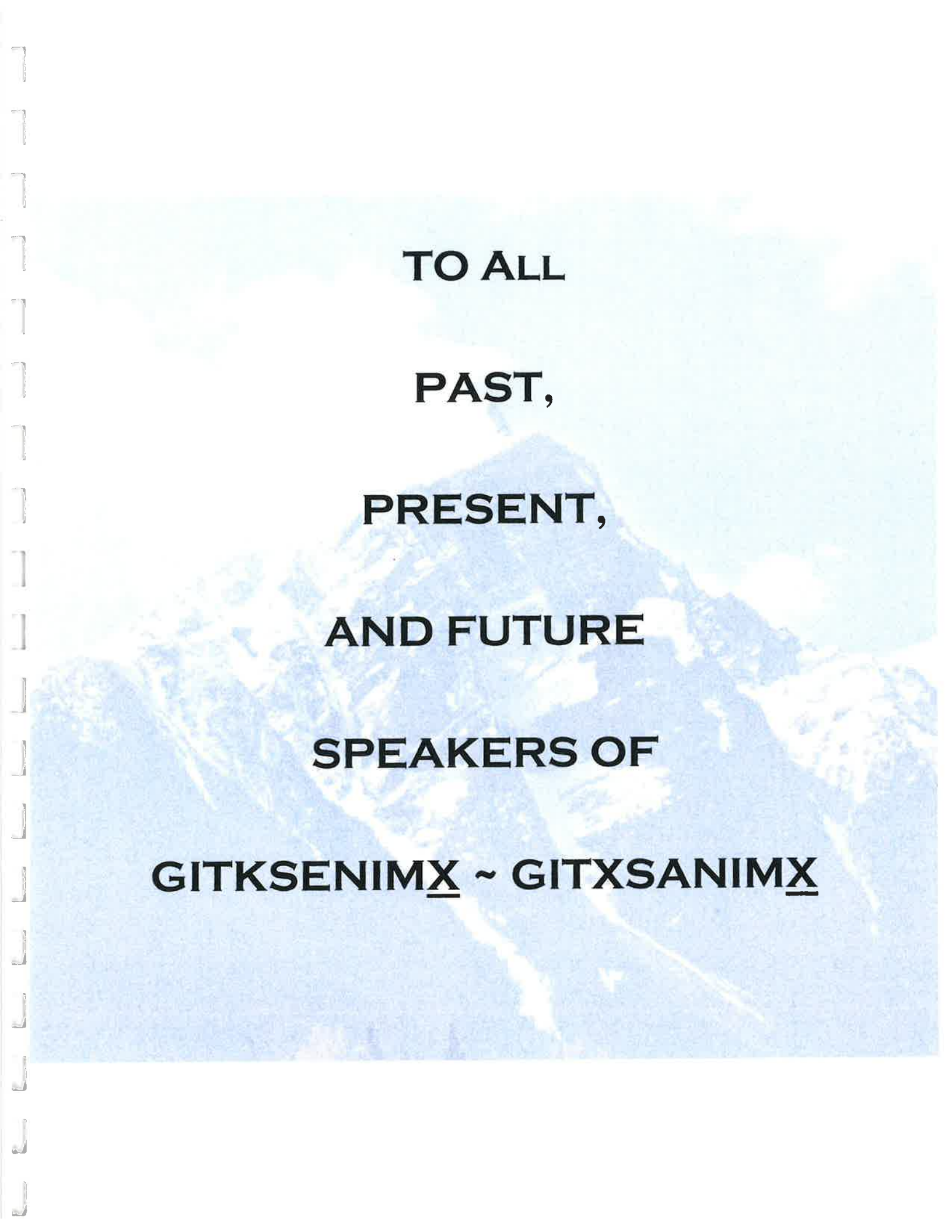


HA'NIIMAGOOANSXWHUM  
ALGAXHL  
GITKSEN ~ GITKSAN

GITXSENIMX - GITXSANIMAX  
TO ENGLISH DICTIONARY  
LEARNER'S EDITION, VOLUME 1

by the  
Aboriginal Education Branch  
British Columbia Ministry of Education  
Gitksan Wet'suwet'en Education Society  
School District # 88  
Sim'algax Working Group





**TO ALL  
PAST,  
PRESENT,  
AND FUTURE  
SPEAKERS OF  
GITKSENIMX ~ GITXSANIMX**



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## PREFACE

The Gitksen/Gitxsan Nation has, at different times during the last twenty years, attempted to encode Gitksenimx / Gitxsanimx using the Roman alphabet. Different linguists have worked with the people to establish a practical orthography for the Gitksen/Gitxsan language. The standardization of spelling for both dialects, Gyeets and Gigeenix is an ongoing process. This work uses the spelling and writing system developed by Dr. Bruce Rigsby and Lonnie Hindle that also continues to be examined and refined as more people become literate in their language.

