able to read and write their ancestral language as compared to those that are able to speak and understand it. Research recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be represented in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the Tlingit youth are exposed to and eventually will ultimately frame their own thoughts within

and around, reflect the unique and distinct ideas, perspectives and views of their own Tlingit people. It is important that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the Tlingit people of today and of tomorrow.

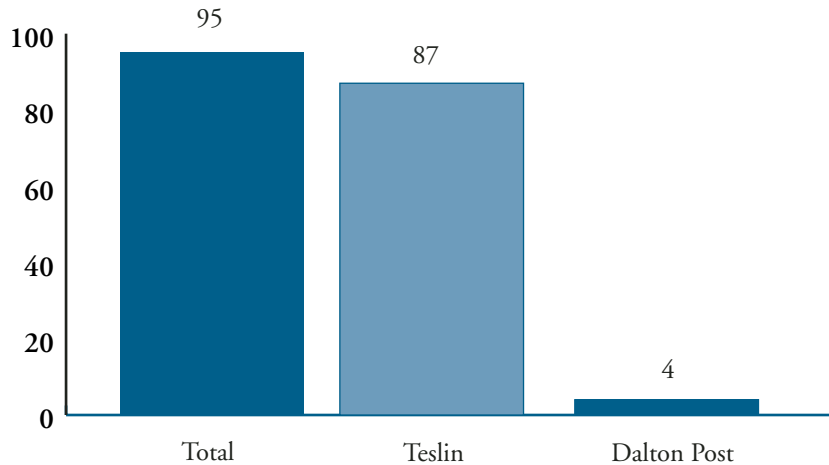
TLINGIT LANGUAGE GROUP: POTENTIAL INSTRUCTORS BASED ON GOOD TO EXCELLENT SPEAKERS

Profile of those who could potentially instruct others in the Tlingit language, that is 'good-excellent' speakers.



Although the main supply of good to excellent speakers is within the 45 years and older range, it is hardly feasible to train these people to be teachers of school aged children largely because of their close proximity to retirement age. However it is this specific population that is ideal for teaching the language to a younger generation of teachers and for providing one-to-one language instruction for increasing fluency levels of individual learners or small teams of two or more language learners. The good to excellent Tlingit language speakers are in a position to have positive and direct impact upon increasing the number of fluent speakers in the Tlingit language group.

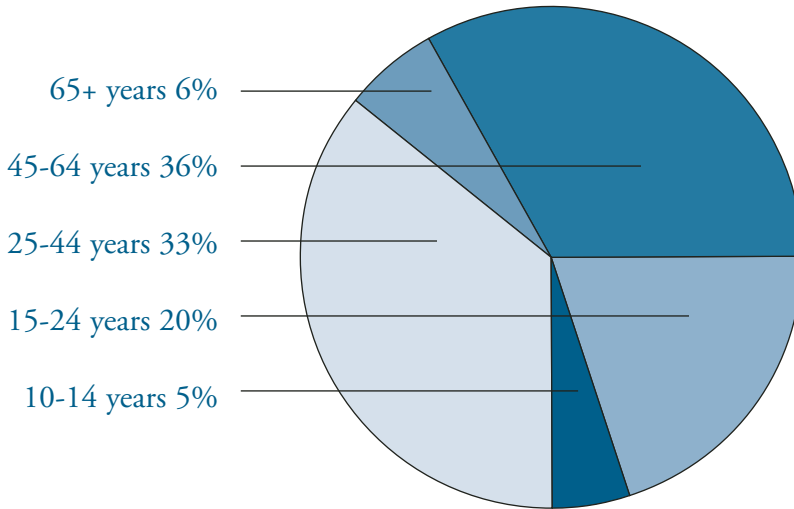
DIALECTS OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY INSTRUCT OTHERS IN THE LANGUAGE



The dialect graph illustrates the distribution of two dialects reported by the Tlingit good to excellent range language speakers. The graph also shows that the majority of good to excellent speakers reported the Teslin dialect as the main dialects spoken. It is important to note that the assessment does not reflect the number of speakers of the Carcross Tlingit dialect.

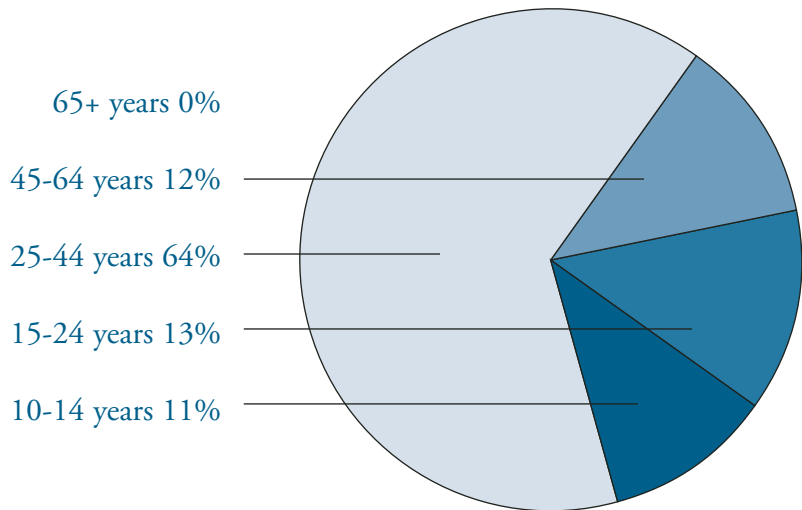
PROFILE OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME FLUENT QUICKLY

(poor to fair speakers or those non-speakers with good-excellent understanding)



Those that are most ideal or prime for learning the Tlingit language can be found in all age ranges, although the majority is in the 25 to 44 and the 45-64 age ranges. As was indicated previously, research on second language acquisition shows that it is far easier to teach those that understand a language at some level than it is to teach a person who has no understanding at all.

PROFILE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK NOR UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE AT ALL.



The 25 to 44 age range has the largest proportion of people that do not speak or understand the Tlingit language at all as compared to all other age groupings. When combined the respondents between the ages of 15 and 44 years account for 77% of the non-speaking population within the Tlingit language group. This is very concerning as it is within this age grouping that the major pool of potential teachers exists. Equally concerning is the fact that it is also within this age grouping that most parents fall into. This shows that there are many Tlingit children that do not have access to a parent that is able to pass the language on to them.

SUMMARY

This fluency assessment illustrates that Tlingit language group is slowly deteriorating is illustrated by the elderly age of good to excellent speakers, the higher numbers of people that report English as their mother tongue and the tendency to use the English language as the main method of communication. Being that the majority of the good to excellent Tlingit speakers are 50 years or older, it is of critical importance that the language be preserved immediately in as natural of a form as is possible and that measures are taken to produce higher levels of fluency in the younger generations of Tlingit speakers.

Although there are a fair number of speakers within the Tlingit language group that report the Tlingit language as their mother tongue, they are not using the language as their main language of communication. For the Tlingit language group, those that speak the language most fluently, must commit themselves to passing on the language. This will involve a process that encourages the fluent speakers to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak the Tlingit language to all Tlingit people they might encounter on a daily basis.

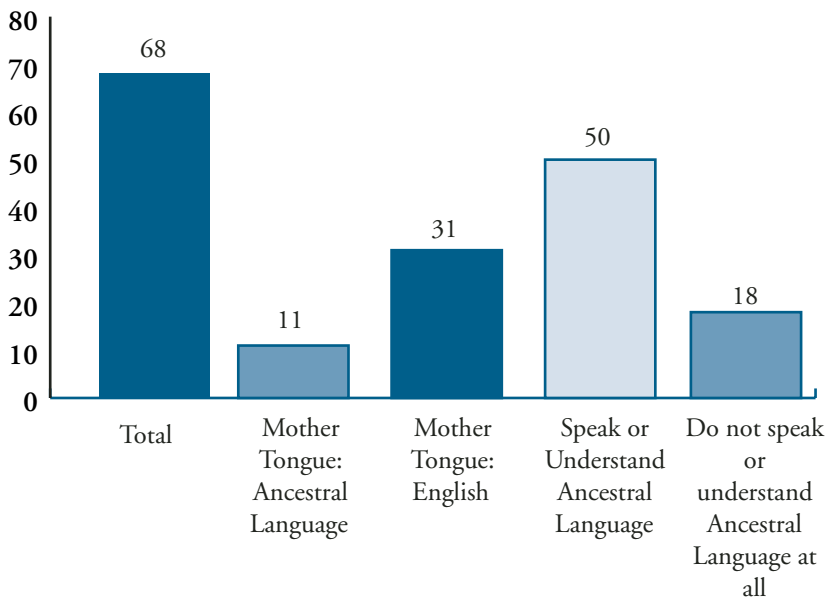
It is essential that opportunities are provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language.

The increase in the number of Tlingit people that reported their ancestral language as their mother tongue since the last assessment; the efforts of the younger generation to use the Tlingit language and the slow growth in the non-speaking population do provide hope for the Tlingit language. These are all positive indications that some of the Tlingit language initiatives are making a positive difference for the language.



