n'łəqʷcin (clear speech): 1,000 hours to mid-intermediate N'syilxcn proficiency
(Indigenous language, Syilx, Okanagan-Colville, n'qilxʷcn, Interior Salish)

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Interdisciplinary Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Okanagan)

November 2013

Abstract

way', iskʷíst (my name is) Sʔímlaʔxʷ. According to Syilx ways, personal introductions come before any other words. I am Syilx, and related to the Simlas and Richters from Vernon and Ashnola BC. I am an N'syilxcn (n'qilxʷcn, Okanagan-Colville, Interior Salish) language learner and teacher. I live in Penticton BC, Canada. Five years ago I arrived in Syilx community to find a critically endangered language and accepted a personal role and responsibility to learn N'syilxcn and teach it to others, as my PhD research. I found allies in beginner intensives: our names are Prasát, C'əɬtups, Xʷnámxʷnam and Staʔqʷálqs. We committed as a cohort to live in an immersion house in Chopaka BC for five months. We were supported by our Elder, Sʕamtíc'aʔ (Sarah Peterson), and a language activist from Paul Creek Language Association, Chris Parkin. During one long winter, in 420 intensive hours of study, we transformed from k'lp'xʷínaʔ (beginning to hear, approximately beginner) to n'ɬəqʷcin (clear voiced, approximately low-intermediate).

I created three films in N'syilxcn, and placed them on YouTube to give primacy to our personal narratives, document our transformation, assess our learning and methods, and share our experience and motivation with language learners. My cohort followed second-language acquisition techniques and curriculum which I believe are replicable in other Indigenous languages. In the following pages I introduce N'syilxcn, my cohort, our language house, Paul Creek curriculum, our three films, our language assessment, and dreams and strategies to become n'tɬɬcin speakers (straightened speech, advanced). I share pedagogical concepts and methods that support adult Indigenous language acquisition, such as N'syilxcn phases of learning, teaching strategies, language assessment, domains of use, immersion, and the

transformative power of hard work. I humbly share our experience and my recommendations for Indigenous language learners. One-thousand hours of intensive instruction, following second-language acquisition techniques and honouring our Indigenous contexts, will bring adults to mid-intermediate speech levels. As intermediate speakers, our role and responsibility will become clear: to create immersion workspheres, write advanced materials, teach, and raise children in the language.

cʔxit iʔ sqwəlqwilts

way', iskʷíst Sʔímlaʔxʷ. iʔ l sqəlxʷcawtət cxʔit iksʔúm iskʷíst uł ikscma̓ʔm̓áy. inqʷúpsaʔ iʔ skʷísts twiʔ Lucy Akát Sʔímlaʔxʷ tl nk̓maplqs. k̓l snpintktn kiʔ kn mut. k̓l Rossland BC isnk̓ʷúˀłltn. sqilxʷ uł suyápix isaʕˀx̌ʷíp. k̓ik̓əm mi kʷu łwinm iʔ ṅqilxʷcntət. naxmł, taʔlí kn cksxitmíst mi kn scmypnwíłn ṅqilxʷcn. axáʔ q̓əy̓ntín iscma̓ʔm̓áy. təs cəlkłspintk, lut t̓a cmystín iʔ naqs iʔ sʔums iʔ l ṅqilxʷcn, nixʷ lut t̓a cmystín isnəqsílxʷ. púti qʷəṅqʷan̓t iscqʷəlqʷílt, nax̌əmł kn scx̌əstwilx. kʷu kcílcəlkst kʷu capsíẃs, kʷu ʔimx uł kʷu kʷliwt cilkst iʔ x̌yáłñx̌ʷ, t̓i kmax ṅqilxʷcn iʔ l citxʷtət. iʔ sqəlxʷskʷskʷístət Prasát, Sʔímlaʔxʷ, C'ə̓r̓tups, X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam, Staʔqʷálqs, iʔ ƛ̓x̌aptət, Sʕamtíc̓aʔ, naʔł iʔ səxʷma̓ʔm̓áyaʔm ʕAṅn. Sʕamtíc'aʔ, ʕAṅn, naʔł Q'ʷq̓ʷc̓wíyaʔ scq̓əy̓ntísəlx iʔ scʕaʕác̓səlx iʔ l kłyankxó. ʔumsəlx kłyankxó iʔ scʕaʕác̓s. kʷu scma̓ʔm̓áy̓aʔx kłyankxo iʔ scʕaʕác̓s. kʷu cqʷaʔqʷʔál, kʷu scmypnwíłn ṅqilxʷcn, kʷu x̌əstwilx iʔ scqʷaʔqʷʔáltət, uł ink̓łpaʔx ti x̌əx̌aʕl.

ka̓ʔłís tə syay̓áx̌aʔ isck̓ʷúˀł. wtntím iʔ syay̓áx̌aʔtət l *YouTube* uł iʔ scx̌mínktət iʔ ksʕaysnwím iʔ scma̓ʔm̓áy̓aʔxtət naʔł p yaʕyáʕt. taʔlí x̌əc̓xac̓t iʔ sck̓ʷúłtət. ksxan iʔ tl sʔilíʔtət iʔ l Smx̌ikn iʔ snʔilíʔtns, kʷu ctixʷlm. ixíʔ uł kʷu capsíẃs. kʷu łə yʕap ilíʔ, kʷu k̓lp̓x̌ʷínaʔ uł kʷu qʷlqʷltiʔst. ksxan iʔ tl sʔilíʔtət, kʷu ṅłəqʷcin, ałíʔ qʷamqʷəmt kłyankxó iʔ sck̓ʷúłsəlx. pnicíʔ, kʷu łplak iʔ k̓l sqəlqlxʷúlaʔxʷtət. ixíʔ uł kʷu səcy̓íc̓yaʔx tə ʔax̌ʷyn iʔ tl ṅqilxʷcn, cʔxił tə tupl iʔ sʕax̌ʷíps.

axáʔ iscq̓əy̓ám iʔ sck̓ʷułtət, kłyankxó iʔ scǩʷulsəlx, isqʔís uł iscǩłpáʔ caʔkʷ iʔ ksłcxʷəlxʷált iʔ ṅqəlqilxʷcntət. axáʔ iʔ x̌aʔtmstín: cakʷ kʷu ck̓ʷułəm tə Smx̌ikn iʔ snʔilíʔtntət, uł kʷu k̓aws ilíʔ, mi kʷu sk̓ʷaʔk̓ʷúlm ʔasíl spintk, (kəm̓ ʔupnkst xəcəcikst sx̌əlakək), ixíʔ uł kʷu kstixʷlm. mi kʷu ṅłəqʷcin. ixí uł mi kʷu qəłnunm kʷu cṅqilxʷcnəm ti kmax ṅqilxʷcn. kʷu łə ṅłəqʷcin, mi kaʔkícm iʔ cəwcawtet: mi kʷu ṅqilxʷcnm ti kmax ṅqilxʷcn iʔ l snʔm̓aʔm̓ayaʔtntət, iʔ l snʔk̓ʷəlk̓ʷułtntət, uł iʔ l cətcitxʷtət, mi ksṅtłłcinaʔx iʔ scəcm̓álaʔtət.

Preface

Three of these thesis chapters contain portions of articles either published or accepted for publication. Articles are provided with abstracts, introductions, conclusions and bibliographies removed in accordance with UBC-O thesis guidelines, and some sections have been blended with others to avoid redundancy. An article published by the Canadian Journal of Native Education (CJNE) informed sections in Chapters two and seven; the body of Chapter four will be published by Stabilizing Indigenous languages Symposium (SILS) in their annual proceedings; and the body of Chapter five has been accepted by the Hawaiian online Journal, Language Documentation and Conservation (LD&C).

Ethics approval for this research was granted by signed approval of the president of The Paul Creek Language Association, by the director of the Okanagan Nation Alliance, by all participants, and by the University of British Columbia-Okanagan Behavioural Research Ethics Board (H11-00054).

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kʷu kʷukstp
isnəqsílxʷ, iʔ tmxʷúlaʔxʷ, iʔ tmixʷ, naʔɬ iʔ siwɬkʷ

mi kn cḱʕam. ḱʷuɬ́ńcútn,
kʷu nqʷəńmínx caʔkʷ kn cqʷlqʷilt iʔ t̓a ńqilxʷcn

dedicated to
my family, the land, animals, and the water

in prayers to creator,
I will speak my language

Glossary of N'syilxcn terms[1]

capsíw's	sisters, kinship term
captík^{w}ł	Syilx stories from ancient times (also spelled chapteekwl)
cawt	way of being, role, responsibility, action, the thing one *does*, caˁ^{w}t
kəkn'iʔ	kokanee salmon, a well-known N'syilxcn borrowed word
Kiʔláwnaʔ	Grizzly Bear (male), powerful figure in captík^{w}ł
k'lp'x^{w}ínaʔ	holes cut in the ears; the first stage of N'syilxcn acquisition, when a person begins to comprehend language
K'^{w}ík̓^{w}x^{w}ənaʔ	Mouse, a small individual who helped Grizzly Bear in captík^{w}ł
limləmt	thank you
n'łəq^{w}cin	starting to be heard/make a noise, become more clear voiced, the third stage of N'syilxcn acquisition; from łiq^w, plain to see, also n'łəq^{w}cn
N'syilxcn	the language spoken by Syilx, Okanagan, and Sinixt people, also spelled N'səlxcin, Nsyilxcen; also called n'qilx^{w}cn
n'tłłcin	straightened speech, like Elders' speech, few or no errors
n'tłtłtcin	nearly straightened speech, contains few errors (advanced speech)
n'qilx^{w}cn	Indigenous language (the language of sqilx^w, the people)
n'qəlqilx^{w}cn	Indigenous languages, plural
ṅq̓iyíẇs k̓^{w}łpaˁx̌mín	two minded; a condition that results from speaking one way while believing another
Okanagan	Sʔuknaʔqín; Syilx; sqilx^w; refers to the language, territory and people
q^{w}lq^{w}ltiʔst	first speech, short utterances, similar to a child's speech; the second stage of N'syilxcn acquisition, when words are formed

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[1] N'syilxcn orthography, spelling and pronunciation guide is provided in Appendix 1.

Smx̌ikn	Grizzly Bear female, powerful symbol of mothering, language and culture transmission
Skmxist	Black Bear: pivotal figure in captikʷł; represents tradition
Snk̓lip	Coyote, a pivotal heroic and comedic figure in Syilx captíkʷł
sṁaʔṁáy	stories, narrative, historical tales
sqəlxʷcawt	sqilxʷ + cawt ,way of being; sqilxʷ pedagogical model (Cohen 2010), also spelled sqilxʷcút
sqilxʷ	person; indigenous person; animal being (tmixʷ) with the power to dream in a cyclical way
Suyápix	English speaking or British descent person
Syilx	stranded together like a rope; N'syilxcn speaking person; refers to Okanagan and Okanagan-Colville people and territory
tmixʷ	animal beings, including humans
xaʔxáʔ	the sacred aspect which links all beings, land, and spirit
X̌əx̌ʔmʕał	Fly, represents individual voice in Syilx captíkʷł
ƛ̓x̌əx̌ƛ̓x̌ap	Elders; respected knowledge keepers of language and sqəlxʷcawt

Chapter 1: cxʔit iʔ sqʷəlqʷilts (Introduction)

waẏ p isnəqsílxʷ, limlmt p cyʕáp. hahúy, iʔ l sqəlxʷcáwtət cxʔit iksʔúm iskʷíst uɫ ikscm̓aʔmáy. iskʷíst Sʔímlaʔxʷ. ƙl snpintktn kiʔ kn mut. ƙl Rossland BC isnƙʷuˀltn. sqilxʷ uɫ suyápix isʕax̌ʷíp. inλəx̌əx̌λ̓x̌áp iʔ skʷskʷístsəlx Gail (Harvey) Johnson naʔɫ twiʔ Michael Johnson. inqáqənaʔ iʔ skʷísts twiʔ Inez (Richter) Johnson. inqʷqʷúpsaʔ iʔ skʷskʷístsəlx twiʔ Lucy Akát Sʔímlaʔxʷ tl nƙmaplqs, naʔɫ twiʔ Francis Xavier Richter tˀl snBohemiaʔtn. Simla naʔɫ Richter isnəqsílxʷ uɫ isʕax̌ʷíp.

təs cilkst spintk, lut t̓a cmystín iʔ naqs iʔ sʔums tl ṅqilxʷcn, uɫ lut t̓a cmystín iʔ sqilxʷ isnəqsílxʷ. kn ckic aláʔ uɫ kʷin incáwt. kn səcmypnwíɫn ṅqilxʷcn, kn scm̓aʔm�̓áyaʔx, kn səxʷm̓amᵒaẏaʔm, nixʷ kn səcλaʔλ̓ʔám iʔ l ṅwist snmᵒamᵒáẏaʔtn. púti qʷəṅqᵒ̌ˀant iscqʷəlqʷílt, naxəmɫ inx̌mínk ṅtɫɫcin iksṅqílxʷcnm. axáʔ iscqᵒ̌əẏám, iscsmᵒaʔmᵒáy, isƙˀlpaʔáʔ uɫ isqʔís, xʷumt iʔ kscxʷəlxʷált aʔ ṅqəlqilxʷcntət.

incáʔ naʔɫ kmusməs incapsíwᵒs, kʷu ʔimx uɫ kʷu kʷliwt ƙl c̓upᵒáq̓ t̓i kmax ṅqilxʷcn iʔ citxʷtət, cilkst iʔ x̌yáɫnəxʷ təs ʔasəlspíntk. iʔ sqəlxʷskʷskʷístət Prasát, Sʔímlaʔxʷ, C'əⱦtups, X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam, Staʔqʷálqs, iʔ λ̌x̌aptət, Sʕamtíc̓aʔ, naʔɫ iʔ səxʷmᵒamᵒáyaʔm iʔ xaʔtústət ʕAṅn. kʷu ɫcyʕap, kʷu cqʷəlqᵒʷltiʔst. iʔ tl cxʔit iʔ sx̌əlx̌aʕlt, kʷu cxʷəlxʷaʕlt uɫ kʷu cɫəxʷncút ṅqilxʷcn. kʷu sʔilíʔ, kʷu cqʷaʔqᵒʷʔál, kʷu scmᵒamᵒáyaʔx kɫyankxó iʔ scʕaʕác̓s, kʷu scmypnwíɫn ṅqilxʷcn, kʷu x̌əstwilx iscqᵒʷaʔqᵒʷʔáltət. ksxan iʔ sʔilíʔtət l Smx̌ikn iʔ snʔilítns kʷu ctixʷlm. kʷu capsíwᵒs, kʷu cṅqilxʷcnm uɫ kʷu ṅɫəqᵒʷcin.

iʔ scƙʷuˀltət taʔlí xəċxaċt, lut t̓ tytyám. ʔumṅtn iʔ citxʷtət: Smx̌ikn iʔ snʔilítns. kn ƙʷəlƙʷuˀlm kaʔɫís tə syaẏáx̌aʔ. pnicíʔ, kʷu ɫplak iʔ ƙl sqəlqəlxʷúlaʔxʷtət. ixíʔ uɫ kʷu səcɣíc̓yaʔx tə ʔax̌ʷyn iʔ tl ṅqilxʷcn, c̓ʔxiɫ tə tupˀl iʔ sʕax̌ʷíps.

kn səcmypnwíɫn iʔ tə ƙʷiλts iʔ sqəlqilxʷ t scλaʔλ̓ʔáxsəlx uɫ kswitmístxəlx caʔkʷ əɫxʷlal aʔ ṅqəlqilxʷcnsəlx. xʷʔit iʔ nqəlqilxʷcn kiƙəm kʷu saxʷtəlx, iwá niʕíp kʷu scmᵒamᵒáẏaʔm.

axáʔ iʔ x̌aʔtmstín: cakʷ kʷu cƙʷuˀləm tə Smx̌ikn iʔ snʔilíʔtntət, uɫ kʷu sʔilíʔ, mi kʷu skʷaʔƙʷúlm ʔasíl spintk, (kəmᵒ ʔupnkst xəcəcikst iʔ sxəlakək iʔ l sx̌əx̌yaɫnx̌ʷ), mi kʷu tixʷlm. mi kʷu ṅɫəqᵒʷcin. ixíʔ uɫ cakʷ kʷu ɫə ṅɫəqᵒʷcin, mi kʷu xʷuystm ṅqilxʷcn iʔ ƙl citxʷtət, iʔ ƙl snəqʷsilxʷtət, ixíʔ uɫ ksṅtɫɫcinxəlx iʔ cəcmᵒálaʔtət.

According to sqəlxʷcawt (Syilx protocol), personal introductions come before all other narrations. My name is Sʔímlaʔxʷ.[2] I live in Penticton BC, Canada. I am sqilxʷ, also known as Syilx (Okanagan), and suyápix (Euro-Canadian) and I am studying to become proficient in n'qilxʷcn (also known as N'syilxcn, N'səlxcin, Okanagan, Colville-Okanagan, Salish, Interior Salish, and simply *the language*).[3] púti qʷənqʷant iscqʷəlqʷílt. I humbly acknowledge, at the outset, that my language skills are still pitiful. I am, at the time of this writing, n'łəqʷcin (a *clear* speaker), roughly intermediate by international benchmarks.

I am related to the Simla family in Vernon BC and the Richters in Ashnola BC. I grew up outside of Syilx community. Four years ago I met my Syilx family and my language. I returned to Syilx territory to find a severely threatened language and accepted a personal role and responsibility to learn N'syilxcn and teach it to others as my PhD research. I gratefully acknowledge Caylx (Richard Armstrong) of the En'owkin centre for introducing me to my first words in an introductory course at UBC-Okanagan. I gratefully acknowledge Sʕamtícʼaʔ (Sarah Peterson) of klyankxó (Paul Creek, near Keremeos, BC) for sharing thousands of words and sentences through the Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA) curriculum.

I found allies in beginner classes. I and a cohort of four women, with Sʕamtícʼaʔ and TPCLA's support, created an N'syilxcn immersion house, deep in Syilx territory. Our language transformation was deep and profound—we began to speak. We studied and lived N'syilxcn for five months, and documented our language transformation in three films. Our

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[2] The UBC student database will not yet accept N'syilxcn fonts; 7s were used instead of 'ʔ' glottal stops in my name on the thesis cover.
[3] Words are defined in the Glossary and throughout dissertation. Spelling explained in Appendix 1.

names are Prasát, C'ə́ṙtups, X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam, Staʔqʷálqs, our Elder, Sʕamtíc'aʔ, and our

teacher, Chris Parkin. Following sqəlxʷcawt, our Elder, Sʕamtíc'aʔ, speaks first:

> kn alá? l' sṗəṗX̌ṁsalq̇ʷ, incá iskʷíst Sʕamtíc̓aʔ. alá? cyʕáp iʔ smaṁím. x̌minksəlx ca?kʷ mipṅwíłn t̓ ksṅqilxʷcnṁsəlx. uł alá?əlx uł t̓i kmax ṅqilxʷcn iʔ ksqʷəlqʷiltsəlx. əcṁaẏtwíxʷ, uł ṁaṁáẏaʔməlx, uł waẏ ta?lí ṅłaqʷcínəlx.

> **Translation:**
> I am here at sp'əp'X̌'m'salq'ʷ (treeline, place name at South end of Chopaka road), my name is Sʕamtíc'aʔ. The women arrived here. They wanted to learn to speak n'qilxʷcn. They stayed together here and did n'qilxʷcn immersion. They told each other stories and they studied. They now speak very clearly. (Sʕamtíc'aʔ, *kʷu n'łəqʷcin* 00:33)

We studied and lived n'qilxʷn from January to May 2011. We were beginner speakers when

we moved in, and emerged five months later transformed on many levels—language,

personal, and community. Our learning process was difficult, humourous, stressful, and

transformative. In five months we progressed through two N'syilxcn phases of language

learning: k'lp'xʷínaʔ (beginning to hear) and qʷlqʷlti?st (first speech), to arrive at n'łəqʷcin

(speaking clearly). Our speech is now comprehensible to Elders,[4] a remarkable achievement

in our language's situation of critical endangerment.

In the following chapters, I share our stories, our backgrounds, and how we actively

learned n'qilxʷcn. I place our experiences within the multiple contexts of sqəlxʷcawt (Syilx

methodology), Indigenous language revitalization, second-language acquisition (SLA)

research, and second-language assessment.[5] I introduce sqilxʷ pedagogical concepts that

reinforce adult language acquisition, such as N'syilxcn phases of language acquisition,

domains of use, and the transformative power of hard work.

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[4] Our Elders are our knowledge-keepers. It is customary to capitalize this word out of respect.

[5] The term *second-language* acquisition (SLA) reflects that N'syilxcn is presently not learned in the home as children, and is therefore learned as a second-language.

During my time in the house, I began to develop visions and strategies towards community-wide proficiency as adult Indigenous language learners, a vision which became more fully developed over time. Prasát, the eldest student in our language cohort, says of her own language vision:

> I believe I'm gonna be fluent. I believe I will be fluent before I leave this world. It's gonna take me a while, but—I feel that for all of us, we're on the edge of something. (Prasát, *kʷu n'ɬaqʷcin* 01:41)

I had a unique role and responsibility as an on-the ground Indigenous language learner, teacher, activist, researcher and community member. The Paul Creek language curriculum provided a bridge to the language and a reconnection to Syilx culture, landscape, stories and dreams. Over time I came to appreciate the importance of second-language acquisition techniques and that TPCLA curriculum utilized a number of these tools. I realized, as an Indigenous language teacher, planner, and activist, I needed a number of second-language acquisition and teaching techniques in my toolkit. I refer to these tools as Indigenous second-language acquisition (Indigenous SLA) strategies. These tools receive attention in Chapters three, five, and seven.

This dissertation arises from a PhD project at a time when N'syilxcn is critically endangered and new learners are courageously stepping up to become speakers. I am grateful to the PhD process because it motivated me to commit three (and more) transformative years to learn and teach N'syilxcn in my community as an unpaid volunteer and experiential documenter. In my PhD approach, I endeavored to step back from a researcher's gaze and fully *live* N'syilxcn revitalization within community. In my writing I endeavor to follow Syilx narrative models (described in Chapters two and three) and describe the transformative process from the heart.

During our time in the language house, I gathered our narratives into three short films, *Goldilocks I*, *Goldilocks II* and *kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin*, and posted them onto YouTube. These films document our transformation in our own words entirely in N'syilxcn, and our commitment to become n'tɬɬcin (straight or true speakers). In Chapter five, I describe the three films and provide a preliminary method of assessment of Indigenous second-language learning levels. I humbly address misconceptions about N'syilxcn language learning and offer insights and recommendations in Chapter seven.

In my writing, and particularly in my recommendations, I often address other Indigenous language activists, N'syilxcn learners and teachers, specifically those actively engaged in revitalizing a critically endangered language such as ours. Personally addressing an audience is an example of personal relational Indigenous narrative style within academic writing (Wilson 2003:162) further described in Chapter three. For you readers who are language revitalization activists—I know what you're thinking—writing about N'syilxcn revitalization *in English* is a bit like arriving at a global warming conference in your private jet. And you're right, every moment I spend in convincing you N'syilxcn revitalization is possible could be better spent writing *in* n'qilxʷcn, thereby increasing my own proficiency, raising the language's profile in academia, and creating a valuable academic document about n'qilxʷcn, *in* n'qilxʷcn. I hope one day we will look back with surprise that anybody would ever write about n'qilxʷcn in English. However, English allows us to connect across language borders and academic domains. My cohort and I practiced a powerful lived-experience, which may provide a model for N'syilxcn learners as well as other Indigenous language learners. I hope our experience will inspire adult Indigenous language learners and

activists. If you are one, you know the path to proficiency and community mobilization can be dificult at times. I offer you my support and I welcome your comments.

Organization of chapters

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters, beginning with an introductory chapter and ending with conclusions. This introductory chapter introduces the capsiw's, our Elder, our organizer, Chris Parkin, and the immersion house. This chapter also provides background to N'syilxcn and current N'syilxcn revitalization efforts, including the Paul Creek Language Association.

Chapter two, *kn X̌əx̌m̓ʕaɬ: axáʔ incáwt uɬ iscƛ̓aʔƛ̓ʔám (I am Fly: this is my role, responsibility, and research question)* develops and describes my research question. It also introduces common perceptions about N'syilxcn which guided my research, Syilx methodologies, Syilx captík^{w}ɬ (story system), and the pertinence of Grizzly stories to N'syilxcn revitalization.

Chapter three, *Methods, methodology and success stories*, introduces the multiple methods and methodologies available to Indigenous language revitalizers. I introduce methodologies from four fields: Indigenous research, second language acquisition, Indigenous language revitalization, and linguistics. Following the methodological discussions, I introduce Joshua Fishman's theory of Reversing Language Shift, and successful language revitalization stories.

Chapter four, *Entering the Grizzly's Den: achieving N'syilxcn proficiency as adult second-language learners*, outlines efforts made by my cohort to revitalize n'qilx^{w}cn in an adult immersion house. Our immersion house was a transformative experience which I came

to call the Grizzly's den. I introduce n'qilxʷcn acquisition phases and provide initial reflections on adult immersion.

According to sqəlxʷcawt, individual personal narratives take primacy over outside methodological generalizations (Jack 2010). I created a series of three short films, publicly available on YouTube,[6] allowing our personal narratives to speak for themselves. These films document our transformation in Grizzly's den in our own words, from our initial stumbling efforts as qʷlqʷltiʔst (first speech) speakers to n'łəqʷcin (clear) speakers.