This document represents a phase of that process stimulated by the November 1992 four-week course in Gitksen/Gitxsan Linguistics conducted by Dr. Bruce Rigsby, and further guided by the June 1994 two-week Lexicography course conducted by Dr. Len Newell. Both of these courses were organized by the Gitksen/Gitxsan people who determined the urgency for comprehensively documenting their language.

In January, 1995, the work on expanding, and compiling existing word lists according to theme groupings began in Gitwangax for the Gyeets dialect, and, in Gitanmaax for the Gigeenix dialect. Joint committees of elders, educators and other interested people began to review the word lists in February 1995. This broadly representative group of speakers worked to refine the data for preparation of this early document.

Advanced stage work was also begun in the establishment of a corpus, a significant volume of text transcribed from archival recordings of natural conversation. This will provide the basis for further research and for the addition of illustrative sentences for the current and subsequent entries. The preparation of a student grammar is the product being planned as the immediate successor to this document and its expansions. The Sim'algax Working Group hopes that readers will respond constructively so that any errors and oversights can be corrected. As this is only a partial listing of categories, and entries within those categories, readers are also urged to start documenting their knowledge in writing or on tape. It is information needed for the ongoing work, and so will be thankfully received and respectfully used.

The main goal of this Learner's Gitksenimx - Gitxsanimx Dictionary has been the promotion of Gitksenimx / Gitxsanimx rather than fluency in polished English. We have, therefore, chosen to provide the nearest English equivalent and retain the valid and distinctive characteristics of Gitksen/Gitxsan English, especially in the additional cultural information.

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Learner's Gitksenimx - Gitxsanimx Dictionary is:

- To assist Gitksen/Gitxsan students in understanding and learning to speak, read and write Gitksenimx / Gitxsanimx as their second language while acknowledging their particular dialect.
- To assist other students in the area to understand and learn to speak, read and write, Gitksenimx / Gitxsanimx.
- To provide a thematic arrangement of entries that can assist Gitksen/Gitxsan language and Cultural Teachers to develop curriculum units with many reinforcing components. The sections on Feasts were developed from information provided by particular families as well as from generally held information.
- To use Gitksenimx and Gitxsanimx as tools for transmitting Gitksen and Gitxsan knowledge and cultural values to the younger generations.
- To increase the number and ability of speakers of Gitksenimx and Gitxsanimx in all of the Gitksen and Gitxsan communities.
- To preserve as much of the endangered Gitksen/Gitxsan language as possible by documenting the linguistic, lexical, and, cultural features of Gitksenimx / Gitxsanimx.
- To present to all readers, a starting point and stimulus for support of ongoing research and compilation which will result in a comprehensive permanent record of Sim'algax as spoken by the Gitksen and Gitxsan.

Gitksenimx / Gitxsanimx, or Gaanimx, is the official Language of the Gitksen/Gitxsan Nation. The linguistic basis for Gitksenimx I Gitxsanimx is Sim'algax, the mother language of the Gitksen/Gitxsan as well as the Tsimshian and Nisga'a.

There are two main dialects for the Language: the downriver (western) dialect, GYEETS, and the upriver (eastern) dialect, GIGEENIX.

Gyeets is spoken in the communities of Miinhlsqa'nist (Cedarvale), Gitwangax (Kitwanga), Gijigyukwhla (Kitsegukla), and, Gitanyaaw (Kitwancool).

Gigeenix is spoken in the communities of Gisbahyakws or Ansbahyaxw (Kispiox), Gitanmaax or Git-an'maaxs (Hazelton) and Sigit'ox (Glen Vowell).

It was also used in the two northern communities of Galdoo'o and Gisgaga'as whose residents relocated to various other Gitxsan villages.

## HOME OF THE GITKSEN – GITXSAN

The territorial home claimed by the Gitksen/Gitxsan nation is a vast area in the beautiful upper Skeena Valley in Northwestern central British Columbia. The people consider themselves to have originated from T'emlaxamit and other ancient communities.

When the Europeans arrived, the Gitksen/Gitxsan, in addition to occupying their specific family territories to obtain resources, had the following cooperative, seasonal settlements: Galdoo'o, Gisgaga'as, Gisbahyakws, Gitan'maax, Gijigyukwhla, Gitwangax, and Gitanyaaw.

Historical events of non-native commerce and settlement, and political decisions of the Canadian government and Christian missionaries, joined to create the six, geographically limited, "reserve" communities of today. These are: Gitwangax, Gijigyukwhla, Gitanyaaw, Gitan'maaxs, Ansbahyaxw and Sigit'ox.

The First Nations who are territorial neighbours to the Gitxsan include: the Nisga'a, the Tsimshian, the Haisla, the Tahltan, the Carrier- Sekani and the Wet'suwet'en. They are noted in the shaded portions of the facing map which also delineates linguistic borders.



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