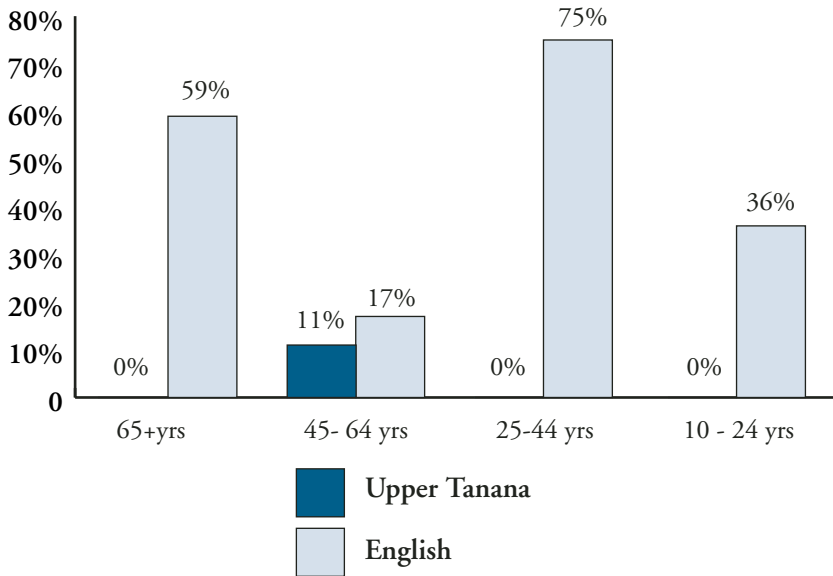
Upper Tanana Language Profile

OVERVIEW



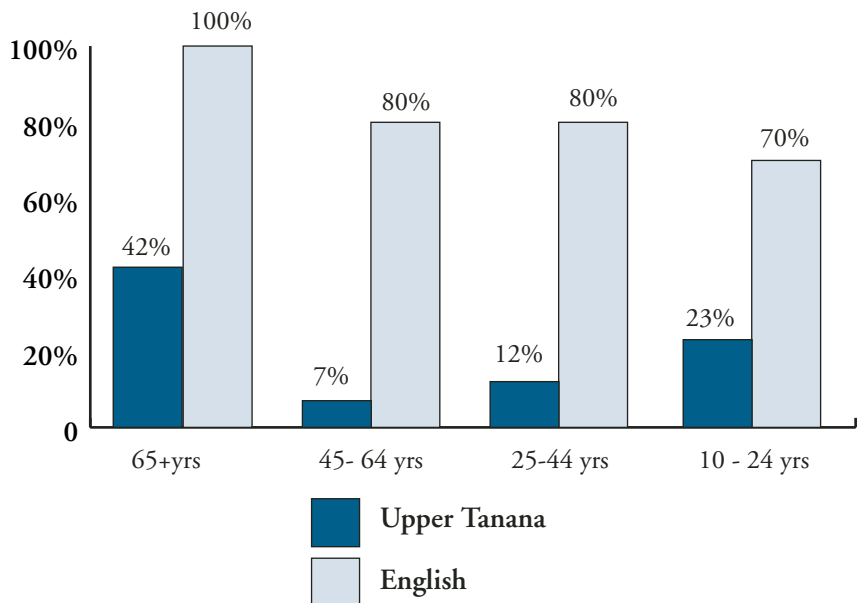
Almost 26% of the Upper Tanana respondents reported that they do not speak their ancestral language at all. Although, the graph illustrates that the English language is the strongest language amongst the Upper Tanana people, approximately 16% of the respondents report the Upper Tanana language as the first language they learned and still understand, and the even higher numbers (over 74%) of respondents that report that they can speak or understand to some degree, shows that there are a significant number of Upper Tanana people learning their ancestral language as a second language. The information around second language learners is a positive indication of the work individuals are doing to reverse the language shift.

UPPER TANANA LANGUAGE GROUP: MOTHER TONGUE



Upper Tanana respondents for all age ranges, including the elders that are 65 years and older, report that the English language is the primary mother tongue for the Upper Tanana language group. Almost all Upper Tanana respondents reported that they are more apt to learn the English language as their first language and to continue using it. This trend is present across all generations. The 45 to 64 year age range of Upper Tanana respondents does show a slight bump in the trend as a few respondents reported the Upper Tanana language as their mother tongue. Surprisingly, and unlike every other Yukon First Nation language group, the elderly population of the Upper Tanana group shows no respondents aged 65 years and older reporting their ancestral language as their mother tongue. Research shows that this language group is dangerously close to extinction and must take immediate steps to address the language shift if they want the Upper Tanana language to be a living language for all generations to come.

UPPER TANANA LANGUAGE GROUP: SPEAK MOST OFTEN



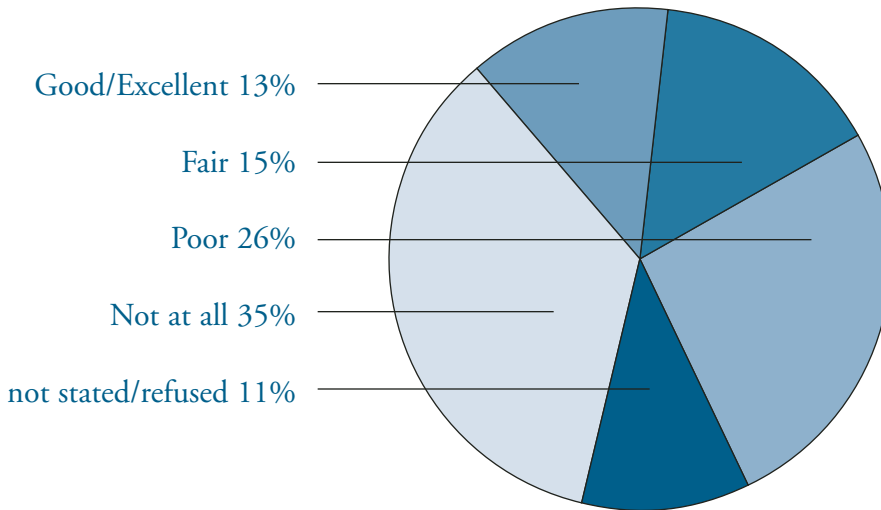
This graph clearly illustrates that the Upper Tanana language is largely replaced by the English language as the main language of use across all generations, including the elderly. This graph shows some hope in that the over two thirds of the very elderly and the youth are attempting to use the language more so than those between 25 - 64 years of age.

These individuals that have the Upper Tanana language as their mother tongue, whom are primarily in the 45 - 64 year age range are not using their ancestral language as much as is possible in their daily lives. It is of vital importance that those individuals that have the Upper Tanana language as their mother tongue use the language as much as they possibly can in their everyday lives. Research states that it is imperative that language learners are provided with as many opportunities as is possible, to hear, observe, and experience the language being spoken naturally by the community's most fluent speakers.

Note: 1989 – 2003 Fluency comparisons are unavailable for the Upper Tanana language group.

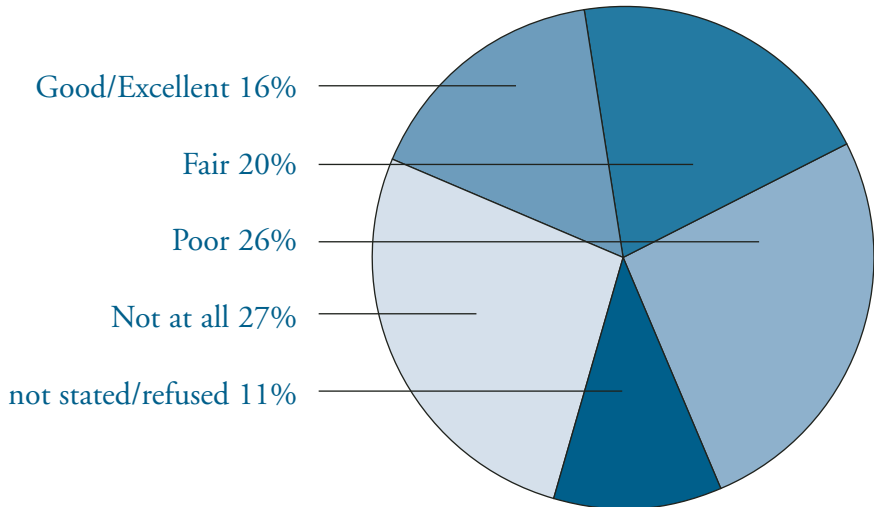
SELF-REPORTED FLUENCY LEVELS

How well do we say we speak?