Chapter five, *kʷu n'łəqʷcin (we speak clearly): N'syilxcn learners assess our voice in filmed narratives* shares transcribed narrative from the three films. I give primacy to our narrative by providing our words, in our own language, before other discussions. Following each film's narrative, I discuss the narrative's relationship to N'syilxcn language-acquisition stages, introduced in Chapter four. I then broaden the discussion to include international second-language benchmarks. I apply benchmarks to our narrative, providing a preliminary (and relatively rare) example of Indigenous second-language assessment (Miller 2004; Peter *et al*. 2003; Underriner, Fernandes and Atkins 2012). In our terms we progressed from qʷlqʷltiʔst (first speech) to n'łəqʷcin (clear speech); in language-assessment terms, we progressed from mid-beginner to low-intermediate speaking level (blended from American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012; Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Miller 2004). I discuss the potential of film within Indigenous language learning and

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[6] *Goldilocks I: Chopaka Immersion House* http://youtu.be/KVj3vpCf6JE;
Goldilocks II: Chopaka Immersion House http://youtu.be/3DxQb_Lr1rw; and
kʷu n'łəqʷcin (we speak clearly): Chopaka Immersion House http://youtu.be/O7fFMN-KSa4.
The three films were also posted to the Endangered Languages website (discussed below) at:
www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/1919.

assessment, and an emergent wave of Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) language learners on YouTube. I conclude Chapter five with musings on memory and dream research.

Chapter six, *iʔ scəwcawtət iʔ l citxʷtət (Our way in the language house)*, provides month-by-month details and personal reflections from our time in the immersion house, what has been accomplished since the language house, and a synopsis of TPCLA's continuing language efforts—the expanding web of adult and children's learning. Since the language house, the many-stranded web of language learning has expanded to each of our communities. We are committed to achieving n'tłłcin (straightened speech) and continue to work with TPCLA curriculum and emergent language programs within our communities.

In Chapter seven, *Recommendations for successful adult Indigenous second-language programs*, I evaluate SLA techniques (previously introduced in Chapter three) through our lived-experience in the language house. I also describe challenges and stresses second-language learners might expect. I humbly offer strategies to create *effective* and *safe* second-language learning environments, based on our experience and combined with Indigenous second-language acquisition theory. The approximate figure of one-thousand hours comes up again and again as an estimate of the amount of time needed to achieve at least intermediate profiency in a second language, particularly if the language is quite different from the learner's original language (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:81; Jackson and Kaplan 1999; Johnson 2013a, b; McIvor 2012:53; Rifkin 2003:586).

Chapter eight provides conclusions and offers visions of language transformation for individuals, groups, and community. I gratefully acknowledge your time, and wish you well on your journey.

Introductions

In the next sections of this chapter, I introduce and gratefully acknowledge our Elder Sʕamtíc'aʔ (Sarah Peterson), the Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA) and my language cohort. I describe our language and overview current efforts in N'syilxcn language revitalization.

iʔ ƛ̓x̌aptət Sʕamtíc'aʔ (Our Elder, Sarah Peterson)

Lim'lm'tx Sʕamtíc'aʔ (thank you); I gratefully acknowledge our brilliant, tireless and infinitely patient Elder Sʕamtíc'aʔ (Sarah Peterson). Sʕamtíc'aʔ's voice is well-known among N'syilxcn learners; she has recorded literally thousands of words and sentences for Paul Creek curriculum. At seventy, she has taught language for over twenty years, and is an experienced translator and curriculum developer. Sʕamtíc'aʔ lives at klyankxó (Paul Creek, Ashnola BC) near Keremeos BC, a forty-five minute drive across the valley from the language house. We were very lucky to have Sʕamtíc'aʔ visit us every day with good spirits, humour, patience and acceptance of our limited understanding of n'qilxʷcn. Sʕamtic'aʔ gave us the gift of laughter, even when our language levels were very basic; our immersion times invariably involved a funny story, laughter, and laughing at ourselves. She fills a vital, active and supporting role in N'syilxcn revitalization throughout her community, in partnership with TPCLA, The Salish School of Spokane, the En'owkin Centre and Master-apprentice relationships with several family members and, at the time of this writing, with C'ərtups, as described below.

Chris Parkin and LaRae Wiley

Lim'lm'tp (thank you); I gratefully acknowledge Christopher Parkin and LaRae Wiley. Chris Parkin was the curriculum specialist, facilitator, motivator, teacher, trainer and organizer of our immersion house. Chris supplied our workplan, Paul Creek curriculum and provided much-needed accountability, in the form of testing and regular visits, to keep us on track. Chris and his wife LaRae have an inspirational language story. Ten years ago, LaRae realized her family's last N'syilxcn speaker (her great-uncle Joe Barr) had passed away, and she asked her husband, Chris Parkin, for his help to bring N'syilxcn back into their family and community (Azure 2012b; Hallenberg 2011). Chris Parkin has a Master's degree in Education and twenty years experience teaching Spanish and English as a second-language. Chris speaks English, Spanish, N'syilxcn and Kalispel Salish (qlispélixʷcn), and has developed successful language programs in three Salish languages: N'syilxcn, Kalispel, and Flathead (Azure 2012a,b). He is currently the principal at Salish School of Spokane, where he continues to co-develop Paul Creek N'syilxcn curriculum, discussed below.

In 2010, Chris and LaRae created a full-time N'syilxcn domain: a language nest and immersion school, the Salish School of Spokane, Washington. Chris and LaRae have dedicated the past decade to actively learning and teaching N'syilxcn and are now leading experts in Salish language revitalization, Indigenous curriculum development, teacher training, and running an immersion school. The Salish School of Spokane currently teaches about twenty children from kindergarten to grade three, and is training a group of proficient adult teachers and youth language apprentices. Neither Chris nor LaRae grew up hearing the language but are now full-time speakers and tireless language activists. Their granddaughter is a full-time student in their immersion school and they have committed to speak to her only

in n'qilxʷcn. I am inspired by their ongoing enthusiasm, creativity, optimism, personal and professional commitment to N'syilxcn.

kʷu capsíw's (we are sisters)

Lim'lm'tp capsíw's (thank you); I gratefully acknowledge the hard work and dedication of my capsíw's (a kinship term for my language sisters, my language cohort): Prasát, C'əɫtups, Xʷnámx̌ʷnam, and StaʔqʷÁlqs (Shelly Boyd, Carmella Alexis, Brandy Baptiste, and Hailey Causton). I introduce myself and the capsíw's in the following five paragraphs, in descending order of our ages. We five Syilx women and our Elder lived several hours apart in six different Syilx communities and were brought together by our shared commitment to language. We each brought our individual skills and experience to the house. Our personal reflections on the language house in our own words, are provided in Chapter five.

Figure 1. Five capsíw's and our Elder.
Left to right, top row: StaʔqʷÁlqs, Xʷámx̌ʷnam, Prasát
Front row: C'əɫtups, Sʕamtíc'aʔ, Sʔímlaʔxʷ

Prasát (Shelly Boyd) is the eldest of the capsíw's, forty-eight when she moved into the house, and is a powerful language organizer in her own community, a culturally active singer, dancer, mother, grandmother, teacher, and leader of women's ceremonies. Prasát has a warm personality and is constantly accompanied by her friendly little dog Russel. Prasát is a Siníxt member (Arrow Lakes Band, sn'aʕyctx)[7] of the Colville Confederated Tribes, and resides in Kewa Washington. She grew up in the Kewa/Inchelium area with her mother Eva Farris, her grandparents Geri Toulou Clark and Jack Wyncoop and her Túpaʔ (Great Grandmother) Helen Toulou, who was a fluent speaker. Prasát reminded us of the vastness of our territory, and the continuity of Syilx language across the imaginary line drawn between Canada and the United States. She travelled the furthest distance, sacrificed time with her family, and quit her job as high school counsellor to live in the language house. Prasát has a Masters degree in School Counseling from Eastern Washington University. While living in the house, Prasát taught N'syilxcn one day a week to an adult cohort at the Inchelium Childcare Center in Inchelium, Washington (N'syilxcn 1 and Captík^{w}ł 1). Since the house Prasát facilitated creation of the Inchelium Language Association and is currently an active teacher and organizer of ongoing adult immersion lessons.

Myself, Sʔímlaʔx^w (Michele K Johnson), I am the second oldest of the capsíw's, forty-three when I moved into the house in 2011. I was the documenter of the experience due to my involvement in a PhD program. I had been recently introduced to our language and culture, having grown up outside of Okanagan territory in Northern BC. My immediate family and I lived off reserve and outside of Syilx culture for five generations. In fact, I am geneologially mostly non-sqilx^w, and part of my journey included getting to know my family

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[7] The Siníxt nation actively lobbies for recognition of their territory and rights. Prasát's husband Jim Boyd is facilitator of the Arrow Lakes Aboriginal Society (Mehaffey 2011: www.wenatcheeworld.com/news/2011/apr/21/colville-band-isnt-extinct-tribe-insists-but/)

and my role and responsibility within community.[8] I have one Syilx great-great-grandparent, Lucy Akat Sʔímlaʔx (Simla) and fifteen great-great-grandparents from various Western European Countries, all of them having made their exodus to various corners of North America between four and eight generations ago. As well as the sqilx relations mentioned previously, I am related to an array of non-sqilx antecedents including the Johnsons and Harveys. I am new to this territory.

Five years ago I was called back. In September 2008 I moved to Okanagan territory and heard my first N'syilxcn words in a language class at UBC-Okanagan taught by Caylx (Richard Armstrong). Since that time I have met many of my sqilx relatives and teachers. I studied beginner N'syilxcn in several courses at UBC-Okanagan and the En'owkin Centre. In August 2010, I enrolled in my first TPCLA course, N'syilxcn 1, and met Chris Parkin for the first time. On the first day of class, I was struck by the efficiacy of the methods and curriculum, the teachers' enthusiasm, and amazed by my speed of acquisition as a learner. After one week, I resolved to become a proficient speaker and this resolution became the basis of my transformative language journey.

Being Syilx means being stranded together in an interconnected web of kinship; when I "returned" to community I found they were expecting me. As sqilx activist, academic, and friend, Bill Cohen told me:

> That strand that connects you to Sqilx ancestors, although it could be considered thin or weak, it was strong enough to pull you home and powerful enough to energize your language acquisition and revitalization work in communities you are reconnecting to. I think that is an incredible story, and

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[8] There is more to this story. I invite the interested reader to contact me for my personal story and to explore writers who have articulated insider/outsider research, the role of the individual in research, (Abu-Lughod 2006; Archibald 2008; L. Smith 2000) and effects of mixed race in community (Jack 2010:22).

we are the people of the stories (Cohen Sept. 9, 2011, Personal Communication).

Since the language house, I remain an active N'syilxcn learner and teacher in community. I co-taught N'syilxcn, in partnership with fluent speaker Q'iyusálxqn (Herman Edward), to children at Ntamłqn School in Cawston for the 2012/2013 school year, and we continue to collaborate on co-writing an N'syilxcn book of captíkʷł; and smaʔmáy (stories). Since completing my PhD I have focused on Indigenous language teacher-training and language revitalization, using second language acquisition (SLA) techniques from our lived-experience in the language house.

C'əɫtups (Carmella Alexis) is from the Okanagan Indian Band, Vernon BC. Her parents are Paul and Gloria Alexis. At twenty-seven when she moved into the house, C'əɫtups was a quiet, dedicated force to be reckoned with and a strong participant in cultural and family events. During her time at the house, C'əɫtups was studying for her Masters degree at UBC-Okanagan with an interest in traditional and contemporary N'syilxcn health practices and policies. From 2005 until the time of this writing, she studied language and culture with the En'owkin Centre. She has studied N'syilxcn with TPCLA since 2010, and continues to study and teach TPCLA curriculum. After the language house she co-taught Captíkʷł 2 in Inchelium, Washington for four intensive weeks, July-August 2012. She co-taught Captíkʷł 1 in August 2012, and studied N'syilxcn 3 in August 2013, both in Keremeos BC. At the time of this writing, C'əɫtups is currently a full-time volunteer apprentice with Sʕamtíc'aʔ (Sarah Peterson). I hold my hands up in the air to their dedication and hard work. C'əɫtups and Sʕamtíc'aʔ committed to spend every day together

from September to December 2013 in a Master-Apprentice relationship, at Sʕamtíc'aʔ's home in Kłyankxó (Paul Creek BC).

Xʷnámxʷnam (Brandy Baptiste) is from the Osoyoos Indian Band and lives in Keremeos BC. At twenty-five when she moved into the house she was already an experienced language student and instructor and the best speaker of the capsíw's. She is the one member of our group who has living grandparents who are fluent, and therefore has more exposure to the language, though she did not learn it as a child. Both her maternal grandparents are fluent speakers; she receives cultural instruction from them and is a strong participant in cultural events.

Xʷnámxʷnam had already taught N'syilxcn 1 and Captíkʷł 1 (C'əɨtups, Staʔqʷálqs and I were her students). She had also completed one more language course than the rest of the capsíw's; she was in one of the first two groups to complete N'syilxcn 2, two years previously in Omak Washington. She previously studied N'syilxcn with the Enow'kin Centre, TPCLA, the Center for Interior Salish, and Eastern Washington University. Xʷnámxʷnam was the lead N'syilxcn teacher and teacher-trainer for the N'syilxcn Language Nest Program at the Tee Pee Tots Childcare Centre in Keremeos in 2010-11, where she worked mornings while living at the house. Since the language house, she has remained dedicated to the language. She taught full-time N'syilxcn to adults in Inchelium, WA for six months in 2012 and 2013. Xʷnámxʷnam gave birth to her first child, a boy named Sk'ʷl'cniktkʷ, on March 4, 2012 and her second child, a girl, on October 10, 2013. At Sk'ʷl'cniktkʷ's name-giving ceremony, Xʷnámxʷnam requested the community speak only N'syilxcn to him.

Staʔqʷálqs (Hailey Causton) is the youngest of the capsíw's and is powerfully dedicated to learning her language and culture. At eighteen when she moved into the house, she had already completed a year of post-secondary education at the En'owkin Centre and was a strong participant in cultural and family events. Her parents are Sandy Alexander and Grouse Barnes. Her grandparents are Marilyn and Frank Causton and Emily Michele and Dennis Barnes. Staʔqʷálqs (like myself) had only recently been introduced to Syilx language and culture and dedicated herself to learn both as quickly as possible; she believes there is no time to waste. In January 2010, by her own account, she only knew one word: lim'lmt (thank you). Staʔqʷálqs was introduced to N'syilxcn in August 2010 in her first beginner course with TPCLA, N'syilxcn 1. In the two years since then she has come a long way to become an intermediate speaker. In the language house, Staʔqʷálqs became our home decorator and garden planner and created decorative language posters in her spare time. She received her new name, Staʔqʷálqs, in the Spring of 2011; her earlier name was P'ip'q's, which shows up in some of my notes. Since the language house Staʔqʷálqs has continued to be an N'syilxcn student at the Enowkin Centre, in TPCLA's Captíkʷł 2 course in Inchelium, Washington, July-August 2012, and a full-time university student.

N'syilxcn and n'qilxʷcn

We have two words for our language, n'qilxʷcn and N'syilxcn (also spelled N'syilxcən and N'səlxcin).[9] Each can be used as a noun or a verb and are used interchangeably in conversation, but have a subtle relational difference. N'syilxcn refers to the language spoken by the Syilx people, and refers to the language of the territory. N'syilxcn is one of seven

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[9] These spellings reflect dialectical differences. N'syilxcən/N'syilxcn are from northern Syilx territory, north of the Canada-U.S. border. South of the Canada-U.S. border, it is spelled and pronounced N'səlxcin.

Interior Salish languages in British Columbia (BC), and occupies the part of the world today known as the Interior Plateau, which straddles current-day Southern BC and Northern Washington.[10] N'syilxcn speaking people are known by several names: Syilx, sqilx^w, Okanagan, Okanagan-Colville, Colville, Salish, and Interior Salish.[11] The Siníxt (Arrow Lakes) are also an N'syilxcn speaking people.

N'syilxcn is a critically endangered language (Norris 2011). It is at Stage seven in Joshua Fishman's (1990) eight Stages of Language Shift, discussed further in Chapter three. As such, N'syilxcn is heard only in limited domains: children and adult lessons, special occasions, ceremonies, introductory words of speeches, and Elders' get-togethers. There are less than one hundred and fifty N'syilxcn speakers remaining who learned N'syilxcn as a first language, out of a total population of around five thousand Syilx people in Canada (Cohen 2001; First Peoples' Culture Council 2011). Most of these speakers are over seventy years old. Of the eighty-something Indigenous languages spoken in Canada (Norris 2011:113; UNESCO 2011),[12] *all* are considered vulnerable or endangered, based on their levels of intergenerational mother-tongue transmission (Norris 2011:124). *Zero* of these languages are considered "safe" (Norris 2011:124).

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[10] First People's Language Map of Syilx territory: www.maps.fphlcc.ca/fphlcc/nsyilxcen.

[11] We were previously known by neighbouring nations as the scxwanmúx, Dried Salmon People, because we had very little salmon and needed to trade for dried salmon from neighbouring nations. In the distant past, prior to the dams, there may have been immense sockeye and spring salmon fisheries on the Columbian and Okanagan rivers within Syilx territory (Skyákaʔ, personal communication, July 2011). A brief note about salmon is relevant here—everything is connected. kəkn'iʔ (kokanee salmon, a land-locked cousin to sockeye) survived with us through colonization and ecosystem disruption, and has become an N'syilxcn borrow-word known around the world. In 2011, 100,000 sockeye salmon (with assistance from Okanagan Nation Alliance Fisheries and Syilx prayers and drumming) returned to spawn in the Okanagan river, a small step towards their previous millions. N'syilxcn's return, like the sockeye, is assisted by our prayers, hard work, and dedication to transformative new methods.

[12] UNESCO (2011) lists eighty-eight Indigenous languages in Canada; Norris (2011) lists eighty-six.

Syilx is the word we use to refer to ourselves, as a person, political entity, community, or the territory. It is a powerful word that includes the person, the land itself, the territory, the language, and the culture. Syilx means stranded together like a many-stranded rope, a concept implying ecological and cultural stability and an interconnectedness of individual, family, land, and language. These strands were strained to the breaking point by colonization, displacement, and residential schools (Armstrong and Hall 2007).

We are also sqilx^w, which can be defined as Indigenous person, or animal being (tmix^w) with the power to dream in a cyclical way. Tmix^w are the animals, animal people, or life force. Tmix^w, including humans, each have roles and ways of being, and are interconnected with each other and the land. The power to dream connects us, as sqilx^w, to the land, to spirit, and to each other. The two words, Syilx and sqilx^w, translated simply as *Salish, Okanagan,* or *people* in English, demonstrate that our way of being, our roles as humans and our connections to each other, the land and the seasons, are embedded in our language. I use the terms N'syilxcn, n'qilx^{w}cn (our language), Syilx and sqilx^w, more or less interchangeably in this dissertation, thereby introducing the reader to the multiplicity of terms and meanings in N'syilxcn. We have a large language territory and, as learners, we are exposed to teachers with different dialectical subtleties and learn to accept multiple words and meanings.[13]

The foundation: our N'syilxcn backgrounds

My cohort's shared language journey began when we met in beginner Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA) classes in Keremeos BC, Canada and in northern Washington. We had

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[13] In community, ongoing discussion and debate on whether to use the words *Syilx* or *sqilx^w* (in English) can contribute to "politics of distraction" (Cohen 2010) that hinder language programs. Subtle differences between these terms, and arguments for using one or the other, can best be made *in* n'qilx^{w}cn.

each completed (at least) the first two TPCLA textbooks—a strong foundation that made the immersion house possible. In this section I describe our journeys to complete TPCLA's Level 1 and to create the language house.

Four of the capsíw's (C'ə́ɫtups, X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam, Staʔqʷálqs and I), met in August 2010 in N'syilxcn 1, in Keremeos, BC, co-taught by X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam and Pʕaɫxʷ, (Grahm Wiley-Camacho, Chris Parkin's son). We were a motivated group—most of us drove an hour or two each day to attend the intensive three-week, ninety-hour course, and Pʕaɫxʷ commuted four hours from Spokane, Washington. Fifteen students completed N'syilxcn 1, emerging with an approximate 500-word receptive vocabulary, and inspired by the cutting-edge language acquisition techniques we had seen. Many had taken other beginner courses, but this was our first exposure to techniques such as total-physical response (TPR), scaffolding, and intensive immersion group-learning, and I was amazed by how fast we learned. We were inspired by our courageous beginner teachers and by Sʕamtíc'aʔ and Chris Parkin, the first person we had ever known to become a proficient speaker as an adult.

When N'syilxcn 1 was complete, several other students and I lobbied Chris Parkin to organize an ongoing Captíkʷɬ 1 class that we could study in the evenings as a cohort from September to December 2010. Chris Parkin created a schedule, Pʕaɫxʷ trained X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam in the teaching method and X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam and Paʕlxʷ co-taught the first two weeks. X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam courageously taught the rest of the course alone, commuting two hours each way from Keremeos to Kelowna. We met in a condo[14] in downtown Kelowna to minimize

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[14] limləmt to my parents. The condo was bought by my late father and generously lent to us by my mother as her invisible contribution to N'syilxcn revitalization.

travel, though most of us still had to drive at least an hour to attend two-and-a-half-hour classes two evenings a week. Seven students completed Captík^{w}ł 1, another ninety hours of intense language acquisition, bringing our grand total as learners up to 180 hours.

We were now q^{w}lq^{w}ltiʔst (first speech, making our first sounds) speakers, or approximately mid-beginner speakers (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006). We were able to make our first, tentative utterances such as, *Do you want tea?* and *What is your name?* We could comprehend the Captík^{w}ł 1 stories and simple sentences but could not speak or converse beyond yes or no questions, simple two- or three-word sentences, and a small handful of brief humorous sentences from Captík^{w}ł 1 stories, such as, *I am chief!* and, *Flip me over, I'm burnt up!* At the conclusion of the course, Chris Parkin visited to administer the final exam, assess our progress and offer encouragement. I spoke with him about the next steps. I believed my cohort and I needed a combination of Paul Creek curriculum and immersion with an Elder in order to become proficient speakers. I asked for his help organizing a full-time immersion house with Sʕamtíc'aʔ.

I did not know the terms yet, but I wanted to create a *domain of use*, and a language community—an immersion opportunity for second-language learners and Elders so that a small group of adult beginner-speakers could become more proficient. It was important to maintain our momentum, support each other, and to achieve proficiency together as a cohort. Chris committed to organize, provide curriculum, assessments and a workplan, and we decided on a five-month "semester" from January to May 2011. Sʕamtíc'aʔ found us a house to rent. X̌^{w}námx̌^{w}nam and I agreed to move in together, quickly followed by C'ə̓ŕtups and Staʔq^{w}álqs. Later in December, Chris told us about Prasát, a dedicated TPCLA learner from Inchelium WA who would move in, making us five. We packed our things in

December, ready to move into the house in January with a mixture of excitement and trepidation.

We made the commitment to spend the next five months living and studying in the house, a transformational experience shared in the next chapters. We were unpaid volunteers, other than StaɁqʷálqs who had funding from the Westbank First Nation to cover her rent, tuition and expenses. We fundraised to pay for rent and SʕamtícʼaɁ's time with us. Our group became the first group to finish TPCLA's level 2 curriculum and to create a full-time immersion house. N'syilxcn 2 had been taught twice, in Omak WA, but Captíkʷł 2 had never been taught before and still only existed in draft form.

The next section introduces our work in the Chopaka immersion house and our commitment to become speakers.

t'i kmax n'qilxʷcn iɁ l citxʷtət (our immersion house)

Five of us moved into a house on a remote part of the reserve, practically touching the Canada/U.S. border. We worked, studied, and lived together four days a week, for five months between January and May, 2011. We each commuted between one and four hours from our various corners of Syilx territory in order to live together.

Our language house was located at sṗəṗƛ̓m̓salq̓ʷ, a place name meaning treeline, in a beautiful, remote location deep in Syilx territory, surrounded by fields, open woodlands, mountains and the Similkameen river. Our address was 891 Chopaka road, Chopaka BC, Canada, at the farthest southern end of Chopaka road, before it is gated off by the international border. We often walked along the two-track dirt road through horse-pastures to the border. The border was marked by a metal gate, "No Trespassing" signs, and a length of barbed wire fence bisecting our Syilx territory (Syilx borders are discussed in Jack 2010).

I share a narrative about living near the border in Chapter six. Our language house was a half-hour drive southeast of Keremeos, four hours north of Inchelium Washington, one hour south of Penticton, two hours south of Vernon, and a forty-five minute drive across the Similkameen valley from Sʕamtíc'aʔ's house in kłyankxó (Paul Creek).

Figure 2. Our driveway with Salʕáwaʔt's house in the background

Figures 2, 3, and 4 show our driveway, the house, and myself in the field beside the house. The snowy peak visible in Figure 4 is Chopaka mountain, across the U.S. border. If you look closely at Chopaka mountain you can see the beautiful woman lying on her back with her head in the East, a result of a love-crossed run-in recounted in our captíkʷł (TPCLA curriculum, Captíkʷł 2, Story 1, Peterson *et al.* 2012:3-26).

Figure 3. The language house

Figure 4. Sʔímlaʔxʷ and Chopaka mountain to the south

Our house was built on the property where Sʕamtíc'aʔ grew up. We were very lucky to have two Elder speakers, Salʕáwaʔt and Q'iyusálxqn, living nearby on Chopaka road. They were regular visitors to the house. Saʔlʕáwaʔt (Tony Qualtier) still lives in a cabin across the road, visible in Figure 2, surrounded by horse fields. He is Sʕamtíc'aʔ's older brother, and like her, is humorous, patient, and accepting. Q'iyusálxqn (Herman Edward) is a gifted storyteller, prolific speaker, acclaimed musician, and patient listener and teacher.

We rented the house in Figure 3 from the Lower Similkameen Indian Band (LSIB). Sʕamtíc'aʔ located the two-storey, five-bedroom house for us, which meant we each had our own bedroom. Our living room was a classroom because our daytime hours were spent studying. Our furniture consisted of foldable chairs and tables which we brought from our own households. Staʔqʷálqs created colourful posters for the walls from words and phrases we were learning. Figure 5 shows the capsíw's in our living-room classroom, with our study table, textbooks, and posters (*Happy Birthday C'ə̀rtups* decorates the window). This is more or less how we appeared, four hours per day, four days a week, for five months.

Figure 5. Capsíw's studying inside the language house
Left to right: StaʔqʷÁlqs, C'əɬtups, Prasát, and X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam

Sarah Peterson visited us for one to two hours each day, drinking tea, chatting, sometimes working on traditional activities. We were the first group of adult learners to bring N'syilxcn into full-time use, even at our limited level. The feeling of switching to N'syilxcn on the first day, as shy beginner speakers, was a combination of fear, awkwardness, excitement, and pride—pride that we had created a place where N'syilxcn was spoken eight hours a day. I filmed our first conversation, described further in Chapter five.

