Indigenous Languages Persistence During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Individual and community efforts keep our languages strong

1. Shifts in ILR Work
   Practitioners saw the way forward was to shift and adapt language work to ensure community health and safety:
   - Significant drop in school-based activities (50% to 15%)
   - Drop in community-based activities (51% to 27%)
   - Home-based activities remained stable (22% to 29%)
   - Largest increase in online learning activities, nearly double (from 5% to 7%)

2. New Technologies, New Strategies
   Communities reported using new technologies (55%) and developing new strategies (56%) for online learning & teaching during the pandemic. Examples included:
   - Hosting virtual circle times for children
   - Sending packages and books to families
   - Involving youth in creating online language resources
   - Live-stream adult language classes across vast geographic distances

3. Caring for Elders & Youth
   - Protecting Elders who were most at risk to the virus, became paramount
   - Supporting Elders in new online work ensured ILR continued in a safe way
   - Youth also needed support through the ever-changing circumstances of their lives
   - Write to loving public health guidelines, people gathered - at times - in safe bubbles or pools

4. Returning to the Land
   - The pandemic brought unexpected opportunities for some to (re)turn to land-based language work outside
   - Some gathered while socially-distancing outdoors
   - Turning to the land and our languages for those in urban areas, brought grounding and joy during a time of missing loved ones and homelands.
   - Land-based learning provided comfort in a time of great fear

5. Promotion of Indigenous Languages Online & Within Communities
   Social media was used for sharing language, such as:
   - Word of the Day
   - Words and phrases to describe COVID-19 and related terms like “social distancing” & “mask”
   - Virtual language hours and talent shows
   - Health campaigns
   - 2020 Indigenous Language Challenge
   - Game nights, Virtual Bingo, Wheel of Fortune, Yahtzee

6. Creating & Sharing Language Resources as an Alternative Activity
   - 59% of participants reported shifting to both creating and distributing resources online
   - Communities “picked up” existing resources that may have been forgotten or were undervalued,
   - And digitized them for language learners’ use
   - Shared stories, hymns, lessons, video files, word lists/images, labelled images

7. Some Challenges Faced
   - Lack of reliable internet
   - Difficulty learning & teaching in virtual spaces
   - Difficulty gauging the impact of online content shared
   - Disregarding to use technology & software, white paper
   - Online does not totally substitute for face-to-face learning, same language work cannot be replicated in a virtual environment
   - Sense of loss, some of the beauty of language learning is with Elders in-person language work

8. Reflecting: (Re-)envisioning Language Education & Pedagogy
   - What implications might affect language revival work for years to come?
   - What did we learn that is worth holding on to?
   - What do we plan to keep and how do we plan to grow? (Many communities expressed the value in taking time to plan and further focus on resources)
   - What strategies can be adjusted for an online format/change-on and work with Elders’ learning on the land, work involving relationship building?

9. Looking Forward
   - By continuing the work during a global pandemic, our languages offered comfort and encouragement.
   - Our languages held the grave and the joy we carry with us, we parted at that is lost and gained during this time.
   - Live streams, on old form that remains relevant to the language will survive us all.

10. Indigenous Language Work Persisted During the C-19 Pandemic
    "Ayejikeli (Ojibwe language), “Keep going”
    "Many (Ojibwe) keep talking (nêyâ-se wêyomim)"
    "All of you: perservere. (Kanawake) “We are resilient.”
    "Nih melody (Haudenosaunee): “Keep doing when you are doing”

How language revitalization practitioners, learners, teachers and Elders shifted strategies during the C-19 pandemic

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