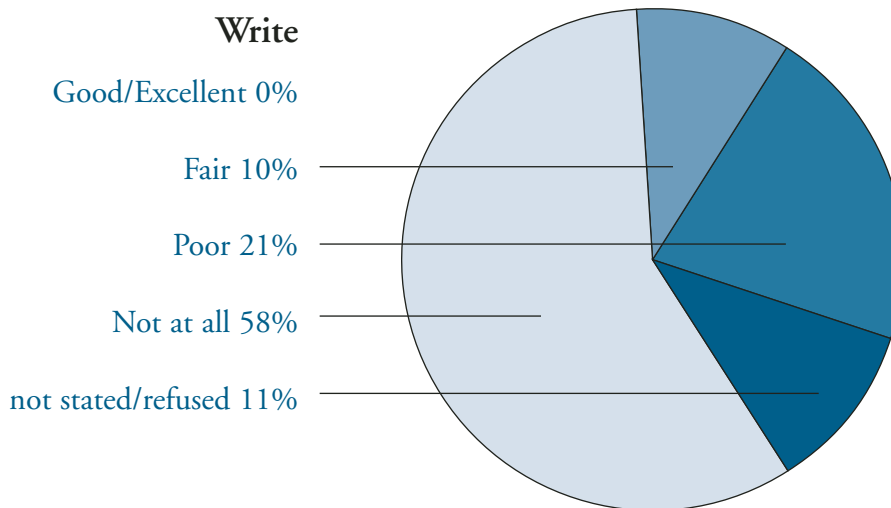
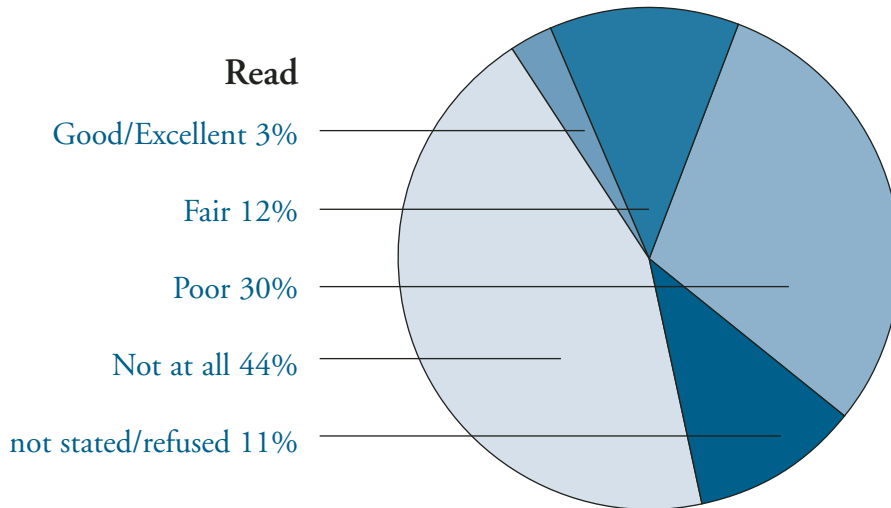
Over one third of the Upper Tanana respondents report not being able to speak their ancestral language at all. Just over 40% Upper Tanana speakers report their speaking fluency level within the fair to poor ranges. Only 13% of the Upper Tanana people report that they are able to speak the language at a level that would enable them to pass on the Upper Tanana language to those that have lower levels of speaking abilities. This means that only a few individuals within the Upper Tanana population are able to contribute to maintaining the Upper Tanana respondents' most valuable resources, which essentially is the Upper Tanana language, as their language provides access to their authentic culture and to their unique and distinct heritage.

How well do we say we understand?



The reported results show that well over half of the Upper Tanana speakers rate themselves as being able to understand their ancestral language within the poor to excellent range, which is a significantly higher number than those that reported themselves as speakers in this range. This particular difference in the number of speakers and those that can understand shows that there are a number of Upper Tanana people who can hear and understand their language better than they can speak it. This specific population of Upper Tanana speakers is a prime group for language learning as research indicates that it is far easier to learn to speak a language if you can understand it first.

How well do we say we read and write?

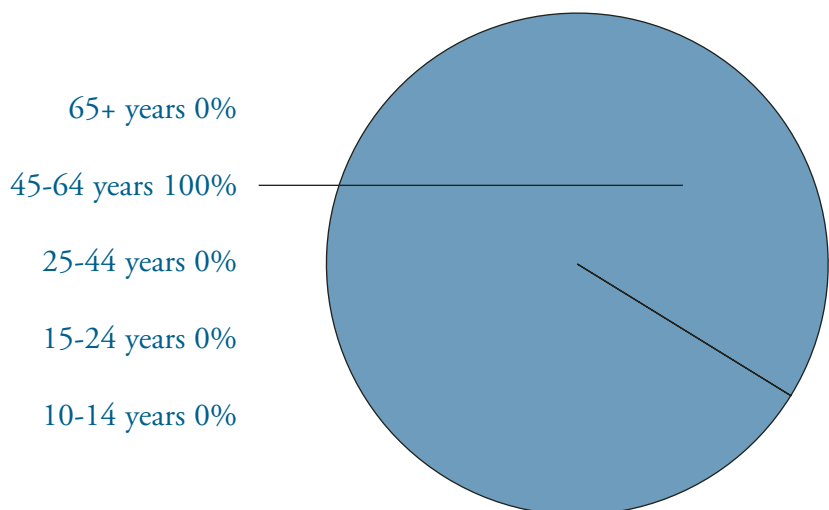


Far fewer Upper Tanana people reported that they are able to read and write their ancestral language as compared to those that are able to speak and understand it. Research recommends that if a language is to thrive well into the future, then the language must be represented in the written discourse that permeates almost every aspect of this modern technological world. It is of great importance that the ideas, perspectives and world views that the Upper Tanana youth are exposed to and eventually will ultimately frame

their own thoughts within and around, reflect the unique and distinct ideas, perspectives and views of their own Upper Tanana people. It is important that the language be learned not only as an oral language but also as a written language by the Upper Tanana people of today and of tomorrow.

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Profile of those who could potentially instruct others in the Upper Tanana language, that is “good-excellent” speakers.



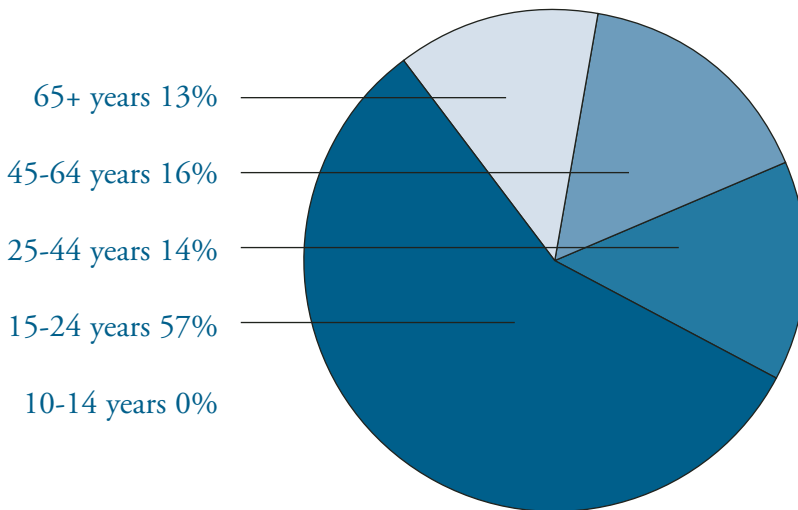
Although the entire supply of good to excellent speakers reported in this assessment are within the 45 to 64 year age range, it is hardly feasible to train these people to be teachers of school aged children largely because of their close proximity to retirement age. However it is this specific population that is ideal for teaching the language to a younger generation of teachers and for providing one-to-one language instruction for increasing fluency levels of individual learners or small teams of two or more language learners. The good to excellent Upper Tanana language speakers are in a position to have positive and direct impact upon increasing the number of fluent speakers in the Upper Tanana language group.

DIALECTS OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY INSTRUCT OTHERS IN THE LANGUAGE

Note: Dialects of those who could potentially instruct others in the Upper Tanana language are not available.

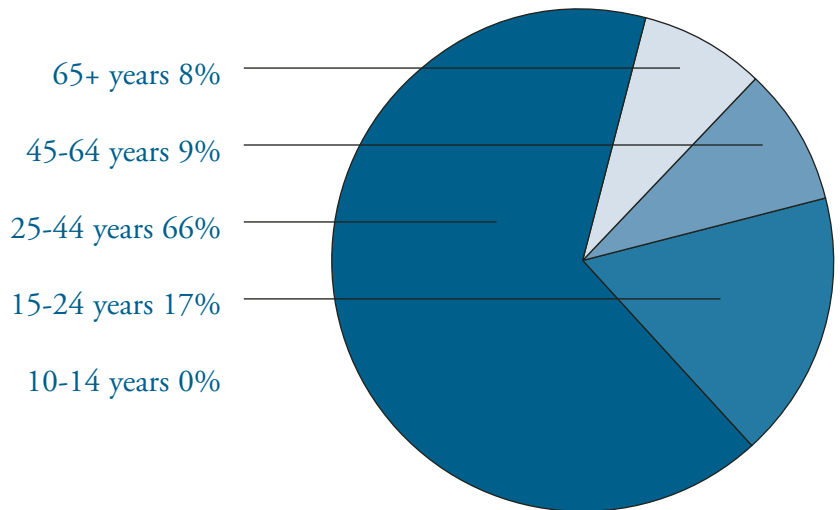
PROFILE OF THOSE WHO COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME FLUENT QUICKLY

That is poor to fair speakers or those non-speakers with good to excellent understanding.