We were unique in that we did not have a teacher, and worked through the curriculum as a group. Our situation was unusual among Indigenous learners in that we followed comprehensive curriculum (Hinton 2011:308) and measured our progress through regular testing and assessment. The Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA), introduced below, provided the foundation and materials for our road to proficiency. As we raised our language

proficiency, we were creating a sqəlxʷcawt (Syilx pedagogical model) for adult N'syilxcn learners. It was not an easy road, but we hope it is one others can follow. Our learning model rested upon the solid foundations of excellent language pedagogy, immersion with Elders, and immersion amongst ourselves, all of which are incorporated within TPCLA curriculum.

Most of our learning occurred during twenty hours per week of group lessons and daily homework. We followed curriculum-based TPCLA lessons four hours a day for 19 weeks, or approximately 300 hours classroom time, over five months. We had 1.5 hours a day of immersion visits with Sʕamtíc'aʔ, or approximately 120 hours total. Classroom time and immersion visits totaled 420 intensive immersion hours, detailed in Chapter four.

We worked through the third and fourth books (level 2) of TPCLA's six-book curriculum, and reviewed the first two books, which we had learned previously. Paul Creek curriculum is based on as much traditional learning as possible, such as the captíkʷɬ, plants, animals, and seasons, but there are also grammar exercises, pair-based sentence construction exercises and regular testing. Assessment (written and oral) and constant review were crucial components of our schedule. We completed daily vocabulary quizzes, midterm and final exams for each textbook. We performed intermittent oral examinations, some of which were filmed, and a filmed assessment at the beginning and end of our program.

We followed a strict no-English rule from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m, meaning we had lunch and dinner (sometimes with our fluent speaking neighbours) in n'qilxʷcn. Our learning was intensive. We got headaches when our brains were full. Our transformation in the language house was so intense and profound that I began to refer to it as the Grizzly's den— referring to a Syilx story described further in Chapter two. Before moving into the house, we were barely qʷlqʷltiʔst (making our first sounds). After five months in the house, we

emerged n'łəqʷcin, (clear voiced, or starting to be heard), and were speaking like precocious four-year olds. We were able to converse at a low-intermediate level (discussed in Chapter five).

Through our efforts, we demonstrated to the Syilx Nation that advanced-level learning is possible as adults. Most of us have courageously progressed from beginner learner to teacher, and have the honour of starting new learners on the path to language proficiency.

The next sections describe N'syilxcn revitalization efforts, including the Paul Creek Language Association curriculum.

Current N'syilxcn revitalization efforts

Through concerted community efforts, N'kmaplqs (Vernon Band, BC) created the nkmaplqs i snmamayatn kl sqilxwtet (Okanagan Cultural Immersion School). Bill Cohen has been an active language catalyst in his Syilx community, although he is careful to note that the N'kmaplqs school was accomplished by the community, not by his efforts alone (Cohen, 2010). He says, of his contribution:

> I am one of the many foxes in the Okanagan gathering up the bits of skin, bone, and hair of coyote. When enough is gathered we can breathe on the assembled pile and *Sinkleep*, coyote, will awaken, yawn, and say, "Oh, I must have closed my eyes for a few minutes" and carry on as if he'd only had a brief nap. (Cohen, 2001:140)

Cohen describes the N'kmaplqs school for children in his EdD dissertation (2010), and articulates sqilxʷ pedagogical principles (described in Chapter two). Cohen writes that for the first two years, the school relied on materials created by the Paul Creek language association (described below) (Cohen 2010:136). Bill Cohen is a Syilx groundbreaker and was faced with initial resistance in his community:

> There was much opposition internally to the school's development, and I experienced firsthand the tensions between transformative action and colonizing hegemonies, and with others was able to mediate and resolve many of those tensions (Cohen 2010:288).

Bill Cohen is careful not to enumerate the many tensions, preferring to avoid the "politics of distraction" and focus on positive action. N'kmaplqs school has been successfully running for six years. The school teaches approximately forty students. The language teaching methods are chosen by Elders, and co-taught by an apprentice language teacher. Their apprentice teacher, Chad Marchand, learned N'syilxcn as an adult (Brady 2012). Chad learned N'syilxcn through attending Paul Creek's 90-hour intensive beginner course (he was a student in the first Paul Creek class that I attended in Keremeos BC in 2010) and through a First Peoples' Culture Council of British Columbia (FPCC)-funded Master-apprentice program with the school's principal Elder speaker, Pauline Gregoire-Archachan. The N'kmaplqs school teaches language in immersion for significant portions of the day, while other subjects such as math are taught in English. Cohen writes that the attitudes of the community have been positively influenced after seeing the children's language abilities and high marks:

> After four years, attitudes are slowly shifting because of our children. Enrolment has grown slowly but steadily. Fourth year students have extensive receptive vocabularies, are able to converse in Okanagan language, and their productive vocabularies are beginning to expand considerably. The children of Nkmaplqs i Snmamayatn kl Sqilxwtet can certainly stand up and assert who they are in our language (Cohen 2010:289).

In 2011, the N'kmaplqs school produced a pilot-project immersion nest for four and five year olds (Brady 2012), which I describe briefly in Chapter six.

There are numerous efforts to revitalize N'syilxcn, notably from the En'owkin Centre in Penticton BC, The Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA) and the Salish School of

Spokane, Washington, described in the next section.[15] Cohen (2010) provides an overview of N'syilxcn revitalization efforts, including the En'owkin Centre. The En'owkin centre has partnered with Linguist Tony Mattina since 1970 to create a writing system, teach it to Elders, create an N'syilxcn dictionary (Mattina 1986) and write two beginner textbooks.

The En'owkin Centre is a First Nation post-secondary institution which offers programs to enhance Aboriginal culture, language, political development, leadership and Aboriginal fine-arts. En'owkin offers N'syilxcn language classes, college readiness, fine arts, ecology, early childhood education, and a three-year Developmental Standard Term Certificate (DSTC), that certifies Okanagan Language/Culture teachers.[16] En'owkin also offers a Certificate of Aboriginal Language Revitalization which consists of six core courses and three electives, in partnership with the University of Victoria. The En'owkin Centre offers ongoing language courses taught by Elders. Their lead language teacher is Richard Armstrong, who also teaches beginner language classes at UBC-Okanagan. NSYL 050/ 060 (N'syilxcen I & II) are offered as college-readiness courses.

In our territory, there are hundreds of k'lp'x^{w}ína? (comprehension phase, or roughly beginner speakers) N'syilxcn learners, including children and adults. There are numerous beginner language programs operated in band schools and high schools. Most Syilx communities have beginner courses in their band schools and high schools. However, we are

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[15] The Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA) and its sister organization the Salish School of Spokane offer numerous courses. To see available adult beginner and intermediate courses, to download N'syilxcn 1, play interactive N'syilxcn games, view instructional videos and listen to songs, see www.interiorsalish.com and www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/1919.

[16] For En'owkin's course listings and descriptions, see: www.enowkincentre.ca. For the Developmental standard term certificate (DSTC): www.enowkincentre.ca/programs.html. The DSTC is reviewed in Craig 2006. Craig (2006) concludes that greater emphasis on curriculum is needed in First Nations languages in BC, and that languages must be taught across the entire life span rather than entirely focusing on children. UBC-O offers a DSTC in partnership with the Enowkin Centre: http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/okanagan/pdf/UBC_Okanagan_Calendar_Faculty_of_Education.pdf.

faced with the same difficulty that many Indigenous language communities face: a shortage of fluent teachers, a surplus of adult learners who stall at beginner, and because of this, the inability to bring the language back into the homes (Hinton 2003a).

Even though there have been ongoing N'syilxcn efforts by hardworking organizations with a small number of excellent fluent speakers, new approaches are needed, as thirty years of N'syilxcn language programming has created not one new fluent speaker (Cohen 2010). N'syilxcn revitalization efforts are hampered by ongoing "politics of distraction," in the form of doubt, uncertainty, disagreement, bureaucracy, and "waiting for conditions to be right" (Cohen 2010).

N'syilxcn is bisected by an international border which resulted in a unique geographical concentration of speakers to the North. International borders can negatively affect languages, concentrating resources on one side or the other. In our case, the border created a permeable barrier with a higher population of Elder speakers to the north (approximately 150), and far fewer Elder speakers to the south (only a handful). The concentration of speakers in the North ironically became a strength, inspiring Southern learners to language activism. Language revitalization often begins when there are no, or almost no, speakers left—sadly, once the Elders have passed away, it gives permission to younger generations to speak (Hinton 2001b) and break through the walls of doubt that can be created by in-community politics of distraction (I elaborate on walls of doubt in Chapter two, and politics of distraction in Chapter three). In N'syilxcn's case, there has been an impetus of advanced learners and activists from south of the international border. Chris Parkin, LaRae Wiley, and Prasát (Shelly Boyd) travelled north to study with Sˤamíc'aʔ and other Elders in BC, later returning to Washington to create N'syilxcn domains of use. Chris

and LaRae founded the Paul Creek Language Association and the Salish School of Spokane, Washington (described below). Prasát formed the Inchelium Language and Culture Association in Inchelium Washington (described in Chapter six).

It is interesting to note that the small handful of advanced speakers that have emerged in recent years have all been self-taught, rather than learning in a classroom situation—all of them are highly motivated individuals who worked closely with family and Elders in a Master-Apprentice type relationship (Cohen 2010:195). These advanced, or n'tłłcin, level speakers are an inspiration to other adult learners. These courageous individuals, including Chris Parkin and LaRae Wiley, have brought their skills forward into the community, developing Paul Creek immersion programs and curriculum. Until then, N'syilxcn learners did not have curriculum to achieve higher than beginner speech levels. Much of this dissertation is involved in describing the transformative potential of this curriculum, its efficacy, and its methods, based on my cohort's lived-experience.

The Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA)

Sʕamtícʼaʔ, Chris Parkin and LaRae Wiley formed the Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA) in Keremeos BC in 2006, and have been working tirelessly ever since to co-author N'syilxcn curriculum including textbooks, teaching manuals, audio recordings, web-based interactive video games, children's books, children's math and science textbooks, songbooks and CDs, and language-nest curriculum.[17] Sʕamtícʼaʔ has recorded thousands of words, sentences, verb conjugations, vocabulary items and stories, all available on CD in TPCLA curriculum. The Paul Creek Language Association's contribution to Interior Salish

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[17] For many examples of beginner TPCLA materials, see playlist on Youtube: www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEPgzzCgcTSvYPvJndxWPGsgxW_vK_QAN.

languages including N'syilxcn is broad and deep and felt throughout Interior Salish territories.

The Paul Creek Language Association developed a set of six textbooks to bring learners from beginner to advanced in two years of study, as well as numerous curricula for children and youth, including math, science, and an interactive video fantasy game that uses intermediate and advanced language. We are very lucky as N'syilxcn learners to have a comprehensive set of TPCLA curriculum that incorporates cutting-edge second-language acquisition techniques such as total physical response (TPR), teaching-proficiency-through-reading-and-storytelling (TPR-S), scaffolding, repetition, immersion, games, visuals, stages of learning, interactive exercises, and regular review and assessment. The six textbooks are organized in three levels, N'syilxcn 1, Captík^{w}ł 1, N'syilxcn 2, Captík^{w}ł 2, N'syilxcn 3 and Captík^{w}ł 3 (Peterson *et al.* 2006, 2005, 2011, 2012, 2013, and in-press, respectively). There is also a level 1 direct acquisition teacher's manual (Peterson and Parkin 2007). TCPLA has developed interactive learning software for each level.

N'syilxcn 1 gives students a 500-word receptive and productive vocabulary. Three of the six textbooks are based on captík^{w}ł (story), placing the language in a sqilx^w cultural context. Each book requires between 90-150 classroom hours to complete, usually accomplished in a three- to four-week intensive course, or ongoing evening classes. The entire curriculum takes approximately 1,000 classroom hours, roughly the equivalent of two full years of university instruction. Once learners have completed the first four (of the six) TCPLA textbooks, they will be intermediate speakers, and able to converse all day with Elders.

Chris Parkin and Sʕamtíc'aʔ are busily writing, recording, and editing text and audio files and hope to complete Level 3 curriculum in 2013. N'syilxcn 3 involves a vast amount of advanced vocabulary, grammatical information and exercises. The Paul Creek Language Association and the Salish School of Spokane[18] are currently fundraising (in both Canada and the U.S.) to complete the sixth TPCLA books, their supporting audio, graphics and software. This critical work must be completed in Sʕamtíc'aʔ's lifetime.

The Paul Creek Language Association facilitates relationships between learners, teachers, and Elders such as Sʕamtíc'aʔ, and ignites a fire in some learners, such as myself, to become proficient N'syilxcn speakers. Their curriculum is unique in that it is specifically designed to be taught by beginner teachers, and in this way we can "lift the burden of teaching from our Elders" (Parkin 2011). As learners teach, they also learn. TPCLA offers several ongoing adult immersion courses, from beginner to intermediate. Several small groups of adults, in many of our Syilx communities, have completed the first one to four books through various intensive programs. The fourth book (Captíkʷł 2) was taught for the first time to a group of fifteen adults (including myself and others from the Chopaka immersion house) in July, 2012, in Inchelium WA. The fifth book (N'syilxcn 3) was taught for the first time in August, 2013 to a small group of adults in Keremeos BC.

The next chapter shares my research question and builds a Syilx methodological framework to assist in developing language transformation strategies, both individual and community.

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[18] Since the time of this research much of TPCLA's publishing has shifted to their partner, the Salish School of Spokane, but for simplicity I refer to their material as TPCLA material.

Chapter 2: kn X̌əx̌mˤał: axáʔ incáwt uł iscƛaʔƛ̓ʔám (I am Fly: this is my role, responsibility, and research question)

iwá iʔ   ṗísƛaʔt iʔ   sqilxʷ cx̌ʷap tkłknxcutns
Even a large person may need help[19]
(Peterson *et al.* 2005:62)

During the four years of my PhD research, like many academics, I modified my methodology many times, adding new elements and discarding others. As an Indigenous researcher I have the responsibility to represent multiple layers of reality, from personal, to community, to the larger picture including the land. As a language revitalizer, I wear many methodological hats, which are shared in the next chapter. In this chapter, I share my research question and the local origins of my methodological journey. I introduce community perceptions about N'syilxcn, sqəlxʷcawt (Syilx ways), captíkʷł (Syilx story), Syilx personal narrative and film which guided my research, as well as overview Syilx historical contributions and Syilx publications. Being an N'syilxcn learner is an individual role. I draw on strength from Xexʔmał's song, described below, to humbly share my story, my role and responsibility in revitalizing N'syilxcn, and what I have learned.

X̌əx̌mˤ ał and the Four Food Chiefs

The Four Food Chiefs and the animal people were engaged in a great discussion; it was the first recorded instance of enowkinwixw (n'aˤʷqnwíʔxʷ). Black Bear had laid his life down for the people-to-be, and the other animal chiefs were taking turns singing to bring him back to life. None of their songs worked and they eventually asked the crowd, does anyone else have a song? All eyes turned toward the voice that had spoken, and tiny X̌əx̌mˤał, Fly, stepped forward. He sang his song and Bear came back to life. This story reminds us that every voice is significant (Paraphrased from Marchand 2004).

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[19] Mouse speaking to Grizzly Bear in a captíkʷł story from Captíkʷł 1 (Peterson *et al.* 2005:62). Grizzly was tied up helpless, and Mouse rescued him by chewing through his bonds.

The story of X̌əx̌mʕał reminds us never to overlook the possible contribution of an individual. Though X̌əx̌mʕał was a small and insignificant being, his song contained the key to bringing Skmxist (Black Bear) back to life. The full story is published in Marchand (2004). X̌əx̌mʕał's courageous contribution revitalized Skmxist, the Chief of the tmix^w (animal people), who also represents Elders and tradition. X̌əx̌mʕał exemplifies emblematic Syilx values of generosity, personal responsibility, and individual self-sacrifice. Like X̌əx̌mʕał, and all of the tmix^w for that matter, we each have our cawt (pronounced *chawt*), our way, or our role and responsibilities within community). I believe X̌əx̌mʕał is an analogy of the role of the adult learner in N'syilxcn language revitalization. The sooner some of us take up our responsibility to use our voice to become advanced adult speakers, the sooner we can take up our place speaking with the Elders and teaching the next generations. This is X̌əx̌mʕał's principle: if we have a song, we are obligated to sing it.

And so, in contradiction to another valued Syilx principle of practicing quietness (Cardinal and Armstrong 1991:90), I begin. Being a small fraction Syilx, and a large fraction English-speaking Euro-Canadian (suyápix), as previously mentioned, my approach to Indigenous methodology reflects my own diasporic jumble of ancestry and experience. Dr. Bill Cohen, Syilx writer, writes of the valued voice and unique-ness of the individual in academia and community, "all of us carry our belief systems into the classrooms ... webs are created" (2001:140). Our personal experiences become a potential source of strength in group discussion, decision-making, or academia. Akiwenzie-damm states that, "through me, my ancestors speak" (1996:1). I bring my experiences to this forum in the same way that X̌əx̌mʕał brought his, humbly, and without expectation.

There are many tmixʷ (animal beings) in our stories whose cawt (way, or role and responsibility) demonstrate the powerful role of individuals and their responsibility to share their song (sometimes with the ability to bring another being back to life). The story of xʷaʔqʷílm (yellow-breasted chat, or multiple-song singing bird) reminds us to sing a song that is original, and not create an ugly song by copying others' songs.[20] A PhD research project, similarly, is meant to be original and *contribute* to the academy. Indigenous research has the added obligation of being useful to community. My fundamental Syilx guiding principle was, identical to Bill Cohen's Syilx research question: "what will you do for the people to be?" (Cohen 2010:22). I decided my best contribution to n'qilxʷcn would be to apply myself, as an individual and in a cohort, to Paul Creek Language curriculum, thereby demonstrating that a group of adults can become proficient through hundreds of hours of dedicated language study. One day, in the summer of 2010, I found myself writing an almost superhuman goal and affixing it to my fridge with a magnet:

Michele's PhD Vision:
I will become fluent in N'syilxcn and teach 10 other people to become
fluent enough to speak only N'syilxcn to their children.

In pursuit of this goal, I created a research project with the goal of supporting, encouraging and documenting successful methods of adult N'syilxcn language acquisition. This PhD project documents the experiences of my small group of adult language learners and our methods and motivations to revitalize N'syilxcn. Commensurate with our main goal of achieving higher proficiency, I held the following question in mind: *How can we, as groups of adults achieve proficiency in N'syilxcn? What is our role and responsibility, as adult learners, in revitalizing N'syilxcn?*

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[20] Talk to Caylx (Richard Armstrong) at the En'owkin Centre for xʷaʔqʷílm's full story.

I chose N'syilxcn revitalization as my individual and community praxis (praxis is an Indigenous methodology described in Chapter three) and committed to bring myself and a group of adults to language proficiency. My dream of proficiency (and the belief that it was possible) was inspired by personal experiences including community work in Guatemala, a decade ago. I became conversationally fluent in Spanish by working for a year with Indigenous Mayan women's groups in Guatemala, in a community where no English was spoken. I progressed from beginner to intermediate speech (and discovered the hard-won stages of language acquisition) by living and working in Spanish and one-on-one immersion lessons (also with no English spoken), one day a week. I was therefore expecting the headaches, tension, frustration, hard work, plateaus, language stages, confusion and potential humour associated with language transformation.

Let me be perfectly honest with you—most of my contribution was in *showing up*, following the timetable, and documenting the experience. I can take credit for getting the ball rolling, perhaps. In my small way I was the language catalyst that pushed for an immersion house. However, like the boy in Grizzly's den (described below), we had help. We five learners had guidance and supervision from our own experts—our transformation was in their hands as well as in our own. As adult learners of a severely endangered language, we must learn quickly, draw upon our courage to find our voices and use all the tools of second-language acquisition available to us. We must also look to the language revitalization strategies tried by other language groups, both successful and unsuccessful, and attempt to replicate the successful approaches. My methodological journey began with Syilx methodologies, described below. This journey continued with an exposure to

Indigenous methodologies, second-language acquisition methods, Indigenous language revitalization methodology and success stories, described in the next chapter.

In Indigenous research, a PhD student has an added responsibility to perform research that is valid to community, that is useful, that is applied, that respects the values of community, and performs a community service. The results must be shared in a way that has validity to community, not just an article, or a dissertation. For myself, I wanted the topic to be valid to the Elders in my community. Like many Indigenous researchers, I went through a process of decolonization, discovery, self-reflection, reconnection and dreaming, followed by action (Burgess 2000).

In our case, our action took the form of learning our language in Grizzly's den, which was then followed by its own set of dreams, transformative experiences, and reflections. My methodology became increasingly localized and particular to my language and community. Ultimately, my model is our Elder, Sʕamtíc'aʔ. In her life she has courageously embraced new technologies to teach, document, and revitalize N'syilxcn while still being loved by all—a remarkable accomplishment. Her generosity of spirit, her acceptance, her hard work, and her ability to make everybody laugh, is my model and inspiration. I choose Sʕamtíc'aʔ as my inspiration, and optimism as my grounding principle.

Walls of doubt

My optimistic vision of language proficiency for myself and a group of adults was challenged by walls of doubt within community. The language is profoundly important, and its revitalization is a source of hope to our communities. However, there are frictions in our communities, coupled with misconceptions and doubts about language which impede language revitalization. If you are a learner of a threatened Indigenous language that has

suffered from generations of colonization, you will no doubt have heard similar statements. I articulate these doubts in order to share with other language activists that you are not alone in encountering doubts and resistance. Many Indigenous language activists articulate frictions, struggles, doubts, and resistance from within community (Cohen 2010; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer1998:64-65; Kipp 2009; McIvor 2005; Underwood 2009; Whaley 2011). Each language activist struggles with walls of doubt on their journey. I have heard these doubts spoken within community by N'syilxcn language learners, community members, and Elders:

1. It takes a lifetime to learn N'syilxcn.

2. N'syilxcn is a particularly difficult language to learn.

3. Only Elders can teach N'syilxcn.

4. N'syilxcn cannot be learned in the classroom—it must be learned on the land.

5. N'syilxcn will come to us easily, without effort, it is part of our bloodstream.

Statements such as these contribute to the politics of distraction that makes it difficult for learners to succeed. Cohen (2010) articulates the "politics of distraction" that he encountered in Syilx community, elaborated in the next chapter, together with Indigenous methodologies and underlying beliefs.

I encountered generalized doubts about Indigenous language revitalization, expressed in my initial readings in the field of Indigenous methodology (ariculated in the next chapter). I also found doubts arising from within our sqəlxʷcawt (way of being). Some principles embedded in our sqəlxʷcawt, specifically the values of practicing quietness and listening rather than speaking, are in opposition to bringing back N'syilxcn. Some cultural values, such as a primacy for land-based learning, quietness, inclusive talking-circles, and Elder-

driven teaching are in opposition to successful second-language learning at a beginner level, as I will share in Chapter seven. This was a struggle for me to accept initially, but I took inspiration from successful language revitalization strategies, described in the next chapter.

Committing to Grizzly's den, as individuals

Smx̌ikn (Grizzly Bear female) wends her way through my thoughts on our language house experience. Grizzly bears, specifically mother Grizzlies, are powerful figures in Syilx captíkʷł (story) representing mothering, cultural transmission, tradition, language abilities, and care of children (Wickwire 2001). I share the Grizzlies and the Boy captíkʷł below because it illustrates the power of hard work and transformation. I relate the Grizzly's den to our language house because it describes the intensity of our transformation in the house, and provides a Syilx framework to break through the walls of doubt about achieving proficiency as adult learners.

The Grizzlies and the Boy captíkʷł offers an example of the power of the indivual as a change agent in community, as well as a framework for structured, mentor-driven learning, transformation, and hard work. I explore the messages from this captíkʷł below, to support adult learners with the transformative power of hard work and of removing oneself from everyday surroundings.

The Grizzlies and the boy

Long ago there was a boy who was spoiled and lazy. He used to lick discarded leftovers off the cooking pots instead of joining the hunters. His community insisted he be abandoned the next time they moved camp. One morning the boy woke up alone with no food and no food-gathering skills. After a few days he despaired and, giving in to death, he laid himself down in the path of a Grizzly Bear mother and her two cubs. Fortunately for the boy, the cubs wanted a playmate and convinced their mother to take him in. To make him a fit companion for her cubs, the Grizzly mother initiated the boy's transformation by

cutting him open and cleaning out the discards from his intestines. The boy lived with the Grizzlies for two summers and two winters during which time he was transformed into a skilled and capable man. After two years the Grizzly mother returned him to his community with skills and knowledge that would enrich his people. Half wild, he returned to his people with knowledge he had gained (paraphrased from Peterson *et al*. 2012, Stories 5 and 6).

The boy's situation was so dire that it was not possible for him to learn the necessary skills and knowledge in his own community. He needed to be removed to the Grizzly's den and subjected to intensive instruction to reverse the downward trajectory of his life. The young boy is like our language, endangered to the point of near-death by colonization, residential school, global forces of language shift, and more recently by internal "politics of distraction" (Cohen 2010) and by our own walls of doubt. Our language is in dire need of Grizzly's help to reverse its decline. We, community members, begin by cleaning our bellies. To take the metaphor further, we can view the discards of colonization and ongoing politics of distraction as the leftovers that fill our bellies, including colonizing pedagogies, unhealthy lifestyles, and community dysfunction. I believe that each of us, like the boy, holds the key to reversing language loss.

The learning will not just "come to us" without work; it will not be easy. We will have to work for it, like the boy did. As adult language learners we need to commit to two intensive years of instruction, or a thousand hours (described further in Chapter four), to a transformative process, in Grizzly's den, removed from our usual distractions, under the tutelage of language experts like the Grizzly-mother and her cubs. For adult learners some of our Grizzly Bears, or guides, will be advanced second-language acquisition (SLA) methods, teachers, curriculum, Elders and techniques, including continued assessment. My capsíw's and I were fortunate to have the assistance of our own Grizzlies, Sʕamtíc'aʔ, Chris Parkin and TPCLA curriculum, as well as messages embedded in our language and our sqəlxʷcawt.

