



Department of Modern Languages Speaker Series

presents



Dr. Inge Genee

The Blackfoot digital dictionary project

Wednesday, November 25th

3:00-4:00 in E 690

The best Blackfoot dictionary is a fluent speaker of *Niitsi'powahsini*. But sometimes it is useful to have other resources when teaching or learning a language, including dictionaries. In the last few decades there has been a push to create digital dictionaries for endangered languages, which are easier to use than print.

For Blackfoot there are some on-line resources with partial collections of words and phrases. Many contain extra features such as advanced search options, pictures, audio, video, cultural background information, grammar, stories, games and lessons, but none include a full searchable dictionary.

At the University of Lethbridge we are working on a digital dictionary of Blackfoot for speakers, learners and teachers. I will present what we are doing and in particular ask what features could enhance the usability of this resource in the Blackfoot language classroom. I also show how the digital environment gives us better options for handling difficult-to-represent lexical elements in Algonquian languages such as the Blackfoot causative morpheme *átt(s)i* 'make', which occurs in such words as: *nitá'po'takiáttsaawa* 'I made her work'; *nítsoyáttsaawa* 'I made her eat / I fed her'; *isistsikáaattsiyiwa* 'she tired him' (lit. 'she caused him to be tired'); *nitsíkkstsimiáttsoohsi* 'I dieted' (lit. 'I caused myself to be slim') (Genee 2013; in prep.).