Those that are most ideal or prime for learning the Upper Tanana language can be found mainly in the 15-24 year age range. As was previously discussed, research on second language acquisition shows that it is far easier to teach those that understand a language at some level than it is to teach a person who has no understanding at all.

PROFILE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK NOR UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE AT ALL.



The 25 to 44 age range has the largest proportion of people that do not speak or understand the Upper Tanana language at all as compared to all other age groupings. When combined, the respondents between the ages of 15 and 44 years account for just over 80% of the non-speaking population within the Upper Tanana language group. This is very concerning as it is within this age grouping that the major pool of potential teachers exists. Equally concerning is the fact that it is also within this age grouping that most parents fall into. This shows that there are many Upper Tanana children that do not have access to a parent that is able to pass the language on to them.

SUMMARY

The fluency assessment illustrates that Upper Tanana language group is in a state that has deteriorated to the point that is very near extinction, as is illustrated by the significantly higher numbers of people that report English as their mother tongue as compared to the Upper Tanana language; the lack of a highly fluent elderly population, and the tendency to using the English language as the main method of communication. The low number of good to excellent Upper Tanana speakers indicates that the language should be preserved immediately, and in as natural of a form as is possible and that measures are taken to produce some fluent speakers in the younger generation of Upper Tanana speakers.

Although there are a few speakers within the Upper Tanana language group in the 45 to 64 year age range that report the Upper Tanana language as their mother tongue, they have also reported that they are for the most part, not using their ancestral language as their main language of communication. For the Upper Tanana language group, those that speak the language most fluently must commit themselves to passing on the language. This will involve a process that encourages the fluent speakers to use the language everywhere they go, in everything they do, and to speak the Upper Tanana language to all Upper Tanana people they might encounter on a daily basis.

It is essential that opportunities are provided to language learners to hear the living language being used as a method of communication. The expression, "use it or lose it" is only too true when applied to the current situation of revitalizing and perpetuating the Upper Tanana language. Language experts also indicate that not only must the speakers and learners of a language have places (homes, schools, business and government) to visit where they can hear the language being used in a natural manner, but they must also see a purpose and an importance given to the language.



Conclusion

There is no doubt that most Aboriginal languages in Canada are in jeopardy and well on the pathway to extinction. The threat of losing any one of the eight Yukon First Nation languages should be of concern to every Yukon person, both First Nation and non-First Nation, as the impact will affect the present generation and the generations to come. If even one language is lost Yukoners will either directly or indirectly experience it, as an entire world view will be lost; stories will remain untold; ancient knowledge about the world will become inaccessible; and the Yukon will become less culturally and linguistically diverse.

Although sufficient rationale and reason for saving Yukon First Nation languages exist, there are significant barriers that First Nation peoples face today and will continue to meet with in the future, in terms of rebuilding the strength of their languages.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

With land claims settlements and self-government provisions in place for many Yukon First Nations, the legislative barriers to the establishment of immersion schools, language nests, or bi-lingual teacher training programs may be more a matter of perception than reality. The authority to design, deliver and administer culture and language programming is enshrined within the land claims and self-government agreements.

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

Currently in the Yukon, all public schools are government funded and operated. The public K-12 schools offer First Nation language as a second language in 19 of its 28 schools. The Yukon Native Language Center (YNLC) provides for some language preservation activities, curriculum development and language instructor training that produces instructors limited to teaching only the First Nation language as a second language. The

Yukon Native Teacher Education Program (YNTEP) produces certified teachers that are able to teach in the public school system, however using only English as a medium of instruction. Aboriginal Language Services (ALS) allocates funding to First Nation organizations for community based language initiatives.

Although all four government funded departments/organizations have contributed tremendously to preserving and enhancing Yukon's First Nation languages and they continue to work hard in their specific area of service provision, there seems to be no evidence of system wide strategic planning involving all of these main stakeholders. The aim of the strategic planning being to increase continuity and cohesiveness across all programs delivered, so as to more effectively achieve the vision, goals and aspirations of YFN people as it pertains to their culture and language programs.

A challenge certainly will be creating a critical mass of committed and motivated people and organizations, that will work together towards strengthening and fortifying the languages using a strategic, organized, informed and cooperative approach based on healthy relationships and strong partnerships.

SYMBOLIC AND PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF ANCESTRAL LANGUAGES

Another challenge that is especially difficult to overcome and to plan programs around is the current imbalance between the levels of symbolic and practical importance of the languages. Essentially this is the difference between First Nation peoples saying the language is important and the number of people that actually use the language to the fullest extent possible in practical situations involving everyday life and the number of people truly committed and dedicated to learning their language. This imbalance clearly demonstrates that language revitalization initiatives must incorporate methods and approaches that will lead to higher levels of practical importance being attached to First Nation languages and thus increased language usage in everyday living situations.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Perhaps the greatest challenge of all is developing a program or incorporating strategies to increase individual levels of motivation, dedication, and commitment to learning one's ancestral language. Almost all non-fluent Yukon First Nation people involved in this assessment indicated that they wanted to learn their language or wanted to further develop their language abilities; however over a fifteen year time frame there are few, if any at all, Yukon First Nation people that took the time or that were dedicated enough, to become completely fluent in their language. Research indicates that one can become a conversational speaker at a basic level within a period of one year with only 10-20 hours per week of study with an Elder or fluent speaker.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Perhaps the challenges around responsibility may be attributed to a lack of understanding of the depths of the impact of language loss; or not knowing the methods and strategies that can help to reverse language shift; or simply not realizing the potential of self-government powers. Perhaps there is an acceptance of social institutions that contain systemic barriers that will eventually contribute to cultural genocide through programs that support inequitable time and resource allocations with respect to the English and Yukon's eight First Nation languages.

The avoidance and apathy concerning Yukon First Nation languages that appears to exist, needs to be replaced with determination, commitment, passion and will, to preserve and restore who Yukon First Nation peoples are as distinct and unique peoples through the saving of their ancestral languages.


COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES

While it is recognized that Yukon First Nation peoples have the most at stake if they lose their ancestral languages and that essentially it is their inherent responsibility to ensure the survival of their ancestral languages and it is widely professed that educational institutions should not have the sole responsibility to restore and sustain Aboriginal languages; the fact remains that all levels of government (First Nation, territorial and federal) do have very significant roles to play and moral and/or legal responsibilities to fulfill.

Being that a large part of the issue is that the problem in its entirety is extremely complex and multifaceted; it is important to understand and accept that First Nation peoples will experience greater challenges and difficulties in achieving the larger vision without the support and assistance from all players involved in the many facets of the problem (Kelly, 2000). Fullan (2001) asserts that when the realm of the problem is very complex and multi-faceted; that the approaches, strategies, and practices undertaken for real change to occur, most certainly must involve the collaborative efforts of all those that have a stake. It is time for all those involved to work together with the strength of unity to keep Yukon a place whereby all peoples have equal rights and equal access to the cultures and languages that are Indigenous to them and integral to their very well-being as individuals and as a community. A collaborative, cooperative and organized approach involving all stakeholders can begin to address the complex problem of designing and delivering more effective language revitalization programs (Fullan, 2001).

The Yukon is not the first place where Aboriginal people are attempting to design and deliver programs and services aimed at language revitalization. There is plenty of research, guidance and advice to draw upon to assist Yukon First Nations to better able design and deliver language programs that are more effective and successful in terms of producing fluent speakers that can speak and understand their ancestral language in natural situations with some spontaneity.

Hope is embedded in the pictures illustrated that show an increase in the number of Yukon First Nation youth that are learning their ancestral languages, perhaps an indicator that the second language school programs in place are working to some degree. Hope is also found in the expressed aspirations and desires of Yukon First Nations peoples to produce speakers that are committed to teaching and speaking their language to their children and grandchildren, and to become communities dedicated to instilling the sense of responsibility in all of its children, to pass on the culture and language for the benefit of all generations to come.



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Appendix A

Stakeholders

The main stakeholders involved in the area Yukon First Nation languages are listed below.

Yukon First Nations (including Individuals)

1. Carcross Tagish First Nation
2. Champagne and Aishihik First Nation
3. First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun
4. Kluane First Nation
5. Kwanlin Dun First Nation
6. Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation
7. Liard First Nation
8. Ross River Dena Council
9. Selkirk First Nation
10. Ta'an Kwäch'an Council
11. Teslin Tlingit Council
12. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation
13. Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation
14. White River First Nation

Tribal Councils

1. Southern Tutchone Tribal Council
2. Northern Tutchone Tribal Council
3. Kaska Tribal Council
4. Daak Ka Nation

Aboriginal Language Services (ALS)

Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) - Yukon Native Language Centre (YNLC)

Yukon Department of Education - Public Schools

Other stakeholders that are involved or have the potential to be involved, in the area of Yukon First Nation languages are listed below:

- Yukon Department of Education – Advanced Education
- Yukon College
- Yukon Native Teacher Education Program (YNTTEP)
- Skookum Jim Friendship Center
- Northern Native Broadcasting Yukon (NNBY)
- Yukon Tourism & Culture Department
- Cultural Services Branch
- Heritage Resources Unit
- Department of Canadian Heritage
- Department of Indian Affairs
- Health Canada
- Aboriginal Headstart
- UFA Boards and Committees



Appendix B

Yukon First Nation Languages: Survey and Fluency Assessment

Household I.D.: _____

Respondent I.D.: _____

Please answer the following questions and when you have finished return your completed form to the survey worker. Thank you.