The den will take us partway in our language transformation. After the den, our transformation must continue in our communities, in newly created language domains. Our ultimate role and responsibility as Indigenous adults is to learn our language in order to transmit it to our children. Grizzly's dens can create a much-needed new generation of adult speakers and parents capable of bringing the language back to our communities and families. Like the boy, we will need a similar network of support to re-integrate language into our homes and communities.

sqəlx^wcawtət (our ways)

Sqəlx^wcawt describes a uniquely Syilx community methodology, combining the two root words sqilx^w (pronounced *skay-lugh)* and cawt (pronounced *chawt*), to mean our ways, work, role and responsibility, as Syilx people, interconnected with Syilx ways and knowledges. *Sqilx^w* (as described in Chapter one) is the unifying term we use to refer to ourselves as people—animal-beings (or life forces) who dream in a spiral, seasonal way, who exist in matter and spirit. This articulates humans' relationship to the natural, ecological and spiritual world (Armstrong 2012; Cardinal and Armstrong 1991). Sqəlx^wcawt means simply, the sqilx^w way, and more poetically, "the dream way in a spiral way," a concept that incorporates the cycle of life, of seasons, plants, tmix^w, family, dream, and spirit (Cohen 2001). According to Syilx Elders, now is the time when the dreams can be rebuilt by the current generations, before they are lost forever. Armstrong explains the sacred relationship between sqilx^w, tmix^w (animal beings), land, and the role of humans:

> A word in Okanagan, xaxáʔ [x̌aʔx̌áʔ] refers to the meaningful essence of all creation. The word has been translated to mean 'the sacred aspect' of being. This word is applied to humans, as beings with the power to acknowledge or act in ways which seek to maintain the principle of harmony with creation and yet continue to make new choices for survival (Cardinal and Armstrong 1991:46).

People without the Syilx cultural connection to land, community, and each other were seen by Jeannette Armstrong's Elders as suffering from a dispassionate condition: they were "crazy," or "people without hearts" (Armstrong 1997:1). Connectedness—to each other, the community, to the land, to ancestral beings—is a central element in Syilx writing (Akiwenzie-Damm 1996; Armstrong 2000; Cohen 2001, 2010). In N'syilxcn, the word for kinship is "sharing one skin," reflecting a deep level of connection (Armstrong 1997:1). Armstrong further develops tmix^w as part of a Syilx environmental ethic in her dissertation, explaining that:

> Tmixw is the life-force which makes up the tmxwulaxw or life-force-place and the humans are only "placed" as a life-force themselves through Indigeneity as a social paradigm within a criteria of full reciprocity in the regeneration of all life forms of a place (Armstrong 2012:1)

In sqilx^w culture a respectful and inclusive style of communication is crucial. It may be particularly important for Syilx learners to incorporate personal content and sharing circles in language programs, as personal connection is an important component of sqəlx^{w}cawt. For Syilx people, communing is often more important than communicating; speaking from the heart, from shared emotional response, is very important (Armstrong 1997, 2006).

Cleansing and transformation are goals of many Syilx rituals and practices. Water has a special cleansing and purifying role for Syilx people. A specific method to prepare for transformation includes what we call "going to the water", or cleansing in cold water. Cohen reminds us that "Turtle's ability to be alert, disciplined, and committed is maintained, in part, by, the ritual of daily cleansing in cold water" (Cohen 2010:221).

Sqəlx^{w}cawt lends itself to community-based action in research. Sqilx^w theory recognizes that many people are action-oriented. I base this on my interpretation of

Enowkinwixw (n'aʕʷqnwíʔxʷ, a sqilxʷ-derived methodology described by Jeannette Armstrong (2000, 2005) and Bill Cohen (2010:115-121). Enowkinwixw recognizes that some individuals have a tendency towards action, and others are innovation-, connection-, or tradition-oriented. Enowkinwixw is a four-day consensus-based decision making process. Before the process, individuals from community are assigned to four groups, named *mothers* (or Spiƛ̓əm, Bitterroot), *fathers* (or Ntiytyíx, Salmon), *Elders* (or Skmxist, Black Bear) and *youth* (or Siyáʔ, Saskatoon Berry), based on the Four Food Chiefs (Armstrong 2005; Cohen 2010:121). Each group is based on characteristics, rather than gender or age; there may actually be youth in the Elders group, and mothers in the fathers group, and vice versa. The *mothers* group is composed of people from community who are most interested in connection and networking. The *fathers* group is composed of the action-oriented, logical thinkers from community, the scientists. The *Elders* are the ones who are traditionalists, interested in preserving cultural values. The *youth* are the innovators and creative thinkers from community. Each group has its strengths, voice, and role in community. Each person is heard within their group, and each group is given voice within the larger Enowkinwixw process.

Syilx ways resonate with the power of the individual to affect change within community. In the initial phases of language revitalization, Darrell Kipp is speaking to the action-oriented, "You don't change the entire community. You save your strength; you find the ones who want it" (Kipp 2000:6). This reflects that sometimes the frictions within community can only be bypassed by Indigenous community activists working in small groups. Community-based language activism is embraced by N'syilxcn activists Bill Cohen (2001, 2010) and Chris Parkin (2012), as well as by Interior Salish language activists Kathy

Michel (2012) and Janice Dick-Billy (2009) each of whom was instrumental in supporting the creation of an immersion language nest in their community.

Sqəlx^{w}cawt (sqilxwlcawt, sqilx^{w}cút) is also a pedagogical model developed by Bill Cohen of nk'maplqs (Cohen 2001, 2010). Cohen illustrates sqəlx^{w}cawt in relation to children's immersion learning, which places children at the centre of the pedagogical process, surrounded by community, extended family, nature, spirit, mastery, and a sense of belonging (2001, 2011). These children will grow up to become powerful community members. Cohen writes that public school programs do not work for Okanagan language, because children are removed from the centre of sqəlx^{w}cawt (2001:144). Sqəlx^{w}cawt (as described by Cohen, 2001) is similar to, and informed by Te Kohanga Reo, the Maori language nest model, and by Kaupapa Maori, Maori language revitalization (G. Smith, 2000).

Within our immersion house we were simultaneously developing a sqəlx^{w}cawt for adult learners to follow. How can adult N'syilxcn learners apply sqəlx^{w}cawt? As adult learners, we also need to place ourselves at the centre of the pedagogical structure, rather than in boxes of learning. We may need to create these pedagogical opportunities—a process which involves action, such as the forming of language houses and language nests. Just like younger learners, adult learners need to be supported by community, nature, extended family, spirit and a sense of belonging. As adults we have an added responsibility, or cawt, within community—to begin to speak up, to embrace successful plans and techniques for language acquisition, and to find our voices within community, classrooms, and in our homes. As a language learner and activist I believe my sqəlx^{w}cawt is to break through the

walls of doubt and resistance to become a proficient speaker, and to reintegrate this learning back into family and community.

sqəlxʷcawt i? l syaẏáx̌a? (film and sqəlxʷcawt)

In sqəlxʷcawt, as in many other Indigenous methodologies, our personal narrative, set in our particular communities, takes primacy over outside methodological generalizations. Oral filmed narrative allows interlocutors to speak for themselves. Film is an excellent medium for sharing personal narrative with our community as well as other language learners. There is an emergent wave of self-determined film and multi-media representation by Syilx media students and professionals—as can be seen by viewing an end-of semester multi-media presentation at the En'owkin Centre, on the Penticton Reserve, B.C., or by typing "Syilx" into the internet browser of YouTube.ca (Baptiste 2009a,b).

Michelle Jack, an Okanagan scholar, uses first person narrative through film and a personal website to explore Syilx people's relationship to the 49th parallel, in her PhD research (2010). Jack feels that multimedia, community narrative voice, and text are best able to show the interconnections between multiple ways of knowing, and to "cut space" in academia for indigenous voice (2010:19). Her work shows that sqilxʷ lifeways are "as varied and layered as each individual member of our communities" (2010:8). For Syilx people, filmmaking can be transformative and network-building, through using *spilaxem* (personal narrative) to share the heart (Giard 2006). Digital video may be better able to subvert the colonialist gaze than static research forms because it is accessible, easily shared, and can be both individual and *collective* (Evans *et al.* 2009; Kindon 2003). Film is also increasingly being used to document language learners' progress, and sharing on YouTube, as described in later chapters. I decided to join this wave of multimedia representation by

producing filmed N'syilxcn narratives (described in Chapter five) as part of my research. I consider the personal narratives reproduced in the three films to be the most powerful contributions of my research as they tell our story in our own words.

Captík^wɬ (Syilx story system)

Captík^wɬ (also spelled captikwl and chapteekwhl) are our stories, including creation stories, that take place in the time before time as we know it, when animal people walked the land, had special powers and the landscape was being transformed into its present form (Robinson and Wickwire 1989). Captík^wɬ are still transmitted orally, though in a shorter form than previously, and generally in English. Syilx ways of knowing are transmitted through day-to-day interactions, and in captík^wɬ (Armstrong 2006; Cohen 2001). Interior Salish stories are a mixture of the sacred and the profane (Ignace 2008), and convey deep cultural meanings about nature, morality, respect, the laws of living in balance with the natural world, and proper behaviour (Armstrong *et al*. 1993; Hanna and Henry 1995:11; Ignace 2008).

The stories are an important part of who we are. Bill Cohen, Syilx poet and academic, notes that a person's lack of *being* within a story structure and community precipitates a disconnect: "story-less figures are lonely metaphors" (2001:142). Without story, culture, and language, we are disconnected particles. The dream way, including connection and belonging, has been all but lost, according to Cohen, during the tragic dysfunction and emptiness caused by genocidal assimilationist policies. However, the strands of connection are strong and resilient with tremendous transformative potential (2001:143). According to Syilx Elders, the current generation is the one with the potential to revitalize the dream way before it is lost.

Our stories have been collected in numerous publications. Wendy Wickwire (2005) provides an overview of Interior Salish stories, many of them collected by James Teit, and their potential for research. James Teit collected and transcribed numerous Okanagan stories in English, though unfortunately much was lost in the translation (Boas *et al.* 1969; Teit and Boas 1973; Wickwire 2001). Interior Salish captík^{w}ł can be found in Leslie Spier's *The Sinkaietk or Southern Okanagon* (1938); and Mourning Dove's *Coyote Stories* (1990), originally published in 1933. Other Interior Salish stories have been published (in English) in Dorothy Kennedy and Randy Bouchard's *Lillooet Stories* (1977); and Darwin Hanna and Mamie Henry's *Our Tellings: Interior Salish Stories of the Nlha7kápmx People* (1995).

Syilx writers have published and re-interpreted numerous captík^{w}ł, in English (Bill Cohen 1999, 2001; Barbara Marchand 2004; Robinson and Wickwire 1989, 2004, 2005). Several audio and written sources of captík^{w}ł exist in N'syilxcn. Andrew McGinnis has made numerous excellent audio recordings of captík^{w}ł in N'syilxcn and English, available on compact discs (McGinnis and McGinnis no date). Tony Mattina, a linguist from the University of Montana, collected and recorded invaluable captík^{w}ł, in N'syilxcn, from Dora Noyes deSautel and published a compact disc together with a book, co-authored by Madeline deSautel (Mattina and deSautel 2002). Much of TPCLA curriculum is based on captík^{w}ł, including text, audio, graphics, and software (Peterson *et al.* 2005, 2012, in-press), providing invaluable resources for learners to connect with language and story.

Personal narrative

Sqəlx^{w}cawt and Syilx ways are often represented in Syilx writing in a personal narrative style. This style is often poetic, culturally-grounded, relational, and personal. Syilx writers value speaking and writing from the heart. This writing style is most eloquently

demonstrated in Jeannette Armstrong's writings (1997, 1998; 2000, 2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2012). Armstrong shares Syilx narrative voice, as well as her deep connection to the rhythms of N'syilxcn in a poem, *Frogs Singing* (Armstrong 1998:189). Armstrong wrote this poem after a long conversation about the musical coherence of N'syilxcn with her elder sister Delphine, who had spoken only N'syilxcn until she was twelve years old.

Frogs Singing

my sister did not dream this
she found this out when she walked
outside and looked up and star
rhythms sang to her pointing their spines of light
down into her and filled her body with star song
and all around her
frogs joined the star singing
they learned it
long ago (Armstrong 1998:189)

Narrative voice is also demonstrated in Bill Cohen's thesis, which is poetic, and employs a personal narrative voice in many places (2010). Syilx writing style may be traced to oral narrative such as Harry Robinson's eloquent storytelling in *Write it on your heart: the epic world of an Okanagan storyteller*; *Nature power: in the spirit of an Okanagan storyteller*; and *Living by stories: a journey of landscape and memory* (Robinson and Wickwire 1989, 2004, 2005). Personal narrative is employed by many Indigenous writers, reflecting a belief that our personal story, relationality, and individual experience is of primary importance within research (Meyer 2008; Wilson 2008). I decided early in my writing to employ, to the best of my ability, a personal narrative style. This shows up best in Chapter six, where I include excerpts from my notebooks.

Syilx voice is strengthened by our storytelling tradition, similarly to neighbouring Interior Salish writers; we are boldly and prolifically reclaiming the page, writing in our own

style, and in our own publications (McGinnis and McGinnis no date; Robinson and Wickwire 1989, 2004, 2005; Webber 1990; Armstrong *et al.* 1993; Young-Ing *et al.* 1999; Armstrong 2000, 2005, 2006, 2012; Armstrong and Grauer 2001; Cohen 1999, 2001, 2010; Hanna and Henry 1995; Greenwood 1997; Marchand 2004; Ignace 2008; C. Johnson 2001; Louis 2008; Sam 2008; Sam 2013; Jack 2010; M. Johnson 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013a,b; Michel 2012b). Storytelling style is combined with personal narrative and academic discourse in seven Interior Salish doctoral dissertations that I know of (Armstrong 2012; Dick-Billy 2009; Cohen 2010; Ignace 2008; Jack 2010; Michel 2012b; Sterling 1997).

Syilx historical contributions

A handful of Syilx authors and scholars have provided an important history of colonization from a Syilx perspective (Armstrong *et al.* 1993; Mourning Dove 1990; Sam 2008; Sam 2012). Mourning Dove (Xmismǝs, Christine Quintasket) was the first Syilx writer. Her life and autobiography provide a window into the pressures of colonization. In her autobiography, Mourning Dove shares the work of women's spheres, seasonal activities such as fishing and hunting, and winter dancing. She provides detailed accounts of the recent history of colonization, including early farming, and the "invasion of miners and settlers" (Mourning Dove 1990b: 177). Mourning Dove also wrote *Coyote Stories* (1990a, originally published in 1933), and a novel in the cowboy-genre: *Cogewea, the half blood: a depiction of the great Montana cattle range* (1981, originally published in 1927). Her work is highly edited by non-Syilx editors who often obscure her voice. It is interesting to note that in the first Syilx novel, Mourning Dove chose to write from the main character's standpoint as a half-blood, which gave her the ability to flow between two worlds and be accepted in both.

Mourning Dove's grand-niece, Jeannette Armstrong continues the strong tradition of

writing from a Syilx perspective in her numerous publications, detailed in the next section. Armstrong collaborated with Syilx Elders, the Okanagan Rights Committee and the Okanagan Indian Education Resource Society for the Okanagan Tribal Council to co-author the Syilx history entitled, *We get our living like milk from the land* (Armstrong *et al*. 1993). The book overviews pre-contact history, the history of colonization, contemporary history, and provides "an historically factual basis for all the grassroots members of the Okanagan Nation" (Armstrong *et al*. 1993:ix). The book begins with captík^{w}ł stories, moves through the first contact of colonization and ends in the present. Syilx people's history, creation, and relationship to the land are recorded in Syilx cəpcaptík^{w}ł (story):

> The original people of the Okanagan were wished here by **k'^{w}lencuten,** the Creator of oneself, Creator and arranger of the world.
>
> The **syilx** people know history, passed on from one person to another, from generation to generation, as a record called **cepcaptik^{w}l.** It is a history of the meaning of being **syilx**, rather than a history of dates. The **meanings** in the **cepcaptik^{w}l** are formed through story. They are the truths and knowledge of the natural laws made active through story.
>
> In the **cepcaptik^{w}l** we are told the **k'^{w}lencuten,** created and sent **senk'lip,** Coyote, to help change things so that our people might survive on the earth. Coyote's travels across the land are a record of the natural laws our people learned in order to survive (Armstrong *et al*. 1993:3).

N'syilxcn language is written on the landscape and passed on from generation to generation:

> The language which arose from our learning about the land is called the **syilx** language. All who speak it are called the **syilx** because the language carries the teachings of a very old civilization with thousands of years of knowledge of healthy living on this land. The laws are always taught by telling the stories to each child and to any adults who need reminding.
>
> The land forms in the stories are teachings and are reminders to each generation, that the land is at the center of how we are to behave. The destruction of the story landmarks and natural land forms are like tearing pages out of a history book to the **syilx**. Without land knowledge we are endangered as a life form on that land and we in turn endanger other life forms there. (Armstrong *et al*. 1993:4).

Syilx governance includes the responsibility to pass along the laws and the language:

A high chief represented the laws of the whole **syilx** at the nation level to protect the rights of the **syilx**. The high chief chose and gave his title to one that he trained before his death. The high chief family decided among themselves who could continue the responsibility of carrying the right of all the **syilx** forward. They are responsible for protecting the land, the people, the language and the **syilx** ways. (Armstrong *et al*. 1993:9)

Bill Cohen summarizes the historical contributions of four infuential, transformative

Syilx leaders spanning 1900 to the present (2010): Chief Johnny Chillihitzia, Chief Gus

Gottfriedsen, Dr. Jeannette C. Armstrong, and Sarah *Sʕamtí́c'aʔ* Peterson. In Cohen's words:

They are leaders who have kept alive the strands of knowledge especially in areas of the right to be Okanagan, storytelling, extended family, Okanagan theory and practice, and language recovery. Because of them and others, the current generation has the opportunity for transforming praxis tied to and informed by our ancestors and homeland—to be Okanagan. (Cohen 2010:125).

Chiefs Johnny Chillihitzia and Gus Gottfriedsen were influential political leaders:

Chief Johnny Chillihitzia was a traditional *Yelmixwem* in the Okanagan language. His positions were informed by strong relational accountability to his people and many First Nations in BC who formed political alliances. Chief Gus Gottfriedsen, an Okanagan, married into the *Secwepemc* and became Chief for many years, a continuing expression of thousands of years of kinship connections and formal alliances with our allies, the *Secwepemc* people. Gus is noted for his political leadership through intense eras of assimilation policy and cultural genocide. It is his role with his wife Millie, however, in maintaining extended family networks of caring and responsibility, and mentoring numerous young men and women with leadership potential that is their continuing legacy (Cohen 2010:125).

Jeannette Armstrong and Sarah Peterson are contemporary Syilx leaders in scholarship and

language revitalization, respectively:

Dr. Jeannette Armstrong is the first Okanagan to receive her Ph. D. for research and work informed by and embodying Okanagan knowledge. Her work has been particularly important to spark the imagination and creative potential of a wave of Okanagan, Indigenous and mainstream artists, writers, scholars and educators. Sarah Petersen, perhaps the most active Okanagan elder in language recovery, was the first Okanagan language teacher to apply Total Physical Response methods, and founded the Paul Creek Language Association, which provides language-teaching resources to all Okanagan communities. Sarah inspired and mentored many young language activists and educators (Cohen 2010:125-6).

Marlowe Sam provides a historical synopsis of colonization of Syilx territory in his Master's thesis (2008), and in a chapter contribution to *The Social Life of Water* (Wagner 2013). Sam provides a chronological, comparative, historical account of first contact from a Syilx perspective, using an ethnohistorical approach based on archival sources, explorers' accounts and Mourning Dove's writings. Effects of colonization, as detailed by Sam, include environmental degradation, economic impacts of trading and trapping, extermination of game due to new economic pressures, degradation of grasslands due to grazing, and degradation of salmon. Sam's PhD research contributed to a deeper understanding of Syilx oral narratives, customary law, water governance and history (Sam 2013).

Syilx publications

Contemporary Syilx writing tends to be emotional, poetic, and personal. Many Syilx publications pertain to decolonization, story, educational materials, and creative literature. Some of these publications are academic (i.e. peer reviewed articles and books); all are aimed towards self-determination, self-translation, safeguarding and presenting the knowledge in a way that is of importance to the Interior Salish people. Jeannette Armstrong provides a wealth of information about Syilx culture in her many publications (1993, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2006, 2012). She continues the strong tradition of Syilx writing begun by her great-aunt Mourning Dove, as well as a powerful spirit of ecological and community activism. Armstrong is a an Indigenous theorist, activist, writer, creative writer, poet, and educator, has authored numerous publications, and maintains her connection to the land and her kinship ties to community (Cohen 2010:133). She was chosen by Elders to lead the En'owkin Centre and served as executive director from its inception to 2013.

Individual Syilx scholars are developing an academic voice, grounded on Syilx foundations (Armstrong 1997, 1998, 2000a,b, 2005, 2006; Cohen 1999, 2001, 2010; Sam 2008; Jack 2010). In a spirit of respect and reciprocity we build upon the words of each other, and make a humble, yet uncompromising, contribution to the academy. Syilx researchers such as myself are strengthened by the work of Indigenous researchers who have gone before us.

In the next chapter I broaden my discussion to include language revitalization methods, methodologies, experiences and success stories in language revitalization.

Chapter 3: Methods, methodology and success stories

tl aʔ mnimɬtət mi ɬxʷlal aʔ ṅqəlqilxʷcntət
we are the ones [it is from us] who will bring our languages back to life
(Q'iyusálxqn, pers. comm. April 4, 2013)

My primary research methodology, a lived-experience of transformative praxis within sqəlxʷcawt, is reflected throughout the research. This chapter broadens the methodological focus and describes my methodological journey through several academic fields. As an Indigenous language revitalizer I found it necessary to wear several methodological hats. I familiarized myself with methods and methodologies from five fields: Indigenous research, sqilxʷ pedagogy, second language acquisition, Indigenous language revitalization, and (to a lesser extent) linguistics. This chapter first defines and clarifies the term *revitalization* from a sqilxʷ perspective. I then define and unpack the terms *methodology* and *methods*. I then describe the methodologies (arranged by *methods* and *underlying beliefs*) of several research areas: Indigenous research, second-language acquisition, Indigenous language revitalization, and linguistics (these areas are developed further in Chapter seven in application to N'syilxcn learning). I then present strategies used in Indigenous language revitalization, Joshua Fishman's eight stages of Reversing Language Shift, and examples of successes in Indigenous language revitalization.

Definition of revitalization

When I think of *revitalization* I think of a term in N'syilxcn, ɬcxʷəlxʷʕalt, *bring someone or something back to life*. The word and concept ɬcxʷəlxʷʕalt is represented many times in our story system, as is the related word ɬxʷlal (bring back to life). For example, Fox bringing Coyote back to life over and over again. For me, revitalization breathes life back into

something. In the case of languages, breathing life is accomplished by speaking, by supplying air and energy to the spoken word, by multiple generations speaking in natural contexts. Full language revitalization is accomplished when language is spoken in the home by parents, grandparents, and children. As a verb, *revitalize* implies responsibility, action, and agency—in linguistic terms, it requires a subject and an object. A language does not revitalize on its own. In the words of fluent Elder, Q'iyusálxqn (Herman Edward), "tl aʔ *mnimɬtət* mi ɬxʷlal aʔ n'qəlqilxʷcntət; *we* are the ones [it is from us] who will bring our languages back to life" (pers. comm. April 4, 2013)[21]. As an Indigenous researcher, the agency lies within me, and I constantly return my focus to the goal of Indigenous language revitalization: to learn, teach, and speak our languages and transmit them to the next generation.

Definition of methodology

Methodology is the "science of method" (Oxford 1989) and refers to an analysis of methods used in investigations. It can include an assessment of methods, but does not generally discuss the methods, or tools, themselves. Methodological discussions include the sets of underlying beliefs that inform the deployment of particular methods, or tools. In my understanding, methodology is passive whereas methods are active; in linguistic terms, methodology can be objectless, whereas method requires an object. As a *methodologist,* "one who treats method as a science" (Oxford 1989) I can *methodologize* without an object, whereas to apply a *method* requires a subject (myself or a group) and an object (myself or others). A paradigm represents a valid methodology. In scientific and technical contexts

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[21] Q'iyusálxqn (Herman Edward) was born in 1953 and lives in Keremeos BC. His mother was the late Plisitíʔ (Isabel (Louie) Edward) and his father was Xʷáʔcuʔ (Noel Edward). He teaches at Ntamɬqn school. He is a fluent N'syilxcn speaker and generously shares his language with all learners.

there is some confusion between methods and methodology, with the latter often used erroneously in place of the former (Houghton Mifflin 2009; Oxford 1989), a tendency which confuses scholarship. Researchers are individuals with beliefs which are represented in their work. I discuss methodologies through this lens.

A discussion of *methods* is not properly considered relevant to a methodological discussion. However, as mentioned previously, Indigenous research is often action-based research of service to the community. I believe adopting successful action-based methods is key to successful language revitalization. In the following sections I overview four methodologies, in terms of (first) their methods and (second) underlying beliefs.

My methodological journey

I begin with a personal admission: from the beginning of my PhD journey I found myself confused by numerous methodological streams and their role in language revitalization. I wanted to speak in terms of successful language learning methods, and leave methodological discussions for others. *Methodology* was and is a foreign word to me. I looked for but could not find my textual friends—those whose methods and underlying beliefs best fit my own. I looked for readings that could assist Indigenous language revitalizers and found few discussions of methods *or* methodologies. In my readings I often found my energies pulled in different directions. Reading about methodologies and paradigms produced tension—a cognitive dissonance from holding simultaneous conflicting beliefs. In n'qilxʷcn, we refer to this unhealthy state as ṅq̓iyíẃs k̓ʷłpaʕx̌mín, two minded, a condition that results from speaking one way while believing another.

