

## I. Introduction

The Woodland Cultural Centre and Memorial University in a collaboration have been fortunate to secure a multi-year grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (a SSHRC Community-University Research Alliance) from Ottawa four years ago to help stabilize and raise the profile of the Cayuga Language primarily among the adult community at Six Nations. We have also supported research, incubated and tested other research, in various education environments: in Schools- K-12, Language Nests, Master Apprenticeships, Adult Immersion, weekly Community Outreach Sessions and the emerging e-learning platforms for grades 9-12 and for general interest.

This research and testing compliments the ongoing mode of education launched at Six Nations in 1985/1986 for Immersion/Bilingual education in both Mohawk and Cayuga.

Several community partners emerged during these 4 years: Six Nations Polytech, York University/Glendon College and the establishment of Six Nations Language Commission and the Sweetgrass First Nations Language Council Inc.

Our work/research to date includes but is not limited to:

- Research and testing best practices when working with Adult Learners (pedagogy, best effective age)
- Testing E learning platforms for the transmission of language instruction
- Research /New Thinking in offering up to Five credits in Cayuga as part of the Ministry of Education's Ontario Secondary School Diploma.
- Supporting the design, implementation and testing Language Nests, Adult Immersion
- Adopting and promoting a community language proficiency/language mastering model 'Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)', a modification of the version by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).
- Researching digital formats for archiving and teaching for a digital dictionary.
- Digitizing and archiving of the audio collections of the Woodland Cultural Centre of the Six Nations which houses the largest modern day collection in the world.
- A dedicated Cayuga Website <http://cayugalanguage.ca>
- Translating and transcribing and digitizing Sacred and Sensitive texts including:
  - The Moral Code of Handsome Lake (a 800 page original text)
  - The formal Funeral Speeches and Protocols of Longhouse Funeral Rites
  - Texts associated with the Annual Longhouse Ceremonies from Mid Winters to Annual Community Memorial Feasts
- Development of a new basic Cayuga Instruction text book and tape.
- Digitizing and reprinting of several popular Cayuga text books and creating accompanying sound files, bytes and examples
- Q̄gweh Go:ga:ʔ Collection, Wadewayęstanih, the Cayuga Thematic Dictionary

- Adding to the body of knowledge contained in the first Cayuga Dictionary published in 1999.

Today we are now at a point in our research and 'confidence' to enter into a conversation with the Six Nations Ethics Board the philosophy, dynamics, regulations and restrictions for access to some of this original research so the research is not tampered with, not appropriated, not misused or misinterpreted, not plagiarized, to consider the need for encryption of digital archiving a system to embargo sacred and sensitive hard copies of research (printed materials).

The confidence coming from this CURA research collaboration is pushing and leading us to promote a much needed 'paradigm shift' that challenges 'academia', all levels of Government and how we now 'self identify' as Six Nations people.

We need to 'debunk' the popular notions, popular research and popular labels that we as Onkwehonweh/Six Nations people were and have excepted that: we simply were 'discovered' as meandering nomads; we were barbaric and uncivilized, devoid of any ideology intellect and intelligences, virtues and institutions; and that we only existed in a mere First Nation culture...

At the time of 'contact' we had all hallmarks, intelligences/sciences, virtues, institutions and complex ideologies of any civilization of the world!

In fact at the time of 'contact' we had a spiritual, moral, emotional, social, ecological, political, civil, spatial, psychological intelligence second to none. For instance we had a Federal/Socialist form of government a Confederacy when the rest of the world were being led by kings, queens and the odd political despot.

As part of our first conversation today... we want to share some of the intelligences we need to covet, protect, control and restrict accessibility to and perhaps to begin the conversation use the terminology of 'sacred and sensitive materials'.

On the next page is an example of the research areas we need to protect:

**A. *Midwinter – The Four Ceremonies (Spiritual intelligence)***

Ohsdowa<sup>?</sup>go:wah – The Great Feather Dance

Adq:wa<sup>?</sup> – Men’s Personal Thanksgiving

Ganehq:<sup>?</sup> – The Drum dance

Gayedowa:nəh – The Dish Game

**B. *Gaihwī:yo: or the Code of Handsome Lake (Moral, ethical, and emotional intelligence)***

**C. *The Doings or cycle of ceremonies at the longhouse (social and ecological intelligence)***

1. Mid-Winter Ceremonies / The Four Ceremonies

Great Feather Dance

Adq:wa<sup>?</sup>

Drum Dance

Dish Game

2. Variety of Dances

3. False Face Hado<sup>?</sup>i<sup>?</sup> / Gajihsa<sup>?</sup>

4. Putting Sap in the Trees

5. Drying The Trees

6. Thunder Ceremony

7. False Face

8. Ohgi:we:

9. Sun and Moon Ceremony

10. Seed Ceremony

11. Finish Planting

12. Strawberry Dance

13. Bean Dance

14. Small Food Gathering

15. Big Food Gathering

Great Feather Dance

Adq:wa<sup>?</sup>

Drum Dance

Dish Game

16. Sustenance Dances

17. False Face – Husk Face

18. We will Gather Bread (some call it Harvest)

**D. *Gayanehsra<sup>?</sup>go:wah (The Great Law/ League of the Iroquois) (political intelligence)***

**E. *Secret societies, private and home ceremonies (psychological intelligence)***

## II. Sacred and secular knowledge

### A. *Sacred and sensitive*

- Only done or passed on if needed.
- Someone is selected to keep the knowledge.
- Very few people know it in detail; such people are recognized for their knowledge.
- Examples: Dress-Up, Shake Pumpkin, Dark Dances, ceremonies whose names are never mentioned, traditional medicines passed on through medicine societies.
- Carefully safeguarded to make sure they're done the right way.
- Potential consequences if misused; for example, someone could get hurt or sick.
- Have to be done in context; have to be lived.
- It's not appropriate to 'collect copies'. You have to be committed, and spend time learning and doing it.
- For Q̄gweh̄:weh people only.
- Proper conduct is part of the responsibility of holding this type of knowledge.
- Traditionally learned through apprenticeship. However, some people learn on their own from recordings, show a commitment through performing the knowledge, and then can learn even more from the Knowledge Practitioners.

### B. *Secular*

- Examples: educational materials, general conversational knowledge, general conversation, common customs (like saying 'nya:w̄eh' after you're finished eating), common social conventions, greetings, leave-takings, 'NuYa!', language about daily living, the kind of material that's in Wadewaȳstanih / A Cayuga Teaching Grammar.

### III. Where is this knowledge stored?

- Knowledge is passed down from person to person.
- The Indigenous Knowledge Centre (Six Nations Polytechnic) has a large collection of sacred and sensitive materials, and of secular materials, which include the JNB Hewitt materials.
- The Haudenosaunee Resource Centre has many collections, including Gayanęhsra'go:wah / the Great Law.
- The Woodland Cultural Centre has sacred and sensitive holdings and also secular holdings, including some Healing/Medicine Society materials, Gaihwı:yo: (the Moral Code of Handsome Lake), Gei Nıyoihwage: (the Four Great Ceremonies), and the Funeral Speeches.
- The Kawenniyo / Gawę:ni:yo: Language Preservation Project has created educational materials over the years, as have several schools.
- Many families or individuals at Six Nations have recordings or printed materials. For example, Yvonne Thomas has all of Jake Thomas' materials.
- Some researchers over the years have gathered materials.

### IV. Principles for access

- ȠgwehȠweh language materials and knowledge should be organized and safeguarded according to how sacred and sensitive they are.
- A select group of Knowledge Practitioners should have the final say about how to categorize language and knowledge materials, and about how such materials should be treated.
- Sacred and sensitive materials should never be posted on the internet.

### V. Protocol for access

- Example: the American Philosophical Society has on-line recordings, and if you request access to the recordings, the APS vets you before giving you password access and permission to download the files.
- Six Nations groups could adopt a similar protocol for sacred and sensitive materials. (See below.)
- Secular materials could be available to the general public. These materials could be protected under copyright by the host/producing organization, perhaps with an added Creative Commons license (which specifies how the copyright owner wants the materials to be used).

### ***A. Guardians for sacred and sensitive material***

- At the Indigenous Knowledge Centre (Six Nations Polytechnic), the IKC Guardians could be involved with providing oversight of their holdings.
- The Haudenosaunee Resource Centre could manage and provide oversight for their holdings as they see fit.
- The Woodland Cultural Centre is thinking of using the leadership provided by the Head Faith Keepers of all or a number of Longhouses (any who want to be involved), asking them to be involved in sanctioning researchers, etc., who may want to view or obtain copies of any sacred and sensitive materials that the Woodland Cultural Centre holds.
- The Head Faith Keepers in each Longhouse are known as *Deyokninohsga'weh* (We have divided the Longhouse by clans) or *Dehodinohsga:weh* (they have divided the Longhouse by clans). They set up the moieties or sides (sets of clans). They are responsible to work with their two moieties which are further divided by gender: males and females. Currently, at the Seneca Longhouse for instance these 'Head' folks are: Alfred Keye, Ron Thomas, Winnie Thomas and Ruby Williams. Tom Deer holds this designation at Onondaga Longhouse; Jim Styres and Ima Johnson holds these designations at Lower Cayuga.

## **VI. Future directions**

- The Woodland Cultural Centre might reach out and engage the Head Faith Keepers at the for Longhouses and ask if they would want to take on this role, to sanction/ok requests to release copies and for access for/to the WCC collections/holdings. More discussion is needed to develop this plan, protocols etc.
- We need to record Amos Key, talking about the agreement that he made with Reg Henry, Hubert Buck Sr., Jake Thomas, etc., when Amos recorded them, and what protocol they recommended and used.
- The Woodland Cultural Centre will engage in exploratory discussions with the Six Nations Ethics Review Board.