1. From the list below please check off the name(s) of the Yukon First Nation language(s) you consider to be your ancestral language(s).

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gwich'in | <input type="checkbox"/> Han | <input type="checkbox"/> Kaska | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Tutchone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tagish | <input type="checkbox"/> Tlingit | <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Tanana | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern Tutchone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | | |

2. What is the dialect of your ancestral language(s)? (Usually given by location, for example Teslin Tlingit, Atlin Tlingit, Carcross Tlingit)

3. From the list below please check off the language(s) you first learned and still understand. (Please check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gwich'in | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Tutchone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Han | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern Tutchone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kaska | <input type="checkbox"/> Tagish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Tanana | <input type="checkbox"/> Tlingit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other language (Please specify): _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other language (Please specify): _____ | |

4. If you could speak your ancestral language(s), how do you think you would feel about speaking it/them in public?

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proud | <input type="checkbox"/> Intimidated | <input type="checkbox"/> Shy | <input type="checkbox"/> Tolerated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afraid | <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Embarrassed | <input type="checkbox"/> Accepted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respected | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | | |

4a. Please describe why you would feel that way in the space below.

5. Do you feel that it is important to provide language training?

- Yes Don't know
 No Other (please specify): _____

6. In your experience, what teaching methods (for example, classroom, small groups) and/or learning environments (for example, at school settings, at work or on the Land) would make the language easier to learn?

Methods (please describe below)

6a. If more than one method, which would work best for you?

7. Do you feel that people should receive an honorarium for learning a First Nation language?

- Yes Don't know
 No Other (please specify): _____

8. Are you currently taking language training?

- Yes Don't know
 No Other (please specify): _____

If "Yes" to question 8, please answer question 8a.

8a. What type of training is the language program?

- Immersion Second language Cultural camps College/University
 Bilingual Mentoring Intensive Training Courses
 Language Development Camps Other (Please specify): _____

If "No" to question 8, please answer question 8b.

8b. Do you want to take language training?

- Yes No - can you tell us why not? (please write on the lines below)
- _____

9. Do you practice any of your traditional life skills? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- Basket making Drum making Hunting Sewing
 Berry picking Fishing Potlatch Singing
 Carving or painting Dancing Sweats Tanning Hides
 Traditional Medicines Storytelling Stick gambling Trapping
 Other (Please specify): _____

9a. If you practice more than one traditional lifeskill, which is most important to you?

10. Who speaks your ancestral language to you? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt | <input type="checkbox"/> No one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | |

11. Who has told you a legend or a story in your ancestral language? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt | <input type="checkbox"/> No one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | |

12. Thinking of your family members alive today, which ones still speak their ancestral language? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No one | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | |

13. Which of your family members speak their ancestral language in their home today as the main language of use? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No one | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | |

14. Do you feel that your ancestral language receives the same level of respect as other languages in your community?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |

15. Do you feel that your ancestral language receives the same level of respect as the English language in your home?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |

16. What do you think is the state of your ancestral language(s)? (mark only one)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy | <input type="checkbox"/> Stable | <input type="checkbox"/> Near extinction | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing | <input type="checkbox"/> Declining | <input type="checkbox"/> Extinct | |

Why? _____

17. Do you think it is important to work towards the survival of your ancestral language?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

18. Are you concerned about the loss of your ancestral language?

- Yes No No Opinion Don't know

19. What does your ancestral language mean to you?

20. Would you say that you personally have experienced a loss or decline in your ancestral language?

- Yes Don't know
 No Other (please specify): _____

If "Yes" to question 20, please answer question 20a.

20a. What factors do you feel contributed to your personal language loss or decline?

- Never learned Residential school Lack of use Marriage
 Nobody to speak the language with Relocation
 No place to speak the language
 No place to hear the language being spoken in a natural way
 Other (Please specify): _____
 Other (Please specify): _____

21. In your opinion, what are the main problems that you see facing your ancestral language?

22. What First Nation are you a member or citizen of?

- Carcross/Tagish Champagne/Aishihik Kwanlin Dun Liard
 Kluane Na-cho Nyak Dun Little Salmon/Carmacks
 Ross River Dena Selkirk Ta'an Kwach'an Council
 Teslin Tlingit Tr'ondek Hwech'in Vuntut Gwitchin White River
 Other (Please specify): _____

23. In what year were you born?

24. Do you have any other comments you would like to make regarding Yukon First Nation Languages? (please write them below)

*Thank you for your time and patience in completing this survey.
Please return this form to the survey worker.*



Appendix C

Yukon First Nation Languages: Survey and Fluency Assessment	Household I.D.: _____
	Respondent I.D.: _____

Please answer the following questions and when you have finished return your completed form to the survey worker. Thank you.

1. Other than your Yukon First Nation ancestral language, can you speak any other language(s)?
 Yes No
 ↳ which one(s)? (please specify): _____

2. If you speak more than one language, which is the most useful to you?

3. From the list below please check off the language(s) you first learned and still understand.
 (Please check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Gwich'in	<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Tutchone
<input type="checkbox"/> Han	<input type="checkbox"/> Southern Tutchone
<input type="checkbox"/> Kaska	<input type="checkbox"/> Tagish
<input type="checkbox"/> Upper Tanana	<input type="checkbox"/> Tlingit
<input type="checkbox"/> English	
<input type="checkbox"/> French	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other language (Please specify): _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other language (Please specify): _____	

4. From the list below please check off the language(s) you speak most often.

<input type="checkbox"/> Gwich'in	<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Tutchone
<input type="checkbox"/> Han	<input type="checkbox"/> Southern Tutchone
<input type="checkbox"/> Kaska	<input type="checkbox"/> Tagish
<input type="checkbox"/> Upper Tanana	<input type="checkbox"/> Tlingit
<input type="checkbox"/> English	
<input type="checkbox"/> French	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other language (Please specify): _____	

... please continue



Form B - 1 no.: 0001

5. From the list below please check off the language(s) you use most often outside of the home. (Please check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gwich'in | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Tutchone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Han | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern Tutchone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kaska | <input type="checkbox"/> Tagish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Tanana | <input type="checkbox"/> Tlingit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other language (Please specify): _____ | |

6. Do you feel that it is important to provide language training?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |

7. Do you feel that people should receive an honorarium for learning a First Nation language?

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> It depends (please specify): _____ |

8. What do you think is needed to motivate others to learn their First Nation language?

9. In your experience, what teaching methods (for example, classroom, small groups) and/or learning environments (for example, at school settings, at work or on the Land) would make the language easier to learn?

Methods (please describe below)

9a. If more than one method, which is the best?

10. Do you practice any of your traditional lifeskills? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basket making | <input type="checkbox"/> Drum making | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> Sewing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Berry picking | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Potlatch | <input type="checkbox"/> Singing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carving or painting | <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweats | <input type="checkbox"/> Tanning Hides |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Medicines | <input type="checkbox"/> Storytelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Stick gambling | <input type="checkbox"/> Trapping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | | |

10a. If you practice more than one traditional lifeskill, which is most important to you?

11. Do you think it is important to work towards the survival of Yukon First Nation languages?

- Yes No No Opinion Don't know

Why is that? _____

12. Are you concerned about the loss of your ancestral language?

- Yes No No Opinion Don't know

12a. What does your ancestral language mean to you?

13. In your opinion, what are the main problems that you see facing your ancestral language?

14. What First Nation are you a member or citizen of?

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carcross/Tagish | <input type="checkbox"/> Champagne/Aishihik | <input type="checkbox"/> Kwanlin Dun | <input type="checkbox"/> Liard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kluane | <input type="checkbox"/> Na-cho Nyak Dun | <input type="checkbox"/> Little Salmon/Carmacks | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ross River Dena | <input type="checkbox"/> Selkirk | <input type="checkbox"/> Ta'an Kwach'an Council | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teslin Tlingit | <input type="checkbox"/> Tr'ondek Hwech'in | <input type="checkbox"/> Vuntut Gwitchin | <input type="checkbox"/> White River |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Please specify</i>): _____ | | | |

15. In what year were you born? 19

16. Do you have any other comments you would like to make regarding Yukon First Nation Languages? (please write them below)

*Thank you for your time and patience in completing this survey.
Please return this form to the survey worker.*



Appendix D

Yukon First Nation Languages: Survey and Fluency Assessment	Household I.D.: _____
	Respondent I.D.: _____

Your answers to the following questions relate to your Yukon First Nation Ancestral Language:
(please check off only one language per survey form)

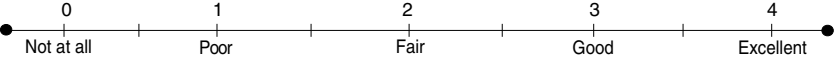
- Gwich'in Han Kaska Northern Tutchone Southern Tutchone
 Tagish Tlingit Upper Tanana Other (Please specify): _____

Dialect (usually given by location, for example, Teslin Tlingit, Atlin Tlingit, Carcross Tlingit):

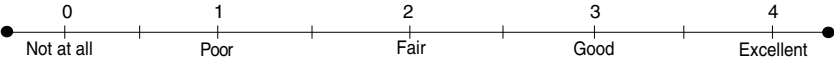
1. On the rating scale below, please mark how well you **speak** your ancestral language.