My methodological journey began with readings in Indigenous methodologies, described below, followed by readings in Syilx methodologies, described in Chapter two,

then Indigenous language revitalization and second-language acquisition, described below and again in Chapter seven. My participation in the language house followed a decolonizing path leading to transformative praxis (these terms are borrowed from Indigenous methodologies, and are defined below). In embodying my language and my praxis, I *lived* my methodology. Later, to describe my transformative journey I employed methodologies from several fields. I needed to express our transformation in specific, replicable terms. My supporting methodologies were chosen in reverse—after the transformative praxis in the language house. As an Indigenous language activist, I was initally concerned with adopting *methods* to successfully support language learning and revitalization. Academic reflection subsequently revealed the *methodologies* behind the methods.

Ultimately, I made methodological choices. My theoretical grounding rests on methodologies and methods from three fields: Indigenous Language Revitalization, second-language acquisition, and Indigenous research. Each one informed my research and the subsequent discussion of my research to some degree. In the next sections I describe these methodologies, as well as linguistic methodologies.

Indigenous methodology

Indigenous scholars present an array of methodologies, criticism, personal writing styles, and activism grounded by a history of colonization, resistance, decolonization, and resilience. Indigenous methodologies are "research by and for Indigenous peoples, using techniques and methods drawn from the traditions and knowledges of those peoples" (Denzin and Lincoln 2008:ix). This section introduces Indigenous methodologies, including the terms *transformative praxis* and *politics of distraction*, followed by Indigenous research methods and underlying beliefs.

Shawn Wilson provides an excellent overview of the historical development of Indigenous research, following several phases (Wilson 2003). Decolonizing Indigenous researchers include Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), Marie Battiste (2000), Youngblood Henderson (2002), Sandy Grande (2004, 2008), Geniusz (2009), Rigney (1999), and Wilson (2008).

Graham Hingangaroa Smith voices the concern that as Indigenous academics, labeling and engaging in uncritical science can serve to reproduce our own oppression, and recreate oppressive structures (Smith 2000:215). Both Shawn Wilson (2003) and Manulani Aluli Meyer (2001) question the validity of objective "intellectual" research. Smith challenges us to be proactive, rather than reactive, and develop Indigenous praxis (defined below) with Indigenous cultural values. Graham Smith's role in proactive engagement started in 1982, when the Maori people decided to step outside the colonial structures and form language nests which have gone on to include hundreds of children (2000).

Graham Hingangaroa Smith does not believe we are in a post-colonial period, and suggests that theory can be an "important site of struggle for indigenous people" (Smith 2000:215). Our task as Indigenous researchers is to develop theory that is authentic, decolonizing, reflects right action, is rooted in our cultures, is linked to community, has meaning, and helps us to make good choices and live a good life (Alfred 2010; Dana-Sacco 2010). Indigenous research should be ethical, performative, healing, transformative, decolonizing and participatory (Denzin and Lincoln 2008:2), and should incorporate concepts of protocol, respect, and ownership of information (Archibald 2008; Wilson 2003). The four Rs of Indigenous research are respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility (Evans *et al.* 2008; Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991). Indigenous methodologies require that the

community be engaged in the research, that the research be useful to the community (Evans *et al.* 2008; Meyer 2008; Wilson 2003), and that something be given back to the community—more than just a research paper, a dissertation, or a map (Battiste 2008). Gail Dana-Sacco articulates the need for research to be meaningful to community:

> Indigenous scholars are calling attention to the essential need to engage in meaningful community service through research. It is within Indigenous communities that we find the means to eclipse the discourse of deconstruction and decolonization to engage in collective action. In this way we center ourselves and our communities in the wellspring of Indigenous creativity and transformative energy (Dana-Sacco 2010).

Transformative praxis

Indigenous research must ultimately focus on community action, on transformative praxis (Alfred 2005, 2010; Battiste 2000; Dick-Billy 2009; Burgess 2000; Dana-Sacco 2010; Jack 2010; Wilson and Yellow Bird 2005). Praxis is a term that includes action and reflection, defined by Paulo Freire as, "the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it" (Freire 2005:79). Paulo Friere was one of the first to research decolonization, praxis, and critical pedagogy in *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, translated to English from Brazilian Portuguese in 1970 and reprinted in 2005.

Indigenous scholars are generally motivated by desire to do something *useful*, to engage in praxis informed by community dialogue and discourse, that does not have discourse as the only result (Alfred 2010; Archibald 2008; Deloria 1995). Indigenous researchers have progressed in recent decades through several phases of recovery from colonial influence, ultimately leading to *action*, or transformative praxis (Alfred 2005, 2010; Battiste 2000; Burgess 2000:152; Dana-Sacco 2010; Jack 2010; Wilson 2003). Poka Laenui/Haydn Burgess suggests five phases of decolonization: rediscovery and recovery; mourning; dreaming; commitment; and finally action (2000:152). After a period of

dreaming, reflection, and mourning, Indigenous methods *must* lead to action and transformative praxis. Taiaiake Alfred reminds us, as Indigenous researchers:

> If we are willing to put our words into action and transform our rhetoric into practice, we too can achieve the fundamental goal of the Indigenous warrior: to live life as an act of Indigeneity, to move across life's landscapes in an Indigenous way, as my people say, *Onkwehonweneha* (Alfred 2005:45).

Praxis may take the form of decolonizing theatre (Madison 2008), transformative pedagogy in a university setting (Williams and Tanaka 2007), building a school (Kipp 2009), participatory filmmaking (Giard 2006; Jack 2010), web design (Buszard-Welcher 2001; Landzelius 2006; Wemigwans 2008), or revitalizing an Indigenous language (G. Smith 2000; L. Smith 2000; Hinton and Hale 2001; Dick-Billy 2009; Kipp 2009; MacDonald 2009; Michel 2012b; Cohen 2010). Transforming Praxis informed the contributions to an Indigenous ecological knowledge conference in Okanagan territory in 2010, *Indigenous Earth: Praxis and Transformation*, Penticton, BC (Johnson and Simmons 2010).

Indigenous researchers stress the need to decolonize the classroom through transformative reflection, Freirian principles (1970) of critical pedagogy, and action (Wilson and Yellow-Bird 2005). Heather Harris, an Indigenous studies professor at the University of Northern British Columbia, invites the entire university classroom to her Kispiox community to share food with her family in her home (2002). She counteracts the divisiveness of academic disciplinary boundaries by decolonizing the classroom and contextualizing the learning for the students. Harris links, in an experiential, lived pedagogy, the multifaceted experiences of classroom, orality, participation, visits to the forest, her home, sharing food with family, and artistic creative storytelling (2002). Many excellent Indigenous pedagogical articles develop Indigenous pedagogies, such as bringing students out of the classroom, land-

based learning, holistic learning, inclusive group learning, sharing from the heart, and talking circles (Harris 2002; Meyer 2008;Wilson 2003; Wilson 2008).

The challenge, according to Graham Hingangaroa Smith, is to engage in praxis with Indigenous cultural values, not to recreate the structures of the non-Indigenous culture. As Indigenous academics, labeling and engaging in uncritical science can be reactive (to pressures within academia), rather than proactive, and can serve to reproduce our own oppression, to reify oppressive structures (Smith 2000). Smith challenges researchers to step outside of colonial structures in a proactive rather than reactive way, and uses his efforts in Maori schools as an example (2000).

Politics of distraction

A methodological challenge to praxis is one articulated as "politics of distraction" by Graham Hingangaroa Smith (2003). This concept has been related to Indigenous language revitalization efforts by Smith (2003) and Cohen (2010), and is related to the *Walls of Doubt* shared in Chapter two. Smith defines "politics of distraction" for oppressed people as ". . . the colonizing process of being kept busy by the colonizer, of always being on the 'back-foot', 'responding', 'engaging', 'accounting', 'following', and 'explaining'", rather than questioning or rebelling (Smith 2003:2). The politics of distraction become self-perpetuating in community, and Smith notes that Maori people have begun to colonize themselves, perpetrating the "self abuse" of "politics of distraction" against themselves (Smith 2003:2).

Cohen describes the "politics of distraction" in Syilx community as "colonizing hegemonies, dirty politics and negative criticisms", and the "Indian crab bucket" (2010:221). He stresses the importance of recognizing the causes and preponderance of these types of negative distractions, to avoid having to learn the "hard way" and suffer "burnout" as a

language revitalizer (Cohen 2010:221). Distractions can lead to tensions in community work:

> Politics of distraction creates anomie, keeps individuals and communities hopelessly entangled in resistance and survival mode, and prevents transforming praxis from occurring (Cohen 2010:231).

Cohen reminds Syilx researchers to remember Turtle's (Figure 9) courageous leadership example and not become discouraged:

> It is useful to remember *arsikw,* turtle, and how his dream told him how to free the animal people. He remained committed and worked for the people even though those who were prisoners of hegemony scorned and ridiculed him for thinking that the animal people could be free. Leadership, through Turtle's example, is not only about vision and courage; it is also about facilitating confidence and vision in others and not becoming discouraged (Cohen 2010:221).

Rather than detail the politics of distraction in his community, Cohen provides a positive example, sharing strengths:

> What did our elders have to say? —Everything we need is here. What did the *tmixw* say? —Your dreams will tell you what you need to do. Gather the knowledge, resources, and all the bits you can and figure it out! (Cohen 2010:237)

Each Indigenous community, in my experience, presents unique challenges to transforming praxis, in the form of doubts, resistance, and politics of distraction arising from community members' deeply held emotions, practices, and beliefs (therefore representing a potential, yet negative, methodological path). Smith notes that the crucial moment in Maori history was when Maori people dealt with the "politics of distraction" and accepted responsibility for their own transformation (Smith 2003:2). He notes that the "'real' revolution in Maori language revitalization in the 1980's was a shift in mindset of large numbers of Maori people—a shift away from waiting for things to be done to them, to doing things for themselves . . ." (Smith 2003:2). For full transformation, individuals and

communities need to move beyond their politics of distraction, and adopt "useful" theoretical tools from community and academy to assist in transformation (Smith 2003:3).

Methods

Indigenous researchers often follow community-driven, participatory action methods (Cohen 2001; Evans *et al.* 2008; Fletcher 2001). Group process such as talking circles are valued Indigenous methods employed in community (Armstrong 2000, 2005b; Evans *et al.* 2008; Wilson and Wilson 2000; Wilson 2003, 2008). There are many parallels between sqəlx^{w}cawt (Syilx ways of being and doing) and Indigenous research methods. Film is valued for its potential in sharing narrative and creating connection at the level of the heart, as discussed in Chapter two.

Narrative voice

Narrative voice and personal storytelling style are valued Indigenous research methods. Narrative voice can be beautiful, expressive, poetic and personal, and is chosen by many Indigenous researchers for representing Indigenous ways in academia and sharing at the level of heart. Writers Shawn Wilson (2008), Jo-Ann Archibald (2008), Bill Cohen (2001, 2010), Shirley Sterling (1997) and Ron Ignace (2008) have broken ground in blending a personal relational Indigenous narrative style with an academic style of writing. Shawn Wilson apologizes, in an early academic article, for engaging in the arena of academic discourse, rather than expressing himself in "an indigenous cyclical-relational manner." (2003:162), and in later years develops a personal narrative style (2008). In my writing, I attempt to use a cyclical, relational style as much as possible, sometimes repeating myself to indicate an ongoing relationship to the topic, sometimes addressing the reader directly. The

readers I address specifically are Indigenous language revitalizers, activists, learners, and teachers.

Shawn Wilson uses two different fonts to discriminate between the relational, personal narrative sections of his book and the more "academic" sections, and writes some sections as personal letters to his son (Wilson 2008:8). Ron Ignace, Secwepemc (Shuswap Interior Salish) Elder, uses italics in his PhD thesis to indicate sections of personal storytelling (2008). Similarly, Jo-ann Archibald indents portions of her text in which she is storytelling (2008). Indigenous researchers should provide our own interpretations to our stories and narrative (C. Johnson 2001; Ignace 2008). Ron Ignace explains:

> Aboriginal people can and should do without Anthropologists or other "experts" as interlocutors. However, the problem is that oral histories cannot "stand alone," removed from their historically and culturally constituted meanings and experiences. Their meaning is almost never self-evident (Ignace 2008:27).

There is a great deal of Indigenous authorship centred on detailing the difficulty in articulating the Indigenous way in an academic dialectic (Archibald 2008; Cohen 2001; Meyer 2001; Progler 2005; Sarris 1993; Smith 1999; Wilson 2003). Indigenous researchers have found ways to respectfully and authentically express Indigenous ways of knowing in academia. Indigenous researchers often place the researcher within the research (as much as is possible by the inherent insider/outsider nature of research) by including personal information, valuing personal experience, describing a personal transformation, and sharing at an emotional level (Meyer 2008; Smith 2000; Tomasell *et al.* 2008; Wilson 2008).

Storywork

Storywork is an increasingly valued contribution to Indigenous research. In a decolonizing approach to Indigenous research, the stories and songs come first, told in a way that reflects protocol, spirit, and respect (Geniusz 2009). Jo-ann Archibald writes that ethnographic note-

taking placed her *outside* the process, whereas learning to listen, being guided by mentors, dreams, and developing "research as storytelling" returned her to the centre (2008). She quit using the taperecorder early on and began to make written and "memory" notes, some of which she experienced as blood memory and heart knowledge (Archibald 2008:47).

Indigenous stories share the characteristic of moral guidance—they organize the storyteller's worldview and direct her actions. To live life "right" is to live it "like a story" according to Julie Cruikshank's documented storytellers of the Yukon (Cruikshank 1990). The stories are an important part of who we are. Story also connects us to the landscape (Palmer 2005). Bill Cohen, Syilx poet and academic, notes that a person's lack of *being* within a community and story structure precipitates a disconnect: "story-less figures are lonely metaphors" (2001:142). Without a story, a culture, a language, we are mere particles. The dream way, including connection to story and belonging to community, has been all but lost during the tragic dysfunction and emptiness caused by genocidal assimilationist policies (Cohen 2001:143). However the strands of connection are also very strong and resilient with tremendous transformative potential (Cohen 2001:143). According to Syilx Elders, the current generation is the one with the potential to revitalize the dream way before it is lost (Cohen 2001).

Exploring dualities

Many Indigenous researchers explore and articulate dualities such as insider/outsider and Indigenous/non-Indigenous. *Intellectualism*, according to Meyer, refers to a belief that all our knowledge comes from empirical sources, our five senses, and that the observer can be distanced from the observed, completely obscuring the fact that all of our perceptions are culturally mediated (Meyer 2001:190-193). The insider/outsider duality, and its associated

difficulties in Indigenous research, has been well articulated by Indigenous researchers (Sarris 1993; L. Smith 2000; Archibald 2008).

Some scholars manage to successfully articulate the convergence of two worlds. Gloria Anzaldúa, a well-known feminist chicana scholar, articulates the concept of borderlands (1987), a convergence of two or more cultures, a concept she further describes as the permeable categories of *nepantla* and *nos/otras* (2000). *Nepantla* refers to the person who lives in the overlapping spaces between two worlds (Anzaldúa 2000). Several Indigenous scholars have applied a gender lens to Indigenous research (Abraham 2010; Anzaldúa 1987; Denzin *et al.* 2008; Rigney 1999; Tamez 2010). In a subsequent section, *Indigenous Language Revitalization methodology*, I offer a few words about the role of gender in Indigenous language revitalization.

Jeannette Armstrong reminds us that Syilx culture historically embraced and accepted diversity, that differences enriched and honoured the community, and suggests that to forget this is a form of racism, an emulation of colonial experience (2005). Leroy Little Bear also reminds us, "One of the problems with colonialism is that it tries to maintain a singular social order by means of force and law, suppressing the diversity of human worldviews" (2000:77). X̌əx̌mʕaɬ's song reminds us that individual voice is valued, and each individual has a unique role in community. Indigenous researchers recount that Indigenous people *are* relationship—to each other, to extended kinship networks, to the land, to the community (Wilson 2008).

Underlying beliefs

In this section I discuss underlying beliefs reflected by Indigenous research representing an Indigenous methodology. Many of these beliefs were introduced earlier in this chapter:

individual knowledge, personal narrative, group work, story systems, family networks, land-based ties, community process, respect, reciprocity, personal roles and responsibilities, which are all valued in Indigenous methodologies.

Indigenous scholars have criticized academic and scientific methods for their colonial origins, their inextricable roots in a hegemonic power-over structure, and their tendency to ignore the voice of the particular, the personal, the community, and the heart (Meyer 2008; Wilson 2003; Wilson and Yellowbird 2005). A difficulty in Indigenous writing is in speaking from within the culture and respecting the requirements of academia, while respectfully avoiding "non-concepts" that only exist within academia and not within Indigenous community (Harris 2002; Meyer 2001).

In Indigenous research it is important to define our own terms, to state our research goals from within our own cultural framework and to stand our ground (Akiwenzie-Damm 1996; Cohen 2010; Deloria 1995; Geniusz 2009; Grande 2008; Meyer 2001; Wilson 2008). As Indigenous researchers, our first task is to explore our own sense of Indigeneity and recover our identity which was stolen by colonization (Alfred 2010). Our strength as Indigenous authors comes from our individual voices and particular cultures. It is important to reflect a personal, experiential, and relational connection to the topic (Armstrong 2006; Jack 2010; Meyer 2008; Sterling 1997; Wilson 2003). Indigenous epistemology dictates that genuine knowledge must be experienced directly, and research must link the body, mind, and spirit (Meyer 2008).

Indigenous methodologies state that protocols must be followed, including ethics, and that Indigenous people have the right to protect the transfer of knowledge (United Nations General Assembly 2007; Battiste 2008). Control of knowledge and information is an

important consideration for communities. However, care must be taken (in my opinion) not to create barriers against learners accessing language materials or sharing language materials with each other.

Relationality is key to Indigenous methodologies (Wilson 2003:172) as well as to Syilx and Interior Salish worldview—relationality and respect of Elders, resources, the environment, and all our relations, including all living beings (Armstrong *et al.* 1993; Hanna and Henry 1995:11; Ignace 2008). Indigenous perspectives are predicated upon relationship—to multi-generational kinship networks, to ancestors, as well as plants and animal relations (Cohen 2001; Wilson 2003). Indigenous knowledge reflects a deep interaction with the environment and the spirit world, is deeply structured, and is often without a single author (Battiste 2008). Indigenous methodologies recognize multiple ways of knowing, multiple layers of reality, and an interrelationship between layers and levels. Indigenous methodologies defy disciplinary boundaries.

Indigenous Second-language acquisition methodology

Second language acquisition (SLA) research offers several theories and methods which are useful for Indigenous second-language learners, teachers, administrators and planners. I briefly outline theory and methods below which I consider to be of interest to Indigenous language learners. I provide further discussion on application of SLA methods in Chapter seven.

The "natural method" is a theory proposed by Krashen and Terrell (1988) to describe phases of learning. Chief Atahm's teaching methods are based on SLA theory named as "the communicative and the natural approaches" by Secwepemc researcher and teacher Janice Dick-Billy (2003:20) as well as in the *Handbook for Aborignal Language Programming in*

BC, written by Secwepemc-speaking researcher Marianne Ignace (1998). A "communication-based" approach to Indigenous language teaching is recommended by Supahan and Supahan (2001). Maori adult language programs have been informed by natural language acquisition theory, mentioning the "silent method" (King 2001).

Some researchers believe Indigenous SLA is inherently different from non-Indigenous SLA because of the historical factors affecting speakers and learners (Dick-Billy 2009; McIvor 2012). Therefore SLA methods need to be specifically adapted to Indigenous contexts. Indigenous Second Language Learning (ISLL) has been proposed as a new academic field, emerging from community, action research, second-language acquisition techniques, linguistics, education, political science, sociology, psychology, and decolonization research (McIvor 2012:41). I choose to use the terms Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Indigenous Second-language acquisition (Indigenous SLA) to maintain consistency with second-language acquisition research, which I believe is of great value to Indigenous language learners.

Methods

Methods used in SLA include immersion, scaffolding, comprehensible input, total physical response (TPR), teaching proficiency through reading and storytelling (TPR-S), and application of language assessment benchmarks. I discuss second-language acquisition phases and benchmarks and their relevance to N'syilxcn in Chapters four and five.

Several specifically Indigenous SLA teaching and learning methods have been developed, including the Master-apprentice model (First Peoples' Culture Council of British Columbia 2012; Hinton 2001c), the Paul Creek Language Association methods (Peterson *et al.* 2007), adult immersion camps (Maracle 2002; Nicholson 1990; Richards and Maracle

2002) and immersion language nests (Chambers *et al.* 2013; Dick-Billy 2009; Hohepa and Smith 1992; Hyslop 2011, 2013; King 2001; Michel 2005, 2012b; McIvor 2006), all of which are discussed further and evaluated in Chapter seven.

Stephen Greymorning's Accelerated Second Language Acquisition approach, designed for the Arapaho language, (1999) is regarded as an excellent teaching method (McIvor 2012:39; Sarkar and Metallic 2009; Underwood 2009), however, it is not reviewed or described in detail. Greymorning's method relies on key visual images to teach nouns and then verb constructions, in an interactive, spontaneous manner. It was reported as highly effective in raising children's productive vocabularies in a brief pilot project taught by Greymorning (Greymorning 1999). Adult Mi'gmaq learners adopted the method and have reported significant gains, self-reported as "advanced level" (Sarkar and Metallic 2009:57).

Total Physical Response is a teaching method originally developed by James Asher which involves action-based learning (Asher 2009; Asher and Adamski 1986; Ray and Seely 2004). Asher and Adamski report that TPR, taught by skilled teachers, can be highly successful in bringing children and teenagers to proficiency:

> If TPR is applied skillfully by elementary school teachers, students can graduate from the 8th grade understanding two, three or four languages which can be further "polished" in high school bringing students to fluency. Remember, the earlier we start internalizing other languages, the higher the chances of acquiring a near-native or even a native accent in each of those languages (Asher and Adamski 1986).

Total Physical Response is used extensively in the Chief Atahm School in Chase (discussed below) (Dick-Billy 2003, 2009; Michel 2012a,b). Janice Dick-Billy provides an excellent sample TPR lesson in her Masters thesis, developed through the Chief Atahm School (Dick-Billy 2003). Chief Atahm school produced two groundbreaking TPR textbooks, *TPR I* and *II* (Dick-Billy *et al.* 2004; Dick-Billy *et al.* 2007). These textbooks,

TPR I and *II* have been translated into N'syilxcn by the Paul Creek Language Association (Peterson *et al.* 2008) and are used extensively in children's teaching. *TPR I* was used as the foundation for the newly created BC *First Nations Language Essentials*, authored by Katherine Michel (Michel 2013), for the First Nations Education Steering Committee, to be used by all First Nations language programs in BC.[22]

The cohort model or method consists of finding a group that will commit to a series of lessons together, often self-taught immersion employing SLA techniques. This method is used by the Chief Atahm school, by Kalispel language program efforts (Fountain 2013), and was used by my own cohort in the Grizzly's Den. Janice Dick-Billy provides a hint of the adult learning method (a cohort model) followed by Chief Atahm School participants in her Master's thesis acknowledgements:

> Kukstsemc [thank you] to Kathy Michel for organizing our small cohort group in Chase, BC and for her constant encouragement to pursue higher goals (Dick-Billy 2003:vi).

To learn about Chief Atahm techniques, TPR methods and methods to raise teacher proficiency, it is necessary to attend the Chief Atahm School Conference, or other conferences where Chief Atahm teachers present. Chief Atahm School teachers organize intensive summer Secwepemc language workshops to raise teachers' proficiency, using storytelling-based immersion methods (Michel 2012a). The ongoing language teacher training is necessary because they found that through full-time teaching, their language proficieny had plateaued, and they needed to increase their proficiency in order to raise the children's proficiency. In Janice Dick-Billy's doctoral dissertation, she does not mention Chief Atahm School's groundbreaking and highly successful TPR methods or teacher

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[22] I used the FNLE for portions of classroom teaching and found it extremely useful for planning and teaching scaffolded, TPR-based lessons, based on learning outcomes.

training, instead she focused on talking circles, Secwepemc ways of knowing, and personal narrative. Dick-Billy provided a single paragraph about her learning method and language assessment in her dissertation:

> As an adult, I, through much diligence and perseverance, was able to re-learn much Secwepemctsin, by attending community and university language classes, self-study, and working with Elders at Chief Atahm School. I cannot, however, be considered a fluent speaker when compared to an Elder for whom Secwepemctsin is their first language. My two daughters, now aged 21 and 19, are fairly proficient in Secwepemctsin because they attended Chief Atahm Immersion School for seven and eight years (Dick-Billy 2009:108-109).

Leanne Hinton notes that successful acquisition methods include "Total Physical Response, or even just a combination of rich language input and common sense" (Hinton 2003a:79). She cautions that it is all to easy, and common, for Indigenous language teachers to rely on ineffective teaching methods such as "word-lists" (Hinton 2003a:79). Hinton also notes that many language programs rely on teachers who are beginner speakers—a situation encountered by many severely endangered languages. Being a beginner speaker should not be a barrier, if the teacher has a plan to raise her own proficiency. However, this process is often overlooked and methods, when mentioned at all, often rely on Elders to transmit the language to teachers, like osmosis. Teacher training, preparation, language training, and immersion are essential components of the teacher's schedule. Hinton summarizes the key methods of effective Indigenous language teaching when teachers are not fluent:

> 1. Speak in the language as much as possible, and avoid switching to English to translate what you are saying, focusing instead on nonverbal communication to make yourself understood;
> 2. Focus on teaching just a few words per lesson; vary the activities in your lesson and in subsequent lessons to allow lots of practice of the vocabulary and sentences;
> 3. Make sure that the communication outside the lesson proper is in the target language as much as possible. Don't switch to English for classroom management talk and teacher patter;
> 4. Use language rituals—things your class talks about every day, such as

greetings, or the weather, or snack time. These are helpful in part because they are real communication, thus giving your language a role to play in the community;

5. The teacher-learner should work with a fluent elder to learn the language necessary for a given lesson. Whenever the teacher-learner realizes in the classroom that she doesn't know how to say something, retain it in memory or jot in down, and ask the language mentor how to say it.

Finally, language teaching is hard whether you are fluent or not. And for the non-fluent teacher there is a great deal of preparation to do in advance of the lesson (Hinton 2003a:91).