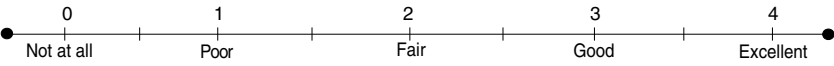
2. On the rating scale below, please mark how well you **understand** the language when it is being spoken.



3. On the rating scale below, please mark how well you can **read** the language.



4. On the rating scale below, please mark how well you can **write** the language.



... please continue



Form B-2 no.: 0001



6. Where did you learn your ancestral language? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On the Land | <input type="checkbox"/> College/university |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Community program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K-12 school | <input type="checkbox"/> Day Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____ | |

6a. If more than one location, where do you feel most of the learning took place?

7. Who taught you the language? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt | <input type="checkbox"/> No one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | | |

7a. If more than one person, who was your most important language teacher?

8. Are you presently working to further develop your ability to speak your ancestral language? (Includes further developing language speaking abilities)

- Yes No

8a. If "Yes", what are you doing? _____

9. How do you feel about speaking your ancestral language in public? (Please check all the boxes below that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proud | <input type="checkbox"/> Intimidated | <input type="checkbox"/> Shy | <input type="checkbox"/> Tolerated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afraid | <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Embarrassed | <input type="checkbox"/> Accepted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respected | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | | |

9a. Please describe why you feel the way you do in the space below

10. Who speaks your ancestral language to you? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt | <input type="checkbox"/> No one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | |

11. Who has told you a legend or a story in your ancestral language? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt | <input type="checkbox"/> No one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | |

12. Thinking of your family members alive today, which ones still speak their ancestral language? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No one | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | |

13. Which of your family members speak their ancestral language in their home today as the main language of use? (Please check all boxes that apply)

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> Sister | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Cousin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No one | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | | |

14. Do you feel that your ancestral language receives the same level of respect as other languages in your community?

- Yes No Don't know Other (please specify): _____

15. Do you feel that your ancestral language receives the same level of respect as the English language in your home?

- Yes No Don't know Other (please specify): _____

16. Are you concerned about the loss of your ancestral language?

- Yes No No Opinion Don't know

16a. What does your ancestral language mean to you? _____

17. Would you say that you personally have experienced a loss or decline in your ancestral language?

- Yes No Don't know Other (please specify): _____

If "Yes" to question 17, please answer question 17a.

17a. What factors do you feel contributed to your personal language loss or decline?

- Never learned Residential school Lack of use Marriage
 Nobody to speak the language with Relocation
 No place to speak the language
 No place to hear the language being spoken in a natural way
 Other (Please specify): _____
 Other (Please specify): _____

18. Overall, what do you think is the state of your ancestral language in the Yukon?

- Healthy Stable Near extinction
 Increasing Declining Extinct Other (please specify): _____

Why is that? _____

19. What do you think is the state of your ancestral language in this community?

- Healthy Stable Near extinction
 Increasing Declining Extinct Other (please specify): _____

Why is that? _____

20. Do you have any other comments you would like to make regarding Yukon First Nation Languages? (please write them below)

Thank you for your time and patience in completing this survey. Please return this form to the survey worker and, if you speak another ancestral First Nation language, obtain another form to complete for that language.



Appendix E

YUKON ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES SURVEY 2003

Household form

Interviewer Name: _____

Dwelling I.D.: _____

Community: _____

Question #1

I need to make a list of all persons of First Nation ancestry who usually live here in this dwelling. Can you please give me the names of those people, starting with the oldest.

	Family name	Given name	Age	Consent (4-14 yrs.)		Speaks or understands language		Form A		Form B-1		Form B-2	
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Final Code	Form No.	Final Code	Form No.	Final Code	Form No.
Person 1				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 2				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 3				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 4				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 5				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 6				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 7				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 8				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 9				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 10				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 11				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Person 12				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								

Interviewer Note:

- Less than 4 yrs. —————> Record name on household form
- 4 yrs. to 14 yrs. —————> Complete the Fluency Assessment Parental Consent form if they speak or understand an ancestral language
- Over 12 yrs. —————> Complete survey form

Question #2

In case we need to contact you again to confirm any information - could we please have your phone number? _____



Appendix F

Profile of Yukon First Nation Languages

Appendix F

YUKON FIRST NATION LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION *adapted directly from the WCP Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs: K-12. 2000*

INTRODUCTION

The fluency assessment tool is specifically designed for the use of assessing the levels of language fluency of Yukon First Nation languages. The questions are designed to give participants an opportunity to demonstrate their levels of **communicative competence**. The overall purpose of this assessment is to provide data that will illustrate the levels of fluency for the Yukon First Nation languages showing three levels: Yukon wide, by language group, and by individual community.

Communicative Competence:

The ability to use systems of language in various contexts and situations to perform a variety of language functions.

(WCP Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs: K-12. 2000)

DEFINITION FOR LANGUAGE FLUENCY

This fluency assessment aims to measure the respondents' level of communicative proficiency. The specific components measured will be speaking, listening, reading and writing abilities. The levels of communicative proficiency can be measured according to the degree of accuracy in the communication of meaning, the variety of topics that can be dealt with, and the amount of depth and abstraction that the respondent shows in various language use situations. As well, there has been an attempt to incorporate the values and perspectives that are held by First Nation cultures. This ensures that the First Nation view of literacy being holistic and all encompassing is incorporated into this fluency assessment.

RATIONALE FOR QUESTIONS

This fluency assessment is designed for respondents to demonstrate their abilities:

- To use their First Nation language in various situations requiring interaction, production or interpretation of language
- To demonstrate their levels of precision, coherency and fluency in their First Nation language.
- To demonstrate the degree to which they are able to use their First Nation language to give and get information, socialize, interpret and produce talk, and to illustrate their depths of understanding of various aspects of their culture.

Language Use Contexts

Three language use context scenarios are incorporated into the fluency assessment. This helps to ensure that the respondent is able to communicate in a variety of contexts.

- Interaction:* involves face-to-face communication and the socio-cultural rules for such interaction.
- Interpretation:* requires respondents to understand and interpret discourse, or a connected set of sentences or ideas.
- Production:* requires respondents to produce discourse that is understandable to others.

Language Quality

Language quality as a measure of communicative proficiency is not synonymous with meaningful communication. It is possible to communicate meaning with relative degrees of quality. Quality is defined using three criteria:

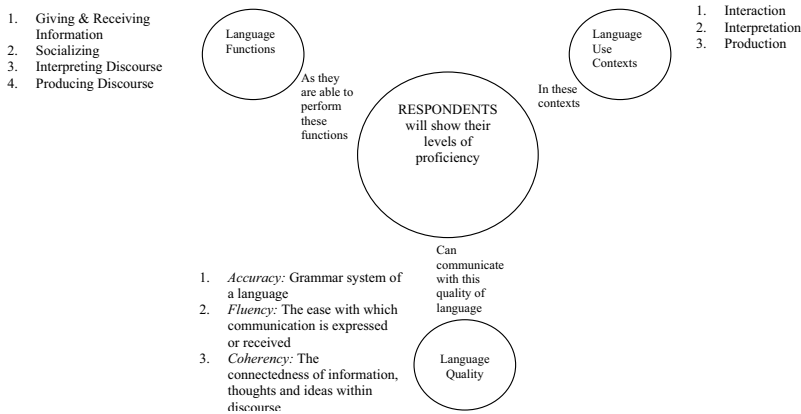
- Accuracy:* primarily involves the grammatical system of a language.
- Fluency:* involves the ease with which communication is expressed or received.
- Coherency:* relates to the connectedness of information, thoughts and ideas within discourse.

Language Functions

The respondents' communicative competencies will be measured in a manner that incorporates the following functions within the variety of language use contexts.

- Giving and Getting Information
- Socializing and Celebrating
- Interpreting Discourse
- Producing Discourse

A VISUAL OVERVIEW: FOUNDATIONS to the FLUENCY ASSESSMENT





Appendix G

Profile of Yukon First Nation Languages

BACKGROUND NOTES: For the Language Specialist or the Elder Escort **Section 1: UNDERSTANDING COMPETENCIES**

Caution: This section is only to be administered to the respondent based on the condition that they have indicated that they do have some ability to UNDERSTAND a Yukon First Nation language in the YIN Survey Instrument.

The UNDERSTANDING SECTION is designed for the respondents to demonstrate their ability to understand their First Nation language when it is spoken to them. There are four levels of questioning that require the respondent to show their abilities to understand the spoken language at various depths of their culture and heritage.

It is important that the person being assessed is provided with every opportunity to demonstrate their ability to understand their First Nation language. It is important that the “conversation” between yourself and the speaker be relaxed. Although it is encouraged to use the First Nation language throughout the assessment, you are encouraged to use English if necessary to assist in explaining the question, but only if it provides the respondent with better chances of understanding and answering the question.

The answer to the question is preferred in the First Nation language, however because this section looks specifically at how well they understand the language, the answer may be provided in English. After completion of each level of questioning, a MEASURE of 0 to 4 must be provided.

The following descriptors may assist you in MEASURING each level:

- 0 – Not at all
 - 1 - Poor
 - 2 - Fair
 - 3 - Good
 - 4 - Excellent
-

EXAMPLE ... the following discussion is provided for the Language Specialist to follow. However, you will still have to adapt your conversation to meet social customs embedded in your nation's cultural ways.

“This section of the assessment is designed for you to show how well you understand your ancestral language when it is being spoken to you. I will ask you a question in our language and then you will show me how well you understood what I said to you. If you need me to ask the question again or to explain it further, please ask me to do so in our language if you can, but you can ask in English if you need to. It is important that the answer you give me is in our language if at all possible, however if you need to, you can provide the answer in English. Do you have any questions before we begin?”

BACKGROUND NOTES: For the Language Specialist or the Elder Escort
Section 2: SPEAKING COMPETENCIES

Caution: This section is only to be administered to the respondent based on the condition that they have indicated that they do have some ability to SPEAK in the YIN Survey Instrument.

The SPEAKING SECTION is designed for the respondents to demonstrate their speaking abilities in their First Nation language. There are four levels of questioning that require the respondent not only to show their language speaking abilities, but also to be able to show how well they can express their depths of understanding of their culture and heritage in their First Nation language.

It is important that the person being assessed is provided with every opportunity to demonstrate their speaking abilities. It is also important that the “conversation” between the Language Specialist and the speaker be relaxed. Although using the First Nation language as the first language is encouraged for this assessment, the English language may be used if it becomes necessary to assist in explaining the question, but only if it provides the respondent with better chances of understanding and answering the question.

The answer to the question must be provided in the First Nation language, because this section looks specifically at how well they speak the language. After completion of each level of questioning, a MEASURE of 0 to 4 must be provided.

The following descriptors may assist you in MEASURING each level:

- 0 – Not at all
 - 1 - Poor
 - 2 - Fair
 - 3 - Good
 - 4 - Excellent
-

EXAMPLE ... the following discussion is provided for the Language Specialist to follow. However, you will still have to adapt your conversation to meet social customs embedded in your nation's cultural ways.

“This section of the assessment is designed for you to show your abilities to speak your First Nation language. I will ask you a question in our language and then you will answer me in our language. If you need me to ask the question again or to explain it further, please ask me to do so in our language if you can, but you need to, you can ask the question in English. It is important that the answer you give me is in our language. Do you have any questions before we begin?”

BACKGROUND NOTES: For the Language Specialist or the Elder Escort
Section 3: READING COMPETENCIES

*Caution: This section is only to be administered to the respondent based on the condition that they have indicated that they do have some ability to READ their First Nation language in the YIN Survey Instrument. **DO NOT** administer this section unless the respondent has clearly indicated that they do have experience with the written form of the language. In other words ensure that they have some experience with reading and writing the language.*

The READING SECTION is designed for the respondents to demonstrate their ability to read the written form of their First Nation language. There are four levels of questioning that require the respondent to show their reading abilities in the First Nation language. The respondent will also be required to show how well they can comprehend the text they have read, which will also reflect their understandings of the various depths of understanding of their culture and heritage.

It is important that the person being assessed is provided with every opportunity to demonstrate their reading abilities. It is also important that the “conversation” between the Language Specialist and the speaker be relaxed. Although using the First Nation language as the first language is encouraged for this assessment, the English language may be used if it becomes necessary to assist in explaining the question, but only if it provides the respondent with better chances of understanding and answering the question.

The answer to the question must be provided in the First Nation language, because this section looks specifically at how well they read the language. The respondent may use the English language to demonstrate how well they comprehended the text that they read. After completion of each level of questioning, a MEASURE of 0 to 4 must be provided.

The following descriptors may assist you in MEASURING each level:

0 – Not at all

1 - Poor

2 - Fair

3 - Good

4 - Excellent

EXAMPLE ... the following discussion is provided for the Language Specialist to follow. However, you will still have to adapt your conversation to meet social customs embedded in your nation's cultural ways.

“This section of the assessment is designed for you to show your abilities to read your ancestral language. I will ask you a question in our language and then you will show your abilities to read the language. If you need me to ask the question again or to explain it further, please ask me to do so in our language if you can, but you can ask in English if you want. It is important that the answer you give me is in our language, but again, if you need to you may use English. Do you have any questions before we begin?”

BACKGROUND NOTES: For the Language Specialist or the Elder Escort
Section 4: WRITING COMPETENCIES

*Caution: This section is only to be administered to the respondent based on the condition that they have indicated that they do have some ability to WRITE their First Nation language in the YIN Survey Instrument. **DO NOT** administer this section unless the respondent has clearly indicated that they do have experience with the written form of the language.*

The WRITING SECTION is designed for the respondents to demonstrate their ability to write their First Nation language. There are four levels of exercises that require the respondent to show their writing abilities in the First Nation language. Each level will progressively become more challenging, as at each level, a deeper understanding of the various depths of their culture and heritage, as well as higher levels of the linguistic aspects of literacy such as diacritical markings, grammar, spelling, content and providing translations are incorporated.

It is important that the person being assessed is provided with every opportunity to demonstrate their writing abilities. It is also important that the “conversation” between the Language Specialist and the speaker be relaxed. Although using the First Nation language as the first language is encouraged for this assessment, the English language may be used if it becomes necessary to assist in explaining the question, but only if it provides the respondent with better chances of understanding and answering the question. The answer to the question must be provided in the First Nation language, because this section looks specifically at how well they write the language. The respondent will also be required to provide English translations at the higher levels.

**This section only applies if you are going to MEASURE their writing abilities yourself. For those Language Specialists that prefer, the Yukon Native Language Centre will assess section.*

After completion of each level of exercises, a MEASURE of 0 to 4 must be provided. The following descriptors may assist you in MEASURING each level:

- 0 – Not at all
 - 1 - Poor
 - 2 - Fair
 - 3 - Good
 - 4 - Excellent
-

IMPORTANT: The completed WRITING answer sheet, as completed by the respondent, must be returned along with the completed sections on Understanding, Speaking and Reading.

EXAMPLE ... the following discussion is provided for the Language Specialist to follow. However, you will still have to adapt your conversation to meet social customs embedded in your nation's cultural ways.

*“This section of the assessment is designed for you to show your abilities to write your ancestral language. There are four levels of exercises provided on this page. If you need me to explain any part of the written exercises, please ask me to do so in our language if you can, but you can ask in English if you want. It is important that your answers are in the written First Nation language, as we are measuring how well you can write your language. Please remember to include a **General Translation** for Level 3 and a **Literal Translation** (word for word) for Level 4. The translations can be written right underneath the First Nation language. Do you have any questions before we begin?”*

INSTRUCTIONS: LANGUAGE SPECIALIST

1. Say hello and thank the person for taking time to do the assessment. Let them know that it will help to provide Yukon First Nation people with valuable information that will help them to save their languages.
2. Take out a blank assessment package. Write the house # and the respondent # at the top of the page.
3. Start with the UNDERSTANDING section first, then do the section on SPEAKING, then do the READING section and finally do the WRITING section.
4. If the person says that they can't SPEAK in the First Nation language, then don't do that section. If they say that they can't READ in the First Nation language, then don't do that section. If they say that they can't WRITE in the First Nation language, then don't do that section.
5. In order to decide what level to begin with, use your background knowledge of the speaker, the community and the language. For example, if you know the speaker to be a generally poor speaker, then start with Level 1. If you know the speaker to be fluent, start with Level 3.
6. Within each section only go as far as the person is able to go. If they are struggling or having difficulty, then stop the questioning and go to the next section. If they say they don't know or can't do it, then stop the questioning and go to the next section.

7. For the UNDERSTANDING section, ask the questions in your First Nation language. The idea is for the person to show that they can understand you speaking your language. You may provide clarification. The clarification should be provided in your First Nation language first, and if that doesn't help then use English to help explain what to do. It's OK for the person to answer in English.
8. For the SPEAKING, READING and WRITING sections the instructions or questions should be asked in the First Nation language first, however if you need to, you can ask the question in English. You may provide clarification if it helps the person to show how well they understand the question. The clarification should be provided in the First Nation language first, and if that doesn't work then use English to give them the clarification. The answer to the SPEAKING, READING and WRITING sections must be in the First Nation language. However the person may use the English language to explain the content of what they read for the READING section, but the reading itself must be a demonstration of how well they can actually read the First Nation language.
9. If you are not sure what the measure (0-4) should be for the person's abilities, ask more questions to help get a better understanding.
10. Thank the person for their time and help. Put the completed assessment into the envelope that contains the rest of the completed assessments.