Underlying beliefs

Second-language acquisition methods are based on the underlying beliefs that people learn languages in a predictable way, that languages can be taught in classrooms, that some methods are more effective than others, and that successful learning methods can be assessed. Some Indigenous second-language learners, teachers and researchers are influenced by underlying beliefs such as the ones previously outlined as *Walls of Doubt*. Motivation is recognized as a key factor in SLA (Dornyei 2003; Ellis 1997) as well as Indigenous SLA (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998; King 2009; Richards and Maracle 2002). Some Indigenous second-language learners and teachers have realized that in the initial stages of language revitalization, language learning will be "artificial", classroom-based learning, following SLA principles, rather than on the land (McIvor 2012; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:79).

There are implicit tensions in learning second-languages. Indigenous second-language learners and teachers experience additional stressors resulting from colonial contexts and post-residential school effects (McIvor 2012:41). Second-language acquisition researchers note the importance of emotional safety in the classroom, reducing anxiety, and the role of emotional safety in maintaining learner motivation (Ehrman *et al.* 2003; Oxford *et al.* 1992; Liu and Littlewood 1997; Oxford 1997). A sense of emotional safety is essential for

language learners—knowing they are freely encouraged to practice their new language skills and will not be ridiculed or corrected harshly. These factors are discussed further in Chapter seven.

Indigenous language revitalization methodology

There are many unanswered questions within Indigenous language revitalization methodology. There is a paucity of research in this field; in fact, I did not find any articles that directly mentioned Indigenous Language Revitalization Methodology. The few published mentions of *methodology* are in relation to its absence (particularly the absense of teaching methodology), or need for development within Indigenous language revitalization efforts (Camp and Portalewska 2013; First Peoples' Culture Council of British Columbia 2013; Hornberger 2006:286). Very few publications speak directly to the success or failure of the methods used in language revitalization (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998; Hinton 2003a; Fishman 1993; Parkin 2012), therefore representing a methodology. A google search of "Indigenous + Language Revitalization + Methodology" revealed only a handful of results, each of them associated with new university departments in Canada or Australia. One such program is a groundbreaking graduate program in Indigenous language revitalization, Faculty of Education, University of Victoria (UVic).

The paucity of Indigenous language revitalization theory forces Indigenous language revitalizers to choose between SLA theory, Indigenous theory, linguistic theory, and teaching Indigenous languages based on linguistic methods (discussed below). The UVic course list reflects that methodologies are pieced together from four research fields: second-language acquisition, linguistic, Indigenous research, and community-based research.[23] The

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[23] UVic: http://cahr.uvic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/IED-Grad-ILR-Application-Flyer.pdf

other theoretical option is to study revitalization through an anthropological lens.[24] Many authors have detailed the devastating effects of colonization on Indigenous culture and languages (Battiste 2000; Dick-Billy 2009; Cohen 2010; Gallegos *et al.* 2010; Smith 1999). Many language revitalizers choose optimism as their guiding principle (Ash *et al.* 2001; Littlebear 2007; McIvor 2005) and seek to adopt successful methods and motivate future revitalizers.

Some Indigenous language revitalization researchers have chosen Indigenous theory and methods such as storywork and talking circles to describe and analyze their revitalization work. Their dissertations are poetic, powerful, and beautiful examples of Indigenous prose (Dick-Billy 2009; Cohen 2010; Michel 2012b). Most researchers used Indigenous methods in combination with other methods. Often Indigenous language revitalization researchers blend research methods, for example a grassroots, family-based language research project blended a "combined feminist and Indigenous theoretical framework" with "participatory action approach", including observation and documentation of revitalization efforts within the Nim-bii-go-nini Ojibwe language (Abraham 2010). Another Indigenous language revitalization researcher created the following methodological blend "K̲angex̲tola framework, an Indigenous methodology based on the metaphor of creating a button blanket, the ceremonial regalia of the Kwak̲ak̲a'wakw" was used, in combination with narrative story, to document language revitalization in community and the author's personal experience (Rosborough 2012). Some researchers focus on community-based methods including language planning and raising awareness (Camp and Portalewska

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[24] The new program in Indigenous Language revitalization at the University of British Columbia-Vancouver is in the Anthropology department.

2013; Chambers *et al.* 2013; Hinton 2001b; Langworthy 2002; Michel 2012b).

Very few Indigenous language revitalization researchers have chosen to discuss or assess their language teaching methods or their programs' success in developing proficient speakers and returning language to the home. In order to honestly discuss the efficacy of methods, the underlying goals must first be illuminated, what Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer refer to as "prior ideological clarification" (1998:63). In my view, there are two main goals of language revitalization for severely endangered languages: *1. the creation of a new generation of adult proficient speakers,* and *2. intergenerational language transmission*.

Viewed through this lens, most Indigenous language revitalization programs, however well-meaning, have been failures (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:57; Fishman 1993; Parkin 2012). Joshua Fishman speaks to the success or failure of language renewal efforts, and his words and their application to N'syilxcn are given their own section, below. Endangered language programs, including N'syilxcn's, have routinely chosen methods and strategies "associated with failure" including "public school language programs, casual community language classes, college and university language classes, cultural events with some language, media production (web, radio, TV), linguistic studies and analyses" (Parkin 2012 08:59-09:24). Language revitalization will (as discussed below) be initiated by motivated individuals, rather than through government interventions. The "depressing failure" of government intervention to save the Gaelic language is a lesson that "Language revival will not take place through the intervention of the State on behalf of Aboriginal peoples, as much as state resources are needed to reverse language shift" (Ignace 1998:34).

There have been a number of successes and I dedicate much of the remainder of this chapter to them. Many of their methods are further evaluated and illuminated throughout my

research in this dissertation, and appear fully in Chapter seven. After a brief summary of methods and underlying beliefs in Indigenous language revitalization, I move on to introduce stages of reversing language shift and success stories.

Methods

It is difficult to speak about specific methods in Indigenous language revitalization as they are numerous and varied. A language revitalization activist must often be a teacher, learner, curriculum developer, parent-teacher, community activist, organizer, fundraiser, and school administrator. Indigenous language revitalization is pioneering work, and "very few language revitalization programs are old enough to serve as models for reversing language shift" (Hinton 2001b:4). Many successful strategies relied on adopting and refining SLA methods, specifically immersion.

There is general agreement among Indigenous language revitalizers on the advantage of full-immersion programs (Aboriginal Task-Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures 2005; First Peoples' Culture Council of British Columbia 2012; Hinton 2001b; Hohepa 1992; Hyslop 2011; McIvor 2006; Nicholson 1990; Peter *et al*. 2003; Wilson and Kamana 2001 and many others). Language revitalizers also agree that language must be transmitted to the next generations (Camp and Portalewska 2013; Cohen 2010; Hinton 2013; Hornberger and Putz 2006; Fishman 1990, 1991; 1997). Successful language efforts begin at the grassroots level (Abraham 2010; Hornberger 2006:281; Nettle and Romaine 2000:178), begun by motivated individuals (Dauenhauer 2005), and then expand outwards to their families and communities. Indigenous language revitalizers increasingly realize that the work is initially done by committed individuals, and that the choices are made on an individual basis.

Indigenous language revitalizers also generally agree on the necessity of developing new curriculum, teaching methods, and training teachers in teaching methods (Aboriginal Task-Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures 2005; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998; Hornberger 2006; McIvor 2012). This topic is discussed further in Chapter seven. Successful programs incorporate measures to increase the proficiency of parent-aged learners and teachers.

A very moving and effective method is in bringing full immersion parenting into the home. This method is embraced by the several authors in *Bringing our languages home*, edited by Leanne Hinton (2013), and further discussed in Chapter seven.

Intergenerational transmission has been widely stated as a goal of Indigenous language revitalization, which implies the strong role of mothers and grandmothers. Indigenous language teachers and activists are often women. Indigenous language teachers are usually women and language transmission is often the domain of women (Pettigrew 1990; Ferguson 2011). Most Interior Salish language teachers and adult learners are women. This is a personal observation and I have no explanation. Syilx captík^{w}ł shares that Grizzly mothers are experts in transmitting language and culture (Wickwire 2001), and Syilx ways transmit that women's roles include transmitting cultural knowledge within the home. In Yukon language programs "99%" of the teachers were women, "mostly middle-aged fluent speakers with little formal education, and the heads of large extended families" (Pettigrew 1990:27).

Initally in language programs, the burden of language teaching and learning is often placed on Elders and children. There are many published examples promoting Elder-led learning (Aboriginal Task-Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures 2005; Chambers *et al.* 2013; Maracle and Richards 2000; Moore 2003; Mortenson 2008). Recent publications

stress the key role of working-aged adults in language revitalization (Hinton 2013; Olthuis, Kivel, and Skutnabb-Kangas 2013).

Reflecting the reverse side of revitalization, many researchers (usually linguists and non-Indigenous researchers) have produced detailed summaries of the ongoing process of language endangerment, language shift, and "death" (Krauss 1992; Crystal 2000; Nettle and Romaine 2000; Maffi 2005; Walsh 2005; Fishman 2007; Littlebear 2007; Leonard 2008). Michael Krauss introduced the world to the alarming estimate, that of the world's 6,000 languages, at least 50% will be extinct within the next century (Krauss 1992:6). These summaries provide a realistic picture of language loss. However, I found that reading more than a few of these was counterproductive and demotivating. I reminded myself, in my personal notebook, to avoid these and to maintain a state of optimism:

> *Walsh [2005] overviews the field of language revitalization, with a lot of references, and finds many themes to summarize--language death, prediction of language death or survival, stages of language endangerment, strategies of language maintenance and revitalization, technology, documentation, community dissatisfaction with linguists, language change, and the difficulties in action versus documentation. His summary produces in me, the reader, a sense of depression and doubt (sigh). There is no optimism here, just a summary of theory, there is no soul in these pages. I should write the author and tell him-- thank god I already planned to get fluent in Okanagan before I read your article. Maybe it's good to read one or two of these kinds of articles, then a person should stop.* (Personal notes, Winter 2010).

Underlying beliefs

Indigenous language revitalization contributes to many important components of healthy community, including personal well-being, sense of Indigeneity, scholastic achievement, reconnection to land and each other, and decolonization. One Elder told me, "the language is the title to our Land," and without our language our stance as Syilx people is weakened. As discussed in Chapter two, N'syilxcn strengthens our story structure, worldview, family

structure, and cultural practices. However, the walls of doubt, in relation to language learning, are still strong in many communities.

Many communities believe that Elders are the only ones to teach and therefore continue to place the burden of teaching on the Elders. Some researchers state that it is easier for children to learn than adults (Ignace 1998:5), ignoring the need to create proficient teachers to teach the children. Some Indigenous language revitalization researchers believe immersion is not possible at beginner levels and many programs slip frequently into English (Maracle 2002; Maracle and Richards 2000; Richards and Maracle 2002).

Many programs mistakenly confuse the goals of language transmission with cultural transmission and attempt to transmit complex cultural material too early (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998). Indigenous scholars' and community members' often outspoken underlying belief in the primacy of culture can cause language programs to intermesh language and cultural goals. Indigenous language programs often stress the importance of cultural content rather than language content, even though cultural content involves a great deal of non-verbal communication (Haynes *et al.* 2010). It is exceedingly difficult to transmit complex cultural material at beginner levels though many beginner language programs attempt to do so (Richards and Maracle 2002). Indigenous language teachers need to save complex cultural and land-based instruction for later, intermediate language levels (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998; Fountain 2013; Richards and Maracle 2002). If cultural information is provided too soon, the tendency is for the teachers to switch to English. Many of these underlying beliefs and their counterarguments are revisted in Chapter seven.

My own underlying belief is that in Indigenous language revitalization work, as much research as possible must be aimed at *actively learning and teaching language* within

community. My language activism was strongly based on learning, speaking, teaching in community, and maximizing my cohort's time learning. If I found my energies being distracted, I refocused with this question: *will this help me or other people learn and speak N'syilxcn*? As a researcher I focused on evaluating techniques to assist the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages.

Linguistic methodology

   Methods

Linguists and language revitalizers approach languages from a very different perspective. Linguistic researchers document languages with an aim to classify, codify, and apply linguistic theory to language utterances. Many examples of this approach occur in N'syilxcn (Baptiste 2001; A. Mattina 1973, 1982, 1986, 1992; N. Mattina 1996; Lyon 2010a,b, 2011a,b, 2013d), as well as numerous documented narratives and stories (Mattina and DeSautel 2002; Mattina and Seymour 1985; Lyon and Lindley 2013). Ethnobotany is a related technique of gathering specific word-lists of plant names and traditional uses. Nancy Turner has created excellent N'syilxcn plant-name and traditional use references (Turner 1977; Turner *et al.* 1980). Linguistic researchers are often non-Indigenous, though there are exceptions (Baptiste 2001). I did not follow linguistic theory or methods in my research, but I offer a few words on linguistic techniques that may be of use to language revitalizers.

   A primary linguistic data collection technique is known as elicitation, in which language is systematically collected from the speaker and itemized by constituent speech parts. In the process linguistic researchers often become quiet proficient in the language (one linguist's proficiency is described in Chapter five). A graduate degree with a focus on one's Indigenous language appears to be an effective method to achieve proficiency (more on this

in Chapter seven). A small number of Indigenous learners have first studied linguistics in order to learn their languages and transmit them to their children. In particular, Daryl Baldwin and jessie little doe baird each completed graduate degrees in linguistics, studying languages which had no remaining speakers, and then taught their children. Each of them share their stories in as a chapter in Hinton's (2013) *Bringing our Languages Home: language revitalization for families*.

Several linguists have developed partnerships with Indigenous language groups, have developed linguistically-based teaching curriculum, and have co-taught languages (Mattina 1996, 2000a, 2000b; Moore 2003; Shaw and Campbell 2012). Many of the Indigenous language courses taught at the University of Victoria are taught by linguists, as are the courses at UBC-Vancouver. Patricia Shaw, a UBC linguist, partnered with a community language specialist and with Elders to produce and teach a series of three textbooks in the Musqueam language at UBC-Vancouver (Shaw and Campbell 2012). Musqueam, or Hәṅq̓әmin̓әm, is a Coast Salish dialect of the Halkomelem language with no remaining "fluent" speakers (First Peoples' Culture Council of British Columbia 2013). The UBC First Nations Language Program (FNLP) courses have produce about seven "semi-fluent speakers" from approximately sixty students who have completed the Musqueam (hәṅq̓әmin̓әm̓) classes (First Peoples' Culture Council of British Columbia 2013).[25]

I believe linguistic techniques and documentation have a useful role in language revitalization efforts, however these techniques do not comprise the main work of language revitalization. Documentation will be of great help to Indigenous language curriculum developers, particularly when these materials are paired with SLA techniques. For example,

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[25] Hul'q'umi'num'/Halq'eméylem/hәṅq̓әmin̓әm: http://maps.fphlcc.ca/halkomelem

recorded narratives could be paired with TPR-S techniques to teach at intermediate levels, or could be published with English translation and codification removed, as literary reading material for advanced learners. Elicitation techniques could be taught to learners in Master-apprentice partnerships, in order to generate intensive learning and create language materials. I discuss the potentials of linguistic language learning methods further in Chapter five.

Underlying beliefs

The urgency to document language death and document endangered languages (Krauss 1992; Maffi 2005) follows from linguists' presupposition that death is inevitable. Krauss warns that it is "urgent to document languages before they disappear" (1992:8).

Linguists are often called upon to teach Indigenous languages as described above, though they are not trained in second-language teaching techniques. I note that second-language acquisition appears to be understood differently by language revitalizers and linguists. When I and other Indigenous language learner/teachers study SLA, it is with an intention to learn strong techniques to teach our languages. Linguists study SLA with an aim to understanding the patterns and processes behind how languages are acquired by the brain. The underlying belief (and I am extrapolating here from the individual contributions of linguists) is that these patterns will meaningfully contribute to the body of linguistic theory. Linguistics researchers often express a desire for their material to be useful to future revitalizers. On his webpage, University of British Columbia linguistics researcher Henry Davis states his belief in the immanent death of languages, and a belief that linguistic documents can assist future curriculum developers:

> It should be emphasized that all the remaining extant indigenous languages of BC are under-documented in the areas of syntax and semantics, and there is

probably only a decade or so remaining in which we can do meaningful work with fluent first language speakers. This research is urgent not only for the purposes of linguistic documentation, but also to lay the groundwork for effective teaching programs, so that future generations of speakers have accurate, detailed curriculum materials which can serve as the basis for language revival (Davis 2013 http://www.linguistics.ubc.ca/people/faculty).

Many UBC faculty members expressed desire to assist in revitalization on their faculty research interest page (http://www.linguistics.ubc.ca/people/faculty).

The following sections introduce successful Indigenous language revitalization strategies, Fishman's theory of language shift, and success stories in Interior Salish and international language revitalization.

Indigenous language revitalization strategies

Indigenous authors are reclaiming our stance within language revitalization within our own communities (Dick-Billy 2009; Cohen 2001, 2010; Dauenhauer 2005; Johnson 2012a, 2013; Kipp 2007, 2009; Littlebear 2007; Noori 2009; Patterson 2000; G. Smith 2000, 2005; 2010; L. Smith 2000). Indigenous activists build upon each other's work. Many Indigenous-language immersion schools have been inspired and informed by other Indigenous-language immersion schools. Darrell Kipp writes that his visit to a Hawaiian immersion school informed and motivated the creation of a Blackfoot immersion school in his community (Kipp 2009). Bill Cohen (2010) likewise writes that his work is inspired and informed by Darrell Kipp, Graham Smith, and The Chief Atahm immersion School in Chase BC (described below).

Much has been said within Indigenous research about the value and strength of individual experience, the strength it brings to community, and the potential of individuals as change agents (Cohen 2001; Dauenhauer 2005; Armstrong 2006; Meyer 2008, Hinton 2009, Twitchell 2012). In the early stages of language revitalization, the work is usually done by a

few courageous individuals, referred to as language heroes, leaders, or catalysts (Cohen 2010:135; Hinton 2001a:53; 2003a:79). These small groups of people are also known as "language fanatics" and recognized as a critical intermediate stage in language revitalization (King 2009). These motivated individuals will, with luck, start a language movement growing like a "snowball rolling downhill" (Hinton 2001c:417), groups will form, and language plans and policies will be created with the support of community.

Language revitalizaion efforts often begin with the courageous efforts of individual families. The personal stories of several family-based language activists are highlighted in *Bringing our languages home: language revitalization for families* (Hinton 2013). Leanne Hinton's (2013) edited book describes the courageous efforts several families have made to learn their languages and speak their languages at home to their children. The introduction begins with the following story:

> Deep in a misty mountain range in Northern California, a young family is visiting with elderly relatives who are members of the last generation to grow up speaking the Karuk language as their first and primary language. The elders are chuckling over the children of the family, who understand and speak Karuk as much as their parents are able to teach them. "*teexúriha hum*?" (are you hungry?), Violet asks. "*haa*!" (yes!), answers Machnátach, three years old. Violet then asks, "*fat ivishtáanti*?" (what do you want to eat?). He answers "*moosh*!" (meaning "mush," spoken with a true Karuk accent) and all the elders laugh in delight. These are the first Karuk children in three generations to grow up having their language spoken to them at home from infancy—indeed since before their births, when their mother laid a tape recorder over her womb every night to play tapes of Karuk stories to them (Hinton 2013:xi).

Many Indigenous language activists speak of the necessity of language action (Dauenhauer 2005; Kipp 2000, 2007, 2009; Littlebear 2007; Smith 2000a, b). Speaking about the power of individual choices, Xh'unei Twitchell said, "linguists have been predicting the death of Alaska Native languages for decades now, and whether or not those

predictions prove accurate comes down to the choices you and I make on a daily basis" (Twitchell 2012).

In the past, we had no need to teach N'syilcn as a second-language—it was acquired naturally as children. There was no reason to teach in a classroom or assess language proficiency—in fact N'syilxcn had no words for assessment. Luckily, sqilx^w have a history of resilience and adopting new technologies. We look to the successes of others who are revitalizing their languages.

In the next sections I review international language revitalization strategies, beginning with Fishman's 8 stages of Reversing Language Shift.

Fishman's eight stages of Reversing Language Shift

Joshua Fishman dedicated his life to describing and reversing the decline of minority languages, including his own minority language, Yiddish (Fishman, Hornberger and Putz 2006). His influential, prolific publications include descriptions of the eight-stage scale for Reversing Language Shift (RLS) (Fishman 1990, 1991), upon which the following paragraphs are summarized. Minority languages worldwide are following a similar path of attrition. Fishman describes the path as following eight stages, each of which must be transcended in order to reverse the forces of language shift.

Stage 8 is the most highly threatened, "rock bottom" stage. At stage 8, no children have been raised in the language for two or more generations, no new speakers are being created, there are very few learners, the language is rarely spoken, and there are only a few isolated elderly speakers left (Fishman 1991:88; Parkin 2012, 05:06). At stage 7, all remaining speakers are over childbearing age and no children are raised in the language, though there are some learners, the language can still be heard at cultural events, there is a

culturally active population of speakers (most over sixty), and these elders can be a vibrant and active resource (Fishman 1991:89).

Stage 6 is the most critical stage, upon which all succeeding stages depend. At stage 6, the language is spoken in the home and children are raised in the language. Parents (who may have regenerated their language skills) conscientiously raise their children in the language and "intergenerational mother-tongue transmission" is achieved (Fishman 1991:12). Most world languages are at stage 6. It can be a stable stage for a language, lasting for millenia in a bilingual or trilingual language community, though it may only be a home-language and not spoken in schools or workplaces. Stages five through one describe a world where the language is used in successively expanding circles: schooling (both compulsory and grassroots), workplaces, local and national government, and mass-media.

Fishman not only describes the stages of language attrition, but describes the revitalization efforts necessary at each stage. At stage 8 it is crucial to document as much language as possible, while the Elders are still with us, and it may be necessary to reconstruct the language from documents and recordings to create a record for future learners (Fishman 1991:88). Once stage 8 is achieved, languages can move onto succeeding stages. Linguists and their documents can be a great help at this stage, though they should not be relied upon as organizers, as they are notoriously poor at creating a social movement (Fishman 1990:19). Fishman cautions that focusing on documentation alone will doom your language project to the mausoleum; unless stage 6 is achieved (the language is spoken at home), "*all else can amount to little more than biding time*" (1990:21, his italics).

At stage 7, successful strategies must focus on strengthening bonds between existing Elder speakers and learners, and creating opportunities to learn, speak and hear the language.

The main goal of stage 7 is to generate a cohort of parent-aged second-language speakers who can then focus on bringing the language back into the home (Fishman 1991:89). At stage 6, efforts must focus on bringing the language back into the home. Parents must be empowered and supported in their efforts to speak at home, with children, Elders, and each other. Stage 6 languages can maintain stability for hundreds of years, with or without being written, taught in schools, or spoken in the workplace. At stages 5 through one, the language is brought into schools, workplaces, government and mass-media. Reversing Language Shift (RLS) efforts can be aimed at these levels once lower levels have been met.

Fishman cautions that language efforts must be appropriate to the stage the language is at. Stage 7 language revitalizers must first use stage 7 strategies. Fishman's research shows that many language efforts focus prematurely on creating schools in the hopes that the young will save the language. Stages 7 and 8 languages commonly mismatch strategy with RLS level, and routinely focus language efforts on "public school language programs, casual community language classes, college and university language classes, cultural events with some language, media production (web, radio, TV), linguistic studies and analyses," all strategies which are ultimately "associated with failure" (Parkin 2012, 08:59-09:24). Schools are then faced with the difficulty in finding trained teachers and must rely on beginners (Hinton 2003a), a strategy which will not (in my experience) create proficient children *or* adults. Schools alone will not create a community of fluent speakers.

Fishman's research shows that successful efforts will come from grassroots initiatives, ultimately backed by the entire community. We must, at stage 7, "work to form a language-culture-community" where the language is spoken all the time (Parkin 2012, 09:43). As adults we will only become proficient if we use the language in our everyday activities.

Children's language mastery will not be complete unless parents speak *in the home*. In some cases, a few individuals or a group can set the goal of learning and maintaining a language through one generation, but the ultimate goal is to transmit it to future generations otherwise it will remain a "special event" or only spoken by a select few (Fishman 1991:399).

N'syilxcn is at Stage 7 of Fishman's Reversing Language Shift scale

N'syilxcn is at stage 7 in Fishman's Reversing Language Shift (RLS) scale; in fact, all Interior Salish Languages are at stages 7 or 8 (Parkin 2012). There is a limited, but significant, amount of interaction among speakers, mainly at cultural events, all first-generation speakers are over fifty years of age, there is very little public use of the language, and only a handful of children are being raised in N'syilxcn. N'syilxcn therefore needs to focus on strategies appropriate to Stage 7 and 8.

Initial N'syilxcn efforts focused on RLS stage 4 schooling for children, creating beginner programs in band schools, taught by Elders and beginner teachers. Hundreds of Syilx children can now recognize and speak some N'syilxcn words, at a basic beginner level. There is currently, however, a blend of simultaneous efforts from stages 8 through 4. Our immersion house was aimed at stages 7 and 8. We and TPCLA were fine-tuning textbooks and learning materials, a stage 8 effort. We were learning N'syilxcn as adult second-language learners, creating a language community, and promoting cultural interaction between ourselves and our Elder, Sʕamtíc'aʔ, all stage 7 activities. Our dream is that graduates from the immersion house will raise their children in N'syilxcn—stage 6 intergenerational transmission.

While no Salish languages are at stage 6 or above (other than the handful of individuals mentioned in this section), I envision a future where our communities speak

N'syilxcn at home and in community, work in N'syilxcn-speaking band offices, schools and colleges, achieve graduate degrees in N'syilxcn, produce N'syilxcn movies, popular music and radio shows. Take a moment, and imagine with me—at home your children are playing, watching movies and video games, asking for help with their math homework, dinner conversation and bedtime stories are all in N'syilxcn. When you sleep, your dreams are in N'syilxcn.

Success stories in Interior Salish revitalization

In this section I share three Interior Salish success stories in language revitalization. These programs have each created full-time immersion schools, created their own language materials and have developed successful teaching methods for adults and children. Two of these programs have produced teachers who are raising children in the language. These three language programs are the Salish School of Spokane (N'syilxcn), the Kalispel Language program, and the Chief Atahm immersion school in Chase, BC (Secwepemctsin, or Shuswap language).[26]

The Salish School of Spokane was created by Chris Parkin and LaRae Wiley when they returned to Washington in 2009 after learning N'syilxcn with Sʕamtíc'aʔ and forming the Paul Creek Language Association (these stories were introduced in Chapter two).

The Salish School of Spokane has successfully been operating an N'syilxcn immersion school for four years, in a rented house in Spokane, funded entirely by private fundraising efforts. Chris Parkin is currently the Principal and LaRae Wiley is the lead teacher and teacher-trainer. Their school is guided by both second-language acquisition principles and cultural values. Currently, the Salish School of Spokane teaches a dozen children, from pre-

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[26] Kalispel language program: http://www.kalispeltribe.com/language; Chief Atahm School: www.chiefatahm.com; Salish School of Spokane: http://salishschoolofspokane.org.

kindergarten to grade 2 (so far), in full N'syilxcn immersion, with one hour per day of English literacy instruction. In 2011, I had the opportunity to visit the Salish School of Spokane. I was impressed to see and hear the children begin their day by drumming and singing traditional songs, and learn math, science, stories, and literacy, in full immersion.

Chris Parkin and LaRae Wiley are helping raise their three-year-old granddaughter, and have made the commitment to never speak English to her. Their granddaughter attends the Salish School of Spokane, making her the first person in over fifty years to spend a large part of her day in N'syilxcn.

The Salish School of Spokane adopts cutting-edge pedagogical techniques (some shared with them by Chris and LaRae's son, Grahm Wiley-Camacho, a recent graduate from Harvard with a Master's in Education). Some of their teaching strategies and successes can be seen on YouTube submissions (LaMere, Wiley and Parkin 2010). Their immersion techniques include phonics, literacy (listen to the beautiful alphabet song and see the phonics wall-cards at www.interiorsalish.com/learnsalishresources.html), math (Whelshula and Timentwa 2013; Wiley and Parkin 2013), and classroom management techniques (LaMere 2013).

For the past four years the Salish School of Spokane has organized a Celebrating Salish language conference (described further in Chapter six) in Spokane Washington, now co-organized by the Kalispel Tribe.[27] The Conference attracted more than five hundred Salish participants from several Interior Salish Nations in 2012, and included the first-ever Salish language karaoke contest, to the delight of the Elders in the audience (Taylor 2011; Hval 2013).

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[27] Celebrating Salish Conference: www.kalispeltribe.com/celebrating-salish-conference.

The annual Celebrating Salish conference in Spokane is an excellent way to hear and learn new techniques from the Salish School of Spokane. I learned several excellent pedagogical techniques and have since tested them in my classroom. I had the opportunity to meet three new teachers at the Celebrating Salish Conference (Spokane WA, 2013) and the Syilx Education Conference (Osoyoos BC, 2013), and was impressed by their profesionalism and language skills—all of them (in my opinion) were n'łəqʷcin, intermediate speakers. One of the young teachers was my student in the 2012 July intensive class in Inchelium, described in Chapter six, but I expect that by the next time I see her, she will be a highly proficient speaker.

The Salish School of Spokane incorporates a comprehensive plan for the proficiency of teachers and students. Teachers are supported to become advanced speakers through a combination of immersion teaching (teacher ratios are three students to two teachers), language study, excellent curricular support, workplace immersion policy, and extensive teacher training. Teachers provide immersion instruction to children from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and then are taught TPCLA material from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. five days a week (Whelshula and Timentwa 2013). Parents in the program are required to study at least one hour per week. The school's mission and vision statements articulate the methodical steps they are taking towards developing proficiency:

> **Mission Statement**: The Salish School of Spokane is dedicated to creating a vibrant community of fluent speakers of Interior Salish languages by providing Salish language instruction to children and by empowering parents and families to speak Salish in their daily lives.
> **Vision Statement**: Salish School of Spokane will provide outstanding immersion education in the languages of the Plateau, creating fluent speakers. The school will seek to serve children from birth to twelfth grade, delivering the highest quality academic and culturally relevant education. Salish School of Spokane will serve as a beacon of light, guiding family and community efforts in reclaiming our language (http://salishschoolofspokane.org).

The Salish School of Spokane is the most successful model of language revitalization in our Nation; training teachers to be advanced speakers and raising fluent children.

The Kalispel language program has recently achieved success in reversing language shift among a small group of dedicated students. The Kalispel language group is a sister-language to N'syilxcn, South of the Canada/U.S. border in Washington. Kalispel has a strong partnership with the Salish School of Spokane and shares identical curriculum, software and teaching methods. Kalispel was at Fishman's stage 8 just a few years ago, with only a small handful of Elder speakers, and no new speakers. Three years ago, the Kalispel Band office instituted a policy of zero-English in their band offices, for all employees (Chris Parkin pers. comm. 2012). Band employees rapidly stepped up from beginner to intermediate speaking. This courageous effort places a small handful of Kalispel second-language speakers at stage 2 of Fishman's Reversing Language Shift.

The Kalispel cohort studied identical currium to our curriculum in the language house, co-authored by Chris Parkin, though with the benefit of full funding for all participants for four years, with a full-time teacher (Jessie Fountain) and fluent Elder. Five years ago, armed with three-million dollars in band funding and a vision, they hired Chris Parkin to develop curriculum, and formed a cohort of twelve adult learners in a three-year full-time fully-funded program. Chris Parkin created a series of six Kalispel textbooks, from beginner to advanced, identical to the TPCLA series, and a three-year full-time schedule. Twelve community members were pulled out of their day-care and teaching jobs to study the curriculum full time with Jessie Fountain as their apprentice teacher. Mornings were spent in lessons, and afternoons in guided conversation with Elders. In three years, the group has

completed six textbooks and Jessie Fountain has become nearly n'tłłcin (straight or true speech, or an advanced speaker).

In 2011, in the time I was living in the language house, the Kalispel program was completing the same book that we were, the fourth of six textbooks. Since then, twelve adults have completed the six-book program and begun a new cohort. The young Kalispel intermediate-speaker teacher, Jessie Fountain, has become a proficient speaker and is raising her baby in Kalispel (Taylor 2011; Hval 2013), the first baby in generations to hear Kalispel in the womb. One day we hope the children from learners like Jessie Fountain will meet at language gatherings, such as the Annual Salish Language Conference in Spokane WA, and reintroduce the concept of multilingual Salish learning. Jessie is now a skilled teacher and knowledge-keeper, and an inspiration to Interior Salish language learners.

The question of funding appears often in relation to language revitalization programs. I will briefly compare two Interior Salish programs. The Kalispel language program has approximately a million dollars of band funding per year to teach twelve full-time adult students and to run immersion children's programs. The Salish School of Spokane (N'syilxcn language) has no funding and raises all its money by private fundraising efforts. Both programs have been successful in creating a small number of intermediate speakers in five years, and are raising children in the language.

The Chief Atahm School, in Chase, BC, has an inspiring story of language renewal, the creation of an immersion school, and the development of a successful teaching method (Dick-Billy 2009; Michel 2005, 2012b). The Chief Atahm School is the longest-running successful immersion school in BC, operating for twenty years. Their immersion program teaches kindergarten to grade seven students. They have developed language acquisition

techniques for adults and children, based upon Total Physical Response (TPR) described above. Janice Dick-Billy and Katherine Michel co-founded the school and Katherine Michel continues to work full-time in the immersion nest. Janice Dick-Billy shares the background of the school and the format of the lessons:

> Presently there are few effective programs for students to acquire Secwepemctsin quickly and efficiently, with the exception of the Chief Atahm Immersion Program. Chief Atahm School offers the only effective program which enables the students to acquire Secwepemctsin within the Secwepemc Nation. Chief Atahm offers a Secwepemctsin Immersion program for students aged four years to seven years. Instruction is entirely in Secwepemctsin for five hours each day four days per week. Chief Atahm School has worked hard to establish a language program which focuses on language acquisition. The students follow a progression of understanding and speaking before reading and writing. The students have developed a high level of fluency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing due to the amount of time and effort committed to the language. Content subjects, such as Mathematics and Science, are taught in Secwepemctsin (Dick-Billy 2003:8).

The School as well as their transformative language journeys are discussed in the EdD theses of Janice Dick-Billy (2009) and Kathy Michel's (2012b). In the early days of Chief Atahm School, Kathy Michel's parents were recruited to become the immersion nest teachers (Michel 2012b). Over the next ten years the school generated Total Physical Response (TPR) textbooks (discussed above), and raised the proficiency of children and teachers through teaching in immersion.

2013 marks the thirteenth year for the Annual Chief Atahm School Aboriginal Language Conference which brings together First Nations language teachers and demonstrates the Chief Atahm model (April 26 and 27, 2013, Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, BC). The 2013 conference focused on strategies for teaching children's immersion, and Hawaiian immersion language assessment strategies. Little is published about the Chief Atahm school's methods, however it is possible to see experienced teachers

such as Janice Billy and Stacey Michel demonstrate their energetic teaching methods at

Chief Atahm conferences as well as other BC First Nations conferences (Billy 2012; S.

Michel 2013), as well as in their annual workshops.

Bill Cohen relates his inspirations for the N'kmaplqs immersion school in Vernon BC

were the Chief Atahm School and Kaupapa Maori (discussed in the next section):

> Experiencing schools where Maori and Secwepemc children were eagerly and
> effectively learning their respective cultural ways, as well as state prescribed
> curriculum and world knowledge, in their own languages and cultural contexts
> was a major and continuous inspiration (Maori and Chief Atahm School).
> (Cohen 2010:179).

Success stories in international language revitalization

Some language communities have been groundbreakers in language revitalization. To

provide an international context, I briefly overview two Indigenous languages, Maori, New

Zealand, and Hawaiian, and one non-Indigenous minority-language, Hebrew, in the

following sections. Early revitalization efforts (similarly to N'syilxcn's current situation) are

often small, and reliant on a lifetime of work from a handful of dedicated individuals. These

dedicated individuals were able to gain community support and experience personal and

community transformation in their lifetimes. Maori, Hawaiian, and Hebrew language

revitalization efforts began as grassroots societal movements, later supported by government

policy. Following the grassroots phase, successful language revitalization efforts have five

characteristics in common: "a sense of group solidarity, immersion teaching environments,

literacy, the use of mass media, and the development of a sufficiently large group of

speakers" (Anonby 1999:36).

Interestingly, both Maori and Hawaiian language nests originally looked to Canadian

French immersion programs as a model (McIvor 2005:27; Warner 1999). Canadian French

immersion models are arguably the most successful programs ever recorded in heritage language teaching (Krashen 1984), however Canadian First Nations language programs have largely looked outside the country for inspiration (McIvor 2005:27).

The Maori language has had a "quasi-miraculous" partial recovery (Fishman 1991). Though the actual numbers of fluent speakers is declining, in twenty years of language planning, the Maori have moved from RLS stage 8 to stage 4, with highly integrated community-level immersion schools (Benton and Benton 2001). Maori revitalization was assisted by extensive Maori documentation; pre-1867 there was high Maori literacy and writing in government correspondence (King 2001:121). Te Reo (Maori language) declined during colonization, and Maori-speaking communities had all but disappeared, when in the 1960s a group of young, well-educated, pro-Maori language and culture intelligentsia emerged (Fishman 1991) and gained strength with the Kohanga Reo movement which began in 1981 (Gallegos 2010).

Maori Language revitalization (Kaupapa Maori) is grounded in Maori concepts, is centred on Whanau (the family), and was created to simultaneously address three concerns directly resulting from colonization: underachievement, loss of language, and loss of culture. Te Kohanga Reo incorporates a holistic approach, with the child at the centre, links to surviving Elders, and interwoven with cultural ethos (Reedy 2000:159). Maori immersion schools for children are deeply connected to extended kinship networks (King 2001:123), so much so that their schools are considered to exist at stage six of RLS, as well as stage four (Benton and Benton 2001:430). However, language use in the home has not developed as successfully as the school and policy areas (King 2001:127). Maori programs have found it difficult for adults to progress beyond the intermediate phase (King 2001:127), a situation

they are addressing with ongoing adult immersion camps (Nicholson 1990).

In the 2006 New Zealand census, fifty percent of all Maoris claimed to be able to speak the language, up from twenty percent in the 1980s census (King 2003 cited in Gallegos 2010). In 1970, twenty percent of Maoris spoke the language (70,000), all of them over fifty years of age (King 2001:121). In 1987 the Maori Language Act was passed, and Te Reo increased considerably. The language act resulted in the establishment of a language commission, week long language camps, and radio and tv programs (King 2001:121). By 1995, there were 10-20,000 fluent speakers, and many intermediate speakers (King 2001:121) (note: King does not define or assess "fluent" or "intermediate" in her article).

There are now 10,000 children "capable of holding a conversation" in Maori (Benton and Benton 2001:425). Long term success is not known, but it is generally accepted that Maori language revitalization efforts are creating "reasonably bilingual" children, with varying levels of proficiency (King 2001:125). Maori have developed and tested language assessment systems, discussed in Chapter five.

Hawai'i is looked upon as a model and a leader in Indigenous language revitalization (Gionson 2009). Hinton writes that Hawai'i has moved from level 7 to 4 on Fishman's RLS scale (Hinton 2003b:50-51). The history of Hawaiian immersion nests, school programs and university programs are outlined in several publications (Iokepa-Guerro and Rodriguez de France 2007; Kamana and Wilson 1996, 2009; Wilson and Kamana 2001, 2006). Hawaiian language programs worked closely with the Maori, Mohawk, and Blackfeet immersion programs, among others, during their development (Wilson and Kamana 2001). Hawaiian revitalization emerged as a "renaissance" spurred by a handful of educators, parents, and administrators (Galla 2009:168). Hawaiian language programs are now the most well-

developed Indigenous language programs in the United States; Hawaiian students can attend school from pre-school to university graduate level programs (Wilson and Kamana 2001:147).

There are approximately 3,000 active Hawaiian speakers, 10,000 speakers with a "fair to high level of fluency", 2,000 children enrolled in immersion programs, around 200 teachers, and more than 2,000 Hawaiian learners at the college level (Kimura and Counceller 2009:127-128). Hawaiian language assessment strategies are discussed in Chapter five. Teacher training has long been an area of concern. Since their inception, Hawaiian revitalization efforts have relied heavily on adult second-language speakers as teachers. All Hawaiian teachers, other than a few native speakers, learned their language in university and college as a second language (Wilson and Kamana 2001).

Hawaiians have succeeded in bringing the language back into daily use in five-hundred homes (Gionson 2009). Four key agents in the "revolution" of Hawaiian language revitalization are Larry L. Kimura, Kalena Silva, Kauanoe Kamana, and William H. Wilson, all faculty members in the College of Hawaiian Language, Hilo campus (Monastersky 2004). Kauanoe Kamana and William H. Wilson were the first of a number of couples to choose to raise their two children in Hawaiian (Kamana and Wilson 1996; Wilson and Kamana 2013). University of Hawai'i, Hilo has been a central location for language revitalization:

> Hilo is now well known for the amount of Hawaiian that can be heard in public. Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani, the college of Hawaiian language at UH Hilo, estimates that there are about 800 Hawaiian speakers in the Hilo area, 500 who use the language daily. Hawaiian speaking households are also on the rise. The college counts 50 people, all under the age of 30, who were raised in the Hilo area speaking Hawaiian as their first language (Gionson 2009).

Hawaiian universities have been at the forefront of Indigenous internet, chatroom, and website development (Warschauer 1998, 2001; Warshchauer and Donaghy 1997) and have developed the first Indigenous-language communication system on the internet, called the Leoki (Powerful Voice) bulletin board system (Warshchauer and Donaghy 1997).

The Hawaiian lexicon committee meets regularly to create new words (Kimura and Counceller 2009). The Hawaiian committee found that second-language speakers are more successful in creating new words than Elder speakers, and over time, the committee's Elder speakers are being replaced by younger speakers (Kimura and Counceller 2009:124-125).

Hebrew is one of the few minority languages to succeed in reversing language shift, along with Quebecois French, and Catalan in Spain, and is the only language so far to be fully revernacularized from the written record. For 2000 years, Hebrew existed only as a language of religion; it was not spoken in the home (Hinton 2001b:415). Hebrew language revitalization succeeded despite being at stage 7, due to grass-roots initiatives, outside of institutions (Fishman 1991; 2007:167). Hebrew was part of a larger social revolution, started by a small handful of dedicated individuals in the 1950s. One dedicated individual, Elizier Ben-Yehuda, is credited for his catalyzing role. Between 1940 and 1953, he coined 4,000 new words, wrote a set of dictionaries and raised his children in Hebrew (Fishman 1991:300, Hinton 2001c:416). Like Hawiian and Maori languages, Hebrew's continued success is supported by government policy (Fishman 1991). Each of these successful strategies relied on policy changes and a handful of dedicated grassroots activists.

The next chapter describes the stages that learners pass through on their way to language proficiency, and shares my preliminary reflections on adult immersion.

Chapter 4: Entering Grizzly's den: achieving N'syilxcn proficiency

ʔasəlscaʔáqʷ uɬ ʔasəlsʔístk stiʔx̌ílms iʔ ttẃit kilíʔms iʔ kiʔláwnaʔ
For two winters and two summers the boy lived with the Grizzlies
(Peterson *et al.* 2012:157)

In this chapter, I describe the language phases my cohort passed through on our transformative journey. In five intense months we progressed from k'lp'x̌ʷínaʔ (beginning to hear) to n'ɬəqʷcin (beginning to have a clear voice, approximately low-intermediate), a testament to the transformative power of hard work in Grizzly's den. We are committed to achieving nt'ɬɬtcin (straightened, or true speech). I introduce sqilx̌ʷ pedagogical concepts that support adult Indigenous second-language acquisition, such as N'syilxcn (n'qilx̌ʷcn) acquisition phases, domains of use, and the transformative power of hard work.

N'qilx̌ʷcn acquisition phases

When I spoke with Syilx Elders about our progress in the house, they recognized and named several phases of language acquisition. The Elders made pronouncements in n'qilx̌ʷcn such as: "your ears are opening up," "you are making your first sounds," "your voices are becoming clearer," and "your speech is becoming straightened."

In her filmed interview, Sʕamtic'aʔ pronounced us n'ɬəqʷcin—the first time I had heard the word. This spurred me to ask her, and other Elders, how to express N'syilxcn phases of language learning. I found, through conversation with three Elders, that there are many N'syilxcn words to indicate the entire range of language acquisition stages, from the initial comprehension stage to "true" speech.

I tentatively began to collect words that refer to specifically n'qilx̌ʷcn phases of learning, which I hoped would make it easier to share our experience with Elders, N'syilxcn

learners, and other Indigenous language learners. The four N'syilxcn phases I have identified are k'lp'xʷína (holes cut in the ears, or comprehension phase), qʷlqʷltiʔst (first speech), n'łəqʷcin (clear speech), and n'tłłcin (straightened, or true speech). I have heard each term applied to learners by at least two Elders, but please accept that my learning is preliminary and ongoing, and that N'syilxcn is spoken differently by different Elders. The terms are applied subjectively, based on the Elder's knowledge of language acquisition. I describe these four phases below and summarize them in a table in Chapter five.

The first of these words, k'lp'xʷína, refers to the ears becoming opened up—a time when the learner begins to comprehend the content of the language being spoken around her, and suddenly begins to get the gist of things. The word literally refers to holes poked in the eardrums, so that the meaning of the words can get through. During this phase, the learner will not say much, but will nod, comprehend simple commands, and be able to follow suggestions. An Elder told me, in May 2011, that we capsíw's had become k'lp'xʷína, literally holes poked in the ears, or beginning to understand the language. To demonstrate the visual behind the word, he picked up a scrap of paper and thrust the sharp point of his knife through it.

Qʷlqʷltiʔst refers to first speech, when the child or adult first begins to speak in simple, short utterances, in single words or short sentences with a lot of errors. Adults do not correct children's N'syilxcn errors; it is known that the speech will improve itself over time. The learner at this stage can answer simple yes or no questions and, just like children, their simple pronouncements may only be fully comprehensible to their parents or teachers.

The third stage, n'łəqʷcin, refers to when learners find their voice—they begin to be heard by those around them. N'łəqʷcin literally means starting to make a clear noise. Their

speech becomes intelligible to people other than their parents or teachers. They can hold simple conversations with effort. There is a certain courage involved in this phase, especially for adult learners; of overcoming the fear of making mistakes, breaking the silence imposed by two generations of language loss, and sometimes being required to stand up to criticism.

The fourth phase, n'tɬɬcin, refers to the time when the speech is straightened out and errors are fewer. It literally means straight, honest, or *true* speech, similar to Elders' speech. Longer sentences are spoken and grammatical errors and pronunciation errors are few. The learner can make speeches, tell stories, and discuss anything and everything from daily life.[28]

As adults, we acquire second languages in a certain, predictable order, mimicking the way languages are naturally acquired as children (Krashen and Terrell 1988; Krashen *et al.* 1984). Comprehension occurs long before speech production. The n'qilxʷcn language phases I collected roughly mirror Krashen and Terrell's stages. According to Krashen and Terrell, the first learning phase is the pre-production, or comprehension phase (also known as the silent phase). The silent phase can last anywhere from three weeks (Asher and Adamski 1986) to six months (Krashen and Terrell 1988), depending on the situation and the teachers. The learner then progresses to early speech, speech emergence, intermediate speech, and finally to advanced proficiency. I believe n'tɬɬcin to correspond to Krashen and Terrell's advanced level. They describe a sixth phase, native-like fluency, used to refer to speakers who have been raised speaking the language (Krashen and Terrell 1988). Phases of learning are important during curriculum development and teaching, particularly to ensure teaching is at an appropriate level (Asher and Adamski 1986; Krashen and Terrell 1988).

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[28] I should note that an Elder, Caylx (Richard Armstrong) informed me that there is a similar word n'tɬtɬcin (with one extra *t*) which refers to speech which is *almost* perfect, and that n'tɬɬcin refers to speech which is perfect. At this point I refer only to n'tɬɬcin speech in my preliminary development of N'syilxcn language acquisition phases, but recognize that n'tɬtɬcin could represent another advanced phase, just prior to n'tɬɬcin, and that n'tɬɬcin could refer to true, perfect speech.

Fluency is a sensitive term in Indigenous language community. In common usage the word *fluency* is often associated with Elders. I have heard people self-designate their language level as *semi-fluent*, or *fluent understander*, terms which are difficult to define. I have heard fluent speakers suggest that another Elders' fluency is not as fluent as someone else's. These statements are vague and can be damaging to people's feelings and reputations. I therefore suggest we use clear, objective, defineable statements. I suggest *advanced proficiency* is a more realistic term than *fluent,* and a goal we should adopt. For me, as an adult N'syilxcn learner, advanced proficiency is possible; "fluent" is not.

It is common to hear the term *fluent* used in relation to language learners. The ability to get all your needs met and converse all day in the target language is an operational definition of fluency used by N'syilxcn activists Bill Cohen (2010) and Chris Parkin (2011). According to Chris Parkin, it takes about a year of concentrated effort to become fluent in N'syilxcn; fluent enough to speak all day to your children (Parkin 2011). Second-language researchers estimate approximately 1,000 hours of intensive study to reach intermediate proficiency (Jackson and Kaplan 1999; Rifkin 2003) (more on this, Chapters five and seven).

I don't believe *fluency* can be assessed in any language; it is too vague and undefinable. I no longer use the term *fluent* as a language goal, other than in a general way, and instead use the term *proficiency.* Having said that, the term *fluent* is appropriate to refer to Elders' speech, and to the speech of future children who will grow up in the language. For them fluency is a possible and achievable goal (Cohen 2010:194).

The *sensation* of fluency is possible now and then, in beautiful moments where words are flowing freely, like water over rocks, and it occurs now and then even at my humble mid-intermediate level. I describe some of these moments in Chapter six.

In the next section I introduce some initial reflections on the transformative effect of five months in Grizzly's den, and share reflections about adult immersion strategies.

When does Grizzly send us back to our communities?

When we entered the house we were all roughly k'lp'xʷínaʔ (comprehension phase) or qʷlqʷltiʔst (making our first sounds), and we progressed to n'łəqʷcin (starting to make a clear noise) during the five months. N'łəqʷcin reflects that we gained confidence in the house, our voices were louder, clearer, and more intelligible to Elder speakers. There are miles to go before my cohort and I reach n'tłłcin (straightened speech), and in order to attain higher levels of adult N'syilxcn language acquisition I believe we need to study the final books of TPCLA curriculum as well as create what Fishman refers to as "domains of language use" (Fishman 1991).

After five months in the house, community members noticed our speaking improve. Some thanked us. When we re-emerged from the house in the spring of 2011, we found we had not been alone. One family member announced at a public gathering, "Don't kid yourselves [that nobody is noticing]. We are all watching you. And we are very proud of you." People recognized the hard work and courage involved in the house. The Grizzly's den had its effect on us. We not only became better speakers, but during the process we each began to *believe that advanced proficiency was possible*. The personal transformation and strands of learning began to affect our respective communities—following the multi-stranded networks and interconnected family webs that make us Syilx. Each of us has affected her community. Prasát, X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam, C'əi̓tups, and I have taught beginner and intermediate classes. Community members noticed our ability to speak and have been drawn

to our beginner N'syilxcn classes. There is talk of forming other language houses in other communities.

This brings up the question—When is it time for the Grizzly mother to kick us out of the den? How much time in an immersion house is enough? Is there a point at which the den will produce diminishing returns? After five months we were not at that point yet, though I feel that a full year would be ample. The Grizzly mother felt it was time for the boy to leave after two years, along with the other cubs. He was at the point where the den could no longer teach him. When the boy returned home, it took his community a while to reintegrate him; he had become half-wild in the den.