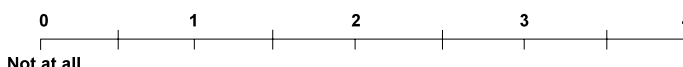
House ID #: _____

Respondent ID #: _____

UNDERSTANDING

LEVEL 1:

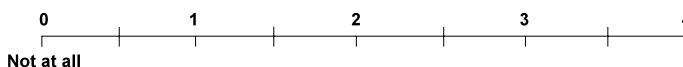
Show the pictures. In your First Nation language, ask them to point to the object when you ask them to. Ask a question like, "Where is the _____?" Do this for all 9 objects and mix up the order.



LEVEL 2:

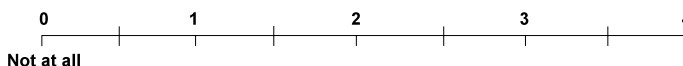
In your language, give them clear and simple directions to explain. Say the commands/ instructions and then ask them to explain back to you what it was that you asked them to do. For example you can ask them to explain the following instructions:

- Take out the garbage
- Bring me some water
- Make me some tea



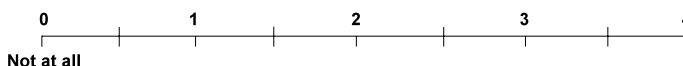
LEVEL 3:

In your language, tell the ***Fish Camp*** story picture by picture. After each picture get them to explain what you said, then go on to the next picture.



LEVEL 4:

Tell a short story of your choice. Every so often stop and ask them to explain what you said.



Section 1

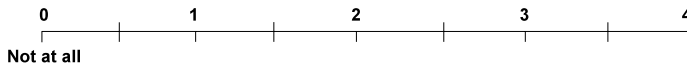
SPEAKING

You are having a conversation with them. Ask them further questions if you need to.

LEVEL 1:

What is your name?

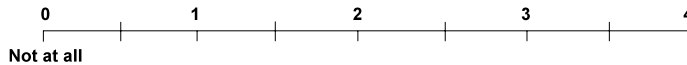
How are you?



LEVEL 2:

Who are your grandparents?

Where are they from?

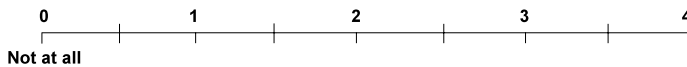


LEVEL 3:

A long time ago our people walked on Indian Trails, what was life like then?

(Older Person) - What kinds of changes have you seen over your life?

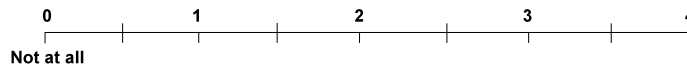
(Younger Person) – What stories have you heard about Indian Trails?



LEVEL 4:

How can we help our young people learn to speak our language?

Why is life so hard for our young people?

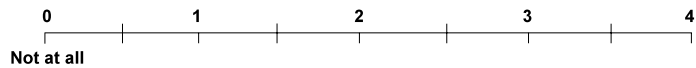


Section 2

READING

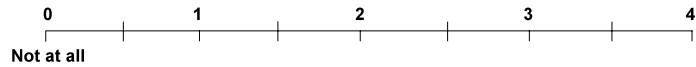
LEVEL 1:

Show the list of words written in the First Nation language. Ask them to read you the list of words.



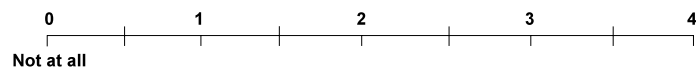
LEVEL 2:

Ask them to read the *Moose Hunt* story to you.



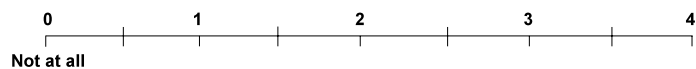
LEVEL 3:

Ask them to tell you about the story they just read. They should tell it to you in their own words.



LEVEL 4:

Ask them to read this prayer and pick out the “Indian Lawyer” words and sentences. Ask them to tell you what those words or sentences mean at a deeper level.

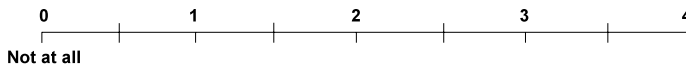


WRITING

LEVEL 1:

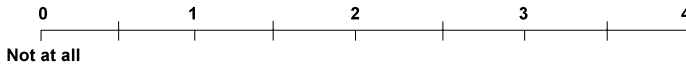
Ask the person to write each word in their First Nation language on the line provided.

- Blueberries
- Dog
- Dry Salmon
- Rock
- Cup



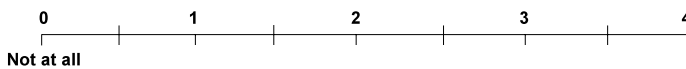
LEVEL 2:

Ask the person to write both of these sentences in their First Nation language.



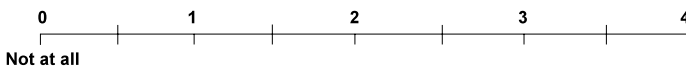
LEVEL 3:

Ask the person to write a short story in their language to go with this picture. Underneath each sentence ask them to write the English translation. Two to three lines would be good (general translation).



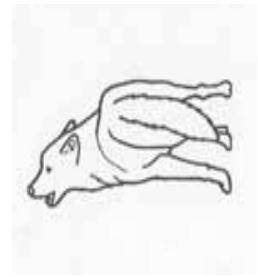
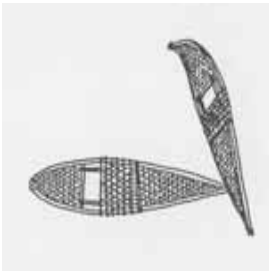
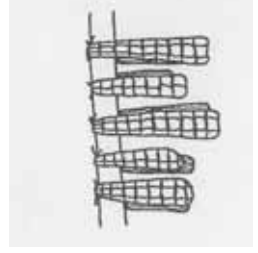
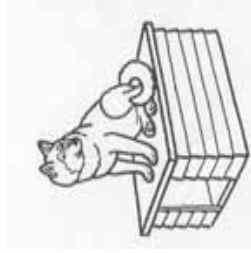
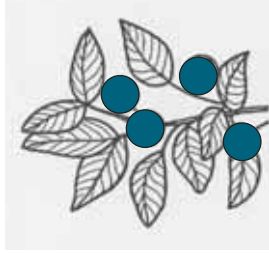
LEVEL 4:

Ask the person to write a short story in their First Nation language, about any topic that is interesting to them. It could be about fish camp, hunting, berry picking, our culture, our history ... whatever they want. Underneath each line ask the person to write the literal translation (word for word) in English. Five lines or more is good.



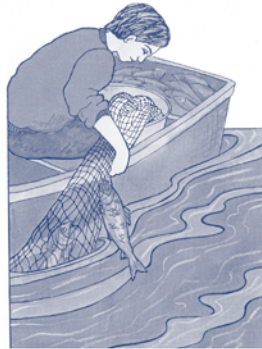
Section 4

Level 1: Understanding - Where is the _____ ?



Level 3: Understanding

I'm going to tell you a story about a **Fish Camp**, picture by picture. After each picture I will ask you to explain what I said then I'll go on to the next picture.



Level 1: Reading

Please read the following list of words to me

Tlingit

dzísk'w

kaxwêxh

t'á

jâji

shàwát

Level 2: Reading (Tlingit - Teslin dialect)

Please read the following story to me.



Level 4: Reading (Tlingit)

Please read the following prayer and explain what the more difficult words or sentences mean at a deeper level.

Hà Ísh

Dikîx' yê iyatì.

I sàyí gaxhàasàyí.

I Khustiyí hàt ghagùt.

I sahèyí yá tl'átgi kâ yan ghanì

Ch'a dikì yáxh.

Yá yagì atxhàyi hà jìt tí

Yá yagì.

Ch'a àdé dê yê na.ù hà ł.ushk'èyí

Uhân àdé ch'a àdé yê tù.uxhx'wêyáxh.

Hà xhùnikhâ ł.ushk'èyí.

Łf khukadlénxhàxh hà shìgùdíkh,

Ł.uskh'é jìdáxh khu.a hà ghasnèxh.

Yê_nghatì.

House ID #: _____

Respondent ID #: _____

Level 1: Writing

Write each word in your First Nation language on the line provided.

Blueberries _____

Dog _____

Dry Salmon _____

Rock _____

Cup _____

Level 2: Writing

Write both of these sentences in your First Nation Language.

The man sees the moose.

The moose runs away from the man.

Level 3: Writing

Using your First Nation Language write a short story to go with the picture below. Two or three sentences would be good. Underneath each sentence write its English translation (general translation).






Level 4: Writing

Using your First Nation Language write a short story about any topic that is interesting to you. It could be about fish camp, hunting, berry picking, our culture, our history. Underneath each word write its English translation, word for word (literal translation).







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