German, a relatively easy language, requires approximately 200 hours of study to reach low-intermediate, and roughly 400 hours to reach low-advanced (Deutsche Welle 2011).[29] Researchers estimate between 500 and 1,000 hours to reach intermediate levels for more "difficult" languages like Arabic and Chinese (Rifkin 2003; Jackson and Kaplan 1999) (more on time estimates in Chapter 7). Indigenous language learners are sometimes afraid to talk about the hard work and sheer amounts of time involved in learning a language. As far as I know, there has been no research documenting time it takes to achieve intermediate or advanced proficiency in Indigenous languages. Onowa McIvor estimates "thousands of hours" to reach high proficiency in Indigenous language (2012:53), and the Dauenhauers estimate "months and years, not hours and days" (1998:88). Maori researchers have found it difficult for adult learners to progress beyond intermediate (King 2001:127). As adult N'syilxcn learners I believe we will require a combination of effective classroom instruction and new full-time language domains to move beyond intermediate levels.

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[29] I am blending several assessment systems here; Vandergrift 2006 provides an excellent comparison of international assessment systems.

Paul Creek's six-textbook curriculum is organized in three levels, 1 beginner, 2 intermediate, and 3 advanced, with two textbooks per tier (for example N'syilxcn 1 and Captík^{w}ł 1 comprise level 1). Each textbook represents approximately 90 to 180 hours of classroom instruction; all six books represent approximately 1,000 hours altogether. Given that a standard university course is approximately forty-five hours, the entire TPCLA curriculum would be the equivalent of twenty university language courses, about two full years of university. I speak more about the number of hours it takes to achieve proficiency in Chapter seven. Each TPCLA textbook has supporting visual aids and teaching manuals, and all incorporate full-sentence group-and pair-based exercises. I believe the textbooks could be effectively translated into other Indigenous languages and provide equally effective learning outcomes. After the first book, N'syilxcn 1, students are at a mid-beginner level and have a 500 word receptive vocabulary. (Low-beginner refers to people who know only a handful of words and a few memorized phrases). After the second book, Captík^{w}ł 1, students are at a high-beginner level.

I believe we reached a low-intermediate level in the immersion house, after studying N'syilxcn 2. The fact that we achieved low-intermediate levels after 360 hours is a testament to the efficacy of the TPCLA curriculum. Low-intermediate is a large level. My cohort and I maintained a low-intermediate level through our time in the house, through the next book, Captík^{w}ł 2 (or approximately 600 hours, total). After teaching for a year, post-Grizzly's den (approximately another 400 hours), I achieved a mid-intermediate speaking level. The repetition involved in teaching N'syilxcn 1 & 2 and Captík^{w}ł 1 & 2 markedly improved my pronunciation (according to my adult students), speaking ability, and comprehension. Given

the threatened state of N'syilxcn, all adult learners should be encouraged to teach. It is good for our learning, pronunciation, and confidence in our language ability.

At this stage, the creation of proficient adult speakers is key to the revitalization of many Indigenous languages (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998; Parkin 2011). Adult second-language learning is the focus of many Indigenous language programs (Maracle 2002; Maracle and Richards 2000; Nicholson 1990; Olthuis *et al.* 2013; Parkin 2011; Sarkar and Metallic 2009).

As adult learners, at some point we need to make the conscious decision to *turn off English*. At the higher levels of reversing language shift, Fishman writes of the necessity of a homesphere, a worksphere, local and higher government, and media, all in the language (Fishman 1991). Once we reach intermediate levels we can begin to create these domains, and by living and working in these spheres we can travel from intermediate to advanced proficiency. Initial domains will be homes, immersion classrooms and language nests, and later domains can include other workspheres, the media, and government. Creating N'syilxcn language domains will ensure that we become advanced speakers. It is only through *use* that language lives.

Another measure of success, beyond proficiency, is the creation of a full time language domain. Hawaiian language nests measure their success by the number of previous students who stay on as teachers (Iokepa-Guerro and Rodriguez de France 2007), maintaining a full time language domain that includes Elders, children and adults.

This chapter introduced N'syilxcn acquisition phases and initial reflections on adult immersion learning. In the next chapter I further develop the acquisition phases to include international assessment strategies, which I then apply to our filmed narratives.

Chapter 5: kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin (we speak clearly): N'syilxcn learners assess our voice in filmed narratives

<div align="center">

yaʕtmín qʷəlqʷilt nixʷ, uɬ nixʷ, ul nixʷ
I need [to] speak more, and more, and more
(X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam, *kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin* 4:10)

</div>

In Grizzly's den we developed a simple storytelling assessment—we told the Golidlocks story from memory without practicing. We did this twice—in January 2011 during our first weeks in the house, and again five months later. We filmed our assessment because we wanted to see and hear ourselves improve and show the humour in our first stumbling attempts at storytelling. I compiled the footage into two short films, *Goldilocks I* and *II*. The process of filming ourselves speaking was motivational. We were much improved speakers in the second storytelling than the first.

In our first telling, most of us could only tell a partial story, with a few words, some gestures, and had to skip over details such as porridge, beds and broken chairs. Some of us only managed a few sentences in the first telling. In the second telling we were recognizably n'ɬəqʷcin, each of our stories were clearly recognizable as the original fairy tale, with a beginning, middle, end, and details. Our stories involved many grammatical errors and vocabulary slip-ups, but there was a night-and-day difference from the first assessment. After five months we were speaking clearly enough to film a simple interview entirely in N'syilxcn, *kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin (we speak clearly)*.[30]

In this chapter, I describe the three films and my language cohort's transformation. I give primacy to our narrative by providing our own words, in N'syilxcn. I discuss our

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[30] As mentioned previously, *Goldilocks I* and *II,* and *kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin* can be viewed on YouTube at: http://youtu.be/KVj3vpCf6JE, http://youtu.be/3DxQb_Lr1rw, and http://youtu.be/O7fFMN-KSa4.

transformation based on N'syilxcn phases of language acquisition (introduced in Chapter four) and then expand the discussion to develop and apply an objective language assessment strategy, based on a blend of international assessment strategies. I discuss, below, the potential of film within Indigenous language learning, and an emergent wave of Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) language learners on YouTube.

Goldilocks I: Chopaka Immersion House

Our first film, *Goldilocks I: Chopaka Immersion House*, provides an introduction to the capsíw's, our house, and began a gathering process for our preliminary language assessment, a telling of the Golidlocks story, entirely in N'syilxcn. The four-minute film was shot in January and February 2011. *Goldilocks I* is a proud achievement for us. It demonstrates our courage to begin to speak and to commit ourselves to an intensive learning program.

Figure 6. Our first immersion conversation, in Goldilocks I
Left to right: Prasát, Staʔqʷálqs, C'əɬtups, Sʔímlaʔxʷ

The film begins with personal introductions, an important part of our sqəlxʷcawt. Each of

the five capsíw's introduces herself: Prasát, Sʔímlaʔxʷ, C'ə̇rtups, Xʷnámx̌ʷnam, and

Staʔqʷálqs. Next, four of the capsíw's are seen and heard in our first N'syilxcn conversation

around the kitchen table. The next three scenes show Prasát quietly studying, the capsíw's

playing the card game *Uno* with Sˁamtíc'aʔ, and Staʔqʷálqs chopping kindling outside. In

the final two minutes of the film we tell the Golidlocks story in our own words, at our own

language levels. Narrative from our first immersion conversation and our telling of the

Goldilocks story are shared below.

Our first immersion conversation

The kitchen table scene is subtitled "First immersion conversation" (01:20). We had turned

off English that morning. Our conversational abilities were extremely limited but I clearly

remember the thrill in the room when we began our transformative journey, exploring our

conversational boundaries for the first time. Our narrative humbly illustrates our very basic

speech levels.

Sʔímlaʔxʷ:	(1:20) yaẏáx̌aʔʔ
Staʔqʷálqs:	yir.
Sʔímlaʔxʷ:	oh, yir!
Prasát:	yir. ki.
Staʔqʷálqs:	yir. kəkníyaʔ.
Sʔímlaʔxʷ:	acmistín. anwí n'- ... ?
Prasát:	lut tə *incá* n'kʷnim ... (1:30).

Translation:
Sʔímlaʔxʷ:	(1:20) watched something?
Staʔqʷálqs:	circle.
Sʔímlaʔxʷ:	oh, circle!
Prasát:	circle. yes.
Staʔqʷálqs:	circle. listen. (gestures spinning, hand-to-ear, i.e. listening to CD).
Sʔímlaʔxʷ:	I know [understand]. you s- ... ? (looks at Prasát, gestures singing).
Prasát:	Not *me* sing. (points at Staʔqʷálqs) (1:30).

Goldilocks I Narrative:

We chose the Goldilocks story because it was a simple, familiar story to us, none of us had studied or practiced it, and we felt it would therefore demonstrate our ability to storytell, without practice.[31] We each told the story in five minutes or less, but for brevity and storytelling style I spliced brief narrative segments, choosing sentences illustrative of our language levels. In this way we take turns telling a two-minute narrative and the story ends about half way through, after the scene with the porridge. The narrative is provided below, complete with errors. I indicate errors by providing square brackets [] around what we were trying to say.

> **Sʔímlaʔxʷ**: (01:57) kn kscúntmaʔx iʔ captíkʷł *Goldilocks and the three Bears*. waẏ q̓sápiʔ, naqs sx̌əłx̌aˤlt, knaqs xíxuʔtm xʷu···y iklí···ʔ k̓l citxʷs sss-[skmxist] . . .
> **Prasát**: (02:22) tkaʔtkaʔłís iʔ skmxist naʔł kʷil xi- . . . xíxuʔtm.
> **Staʔqʷálqs**: (02:30) axáʔ! . . . citxʷ! . . . mmmm, citxʷ. taʔlí ilxʷt. taʔlí ayxʷt.
> **X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam**: (02:42) iʔ snkł̓iłṅtn kł kaʔłís snkəkap. iʔ kəkap kł snp̓q̓ʷitkʷ. cʔix snp̓q̓ʷitkʷ. naqs kł cʔix snp̓q̓ʷitkʷ, naqs kł caʔł snp̓q̓ʷitkʷ, uł naqs . . . t̓i x̌ast snp̓q̓ʷitkʷ.
> **C'əɾtups**: (03:07) xíxuʔtm c'ilstn . . . čilsts [čiłsts] sṅp̓- . . . snp̓q̓ʷitkʷ. hmmm . . .
> **Prasát**: (03:21) uh, swit iʔ . . . swit iʔ iłn iʔ stixʷ ?
> **C'əɾtups**: (03:28) c'- . . . [čiłsts]. mmm . . . (ˤayncúts, uł nixʷ q̓ʷásqi ˤayncúts) (03:49). (Total narrative 1 min. 52 sec.)
>
> *Translation:*
> **Sʔímlaʔxʷ**: I will say [tell] the story *Goldilocks and the three Bears*. Ok, long ago, one day, one little girl went . . . far (*went* and *far* are elongated in mock storytelling style) to the house of b- . . . b- . . . [bear] (snaps fingers, unable to

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[31] For those who need a Goldilocks refresher: A little blonde-haired girl is walking in the forest. She is hungry and tired and enters a house, not realizing it is the three bears's house. She finds three bowls of porridge, one of which she eats; three chairs, one of which she breaks; and three beds, in one of which she sleeps. The bears return home to find porridge eaten, chair broken, girl sleeping, and chase her off.

remember *bear*).

Prasát: three bear [s] and red [blond-haired] little girl.

StaʔqʷáIqs: This! . . . (points at something) House! . . . mmm, (sniffing). House. Very hungry (pats stomach). Very tired (motions walking towards house).

X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam: The table had three bowls. The bowls had porridge. Hot porridge. One had hot porridge, one had cool porridge, and one . . . just right porridge.

C'əɬtups: Little girl . . . I ate . . . she ate . . . p . . . porridge. hmmm . . . (pauses, thinking).

Prasát: uh, who . . . who . . . ate the stew [porridge]?

C'əɬtups: a- . . . [ate] (pauses) mmm . . . (laughs at camera, unable to complete story).

Qʷásqi (blue jay) laughs audibly in the forest behind C'əɬtups as the credits run.

Until I showed the film in community I did not know that qʷásqi's vocalizations indicated laughter. Elders laughed along with qʷásqi, sharing the humour and humility in our first storytelling.

Goldilocks II: Chopaka Immersion House

In our second film, *Goldilocks II: Chopaka Immersion House* we re-told the Goldilocks story five months later with great improvement. Our storytelling had more detail, vocabulary and grammar elements, and we were all able to complete the story, even adding personal storytelling embellishments.
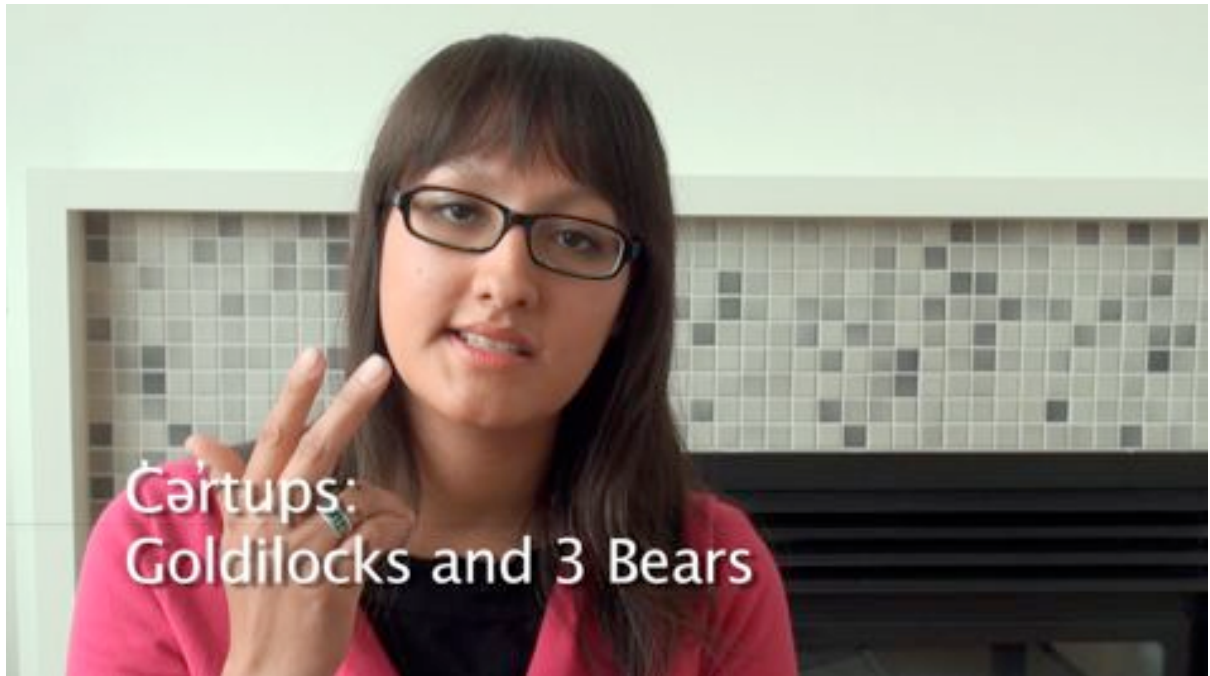
Figure 7. C'əṙtups storytelling, in Goldilocks II

We each told the Goldilocks story again, in approximately five minutes but for brevity and storytelling style I spliced narrative segments approximinately one- to two-minutes long to create a seven-minute story. Our *Goldilocks II* narrative is provided below.

Goldilocks II Narrative:

C'əṙtups: (00:10) waẏ tə tkʷriʔqn naʔɬ tkaʔkaʔɬís skmxist. q̓saʔpí tkʷriʔqn xʷaʔxʷíst ̓l c̓əlc̓al. tkʷriʔqn ckics tkaʔkaʔɬís . . . citxʷ. tkaʔkaʔɬís skmxist xʷuy ̓tl citxʷ. tkʷriʔqn k̓ɬʔipnt—klʔipnt—k̓ɬʔipnt [kɬnk̓ʷƛ̓ips] . . . (ʕayncút). xʷuy k̓l sṅk̓ʷəlcṅcutn.

Prasát: (01:10) cmay cq̓ʷliẇm tə síyaʔ, lut acmistím. uɬ ixíʔ iʔ xíxuʔtm wiks iʔ tkaʔkaʔɬís skmxist citxʷ[səlx]. uɬ uh, iʔ xíxuʔtm taʔlí ilxʷt uɬ um, cmay məlmilt iʔ sqilxʷ uɬ citxʷ. uɬ lut kn tå kɬ skə- . . . skəkmxist, uɬ lut kn ̓ta kɬ tuṁ, mistəm, uɬ iʔ cəcmálaʔs. uɬ iʔ xíxuʔtm taʔlí ʔilxʷt uɬ *uh*, wiks iʔ iɬn, uɬ xminks iɬn. uɬ iʔ xíxuʔtm naqs iɬn iʔ *oh*, nɬiptms! umm . . . [Sʔímlaʔxʷ: sṅṗq̓ʷitkʷ]. sṅṗq̓ʷitkʷ, sṅṗq̓ʷitkʷ! uɬ iʔ itn . . . iɬn, taʔlí c̓ixc̓əxt uɬ lut tə xast, uɬ uh, iʔ ʔasíl sṅṗq̓ʷitkʷ lut tə xast, uɬ k̓ʔit. uɬ *uh*, iʔ—iʔ—iʔ . . . kaʔɬís sṅṗq̓ʷitkʷ ti put! uɬ iʔ xi—xi—xíxuʔtm c̓iɬt yaʕyáʕt iʔ sṅṗq̓ʷitkʷ. uɬ iʔ

xíxuʔtm wiks iʔ sṅkɫmutn. uɫ mut iʔ naqs sṅkɫmutn, sílxʷaʔ sṅkɫmutn, lut tə
xast. uɫ ʔasíl sṅkɫmutn *um*, uɫ *uh* . . . lut tə xast. uɫ kaʔɫís snkɫmutn, ƛ̓i put! uɫ
maʕʷt iʔ snkɫmutn. uɫ iʔ xíxuʔtm taʔlí ayxʷt. uɫ . . .

Sʔímlaʔxʷ: (03:16) ƛaʔƛaʔám sṅpulxtn. uɫ l̓ iʔ sṅpulxtn kaʔɫís sṅɫqutn. wiks
iʔ sṅɫqutn. naqs iʔ sṅɫqutn miyáɫ tstast. ʔasíl iʔ sṅɫqutn miyáɫ . . . *oh*,
nɫiptmn iʔ sʔums. lut tə xast. uɫ kaʔɫís sṅɫqutn ƛ̓i xast. uɫ pulx tkʷriʔqn uɫ
ʔitx. *um*, cyʕapəlx tkaʔkaʔɫís iʔ skəkṁxist l̓ citxʷsəlx. uɫ wiks iʔ sṅiɫṅtn. uɫ
iʔ tətw̓it skəkṁxist cus, swit iʔ ʔiɫs isṅṗq̓ʷítkʷ? mat swit ʔiɫs isṅṗq̓ʷítkʷ uɫ
wiʔs isṅṗq̓ʷitkʷ!

X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam: (04:29) oh, nikxəná, kʷɫax yaʕyát swit. swit aláʔ? uɫ, *hmmm* . .
. uɫ, iʔ k̓ʷl̓ʔilt [skəkṁxist] wiks iʔ snkɫmutns. nikxəná! inmís xast snklmutn!
swit maʕs isnkɫmútn? uɫ cqʷaqʷ. uɫ, *oh*, inx̌mínk kakíc—kakíc swit mut l̓
ísnkɫmutn. uɫ ʕaymtw̓ílx iʔ skmxist. *hmm*, cmay l̓ iʔ npulxtn—iʔ
npulxtntət. uɫ xʷuy—xʷuyʔiəlx k̓l iʔ npulxtnsəlx. uɫ iʔ tumtm iʔ skmxist
cus, mmm, mat swit l̓ isnpulxtn. ʕac̓nt! nikxəná. uɫ iʔ ƛxap skmxist cus,
nikxəná, mat swit l̓ ísṅɫqutn. k̓ak̓ín? uɫ iʔ k̓ʷl̓ʔilt [skəkṁxist] skmxist cqʷaqʷ,
nikxəná! ʕac̓nt l̓ ísṅɫqutn, iʔ . . . stim ixíʔ? iʔ sqilxʷ l̓ isṅɫqútn, xíxuʔtm. uɫ
yaʕt iʔ skmxist ʕaymt. uɫ tkʷriʔqn . . . qiɫt, uɫ nxiɫ, a··· skmxist! nikxəna,
húmaʔ! (ʕayṅcút). ɫətpmncut, uɫ yʕalt ƛ̓l iʔ citxʷsəlx. uɫ ilíʔ way̓. lut t
acmistín. lut inx̌mínk iʔ skmxist iɫs iʔ tkʷriʔqn. (ʕayncút).

C'əṙtups: (6:20) mmm . . . tkaʔkaʔɫís iʔ skmxist sʔiɫns iʔ tkʷriʔqn. way̓ ixíʔ
put.

Sʔímlaʔxʷ: (6:30) k̓lkilsəlx iʔ tkʷriʔqn. u···ɫ [kn] ntils, ʔiɫsəlx iʔ tkʷriʔqn. uɫ
way̓.

Prasát: (6:39) qicəlx uɫ qicəlx k̓l claʔtiw̓s! uɫ way̓ ixíʔ (ʕayncut) (6:48).

(Total narrative 6 min. 38 sec.).

Translation:

C'əṙtups: Ok, Goldilocks and three bears. Long ago, Goldilocks walked in [the]
forest. Goldilocks arrived [at] three person['s] house. Three bears, he [they]
goes, from house. Goldilocks op-, op-, (laughs, unable to find word *opened the
door*) . . . went to [the] kitchen.

Prasát: Maybe she was picking saskatoon berries, we don't know. The little girl
saw the three bears['] house. And, the little girl was very hungry, and maybe
visit the people['s] house. And I don't have [there aren't any] bears, mother,
father, children. The little girl was very hungry and saw the eat [food] and
wanted food. And the little girl, one, [she] ate the . . . oh she forgets [I forget]!
um. . . [Sʔímlaʔxʷ: porridge]. Oh, porridge, porridge! And food [she ate] the

porridge, very hot, not good. And the two [second] porridge not good, cold. The three [third] porridge was just right. And the little girl ate all the porridge. The little girl saw the chair. She sat in one, a big chair, and it wasn't good. And two chair, wasn't good. And three chair, was just right. She broke the chair, and the little girl was very tired.

Sʔímlaʔxʷ: She looked for [a] bedroom. In the bedroom were three beds. She saw the beds. The one [first] bed, too hard. The two [second] bed . . . too . . . oh, I forget the word. Not good. The three [third] bed was . . . just right. Goldilocks went to bed and slept. The three bears arrived in [at] their house. He saw the kitchen table and the little boy bear said, "Who ate my porridge? Somebody ate my porridge and finished it!"

X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam: Nikxena. Everyone was surprised. "Who is here?" The [cub] saw his chair. "Nikxena. My favourite chair! Who broke my chair?" He cried, "Oh, I want to find whoever sat on my chair." The bear[s] got angrier. "Hmm, maybe in our bedroom." And they go—they went to their bedroom, and the mother bear said, "Somebody was here in the bedroom. Look! Nikxena!" And the elder bear said, "Nikxena, somebody was in *my* bed. Where is he?" And the [cub] cried, "Nikxena, look in my bed! . . . What is it? A person is in my bed. A little girl." The bears were angry. And Goldilocks . . . woke up. She was afraid. "Nikxena! Bear! Excuse me!" (laughing). She jumped up and ran off from their house. . . That's it (laughing). I don't know. I don't like [to say] the bear ate Goldilocks.

C'ər̓tups: The three bears ate Goldilocks. And . . . that's it.

Sʔímlaʔxʷ: They chased Goldilocks, and . . . [I] think they ate Goldilocks. That's it.

Prasát: She ran and ran to the valley. And that's it (laughing).

N'syilxcn acquisition phases and assessment

Our speech had improved between *Goldilocks I* and *Goldilocks II*, but by how much? The N'syilxcn acquisition phases were introduced in Chapter four, and are reproduced in the table, below.

Table 1: N'syilxcn acquisition stages

k'lp'xʷínaʔ	holes cut in the ears, when a person begins to comprehend language; the first stage of N'syilxcn acquisition
qʷlqʷltiʔst	first speech, when words are formed, similar to a child's speech, short utterances; the second stage of N'syilxcn acquisition
n'łəqʷcin	starting to be heard, make a noise, become more clear voiced, audible, from łiqʷ, plain to see; the third stage of N'syilxcn acquisition
n'tłłcin	straightened or true speech, when speech contains few errors and is like the Elders; the final stage of N'syilxcn acquisition

As well as N'syilxcn phases of learning, I became interested in language assessment, a related yet distinct process that can unpack the value and efficacy of a particular learning program. Indigenous language assessment has been described as a three-stage process similar to gathering firewood, building a fire, and evaluating the flames based on expert knowledge of tree species, humidity of wood, amount of pitch, and so on (Miller 2004:14, speaking of Secwepemctsin, Interior Salish, assessments). In language assessment these three stages are: gathering language information; building an assessment strategy; and finally applying the assessment strategy to the information (Miller 2004:14). I include an extra stage, prior to evaluation, sharing the knowledge in community, to *enjoy the flames*. My filmed narrative assessment process followed a similar pattern: collecting raw footage and interview narratives was a gathering process; the editing process was similar to building the fire; viewing the films in community was similar to enjoying the flames (in sharing our narratives on YouTube and in this writing we are enjoying the flames with a broader audience); and finally evaluating the narrative based on N'syilxcn and international language benchmarks is the evaluation of the flames. In the following sections I evaluate the flames, first according to N'syilxcn language acquisition stages and then based on international assessment benchmarks.

Golidlocks I

Goldilocks I demonstrates our basic qʷlqʷltiʔst speech level and our slightly varying language abilities in our first month. Our varying abilities reflected our differing language backgrounds, introduced in Chapter one.

Prasát, C'ə̓rtups, Staʔqʷálqs and I were qʷlqʷltiʔst, struggling to make our first sounds. We still showed frequent signs of k'lp'xʷínaʔ, often unable to find our voices and

resorting to silence. X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam was n'ɬəqʷcin when we moved into the house though she

was shy and quiet and often resorted to the silences employed by k'lp'xʷínaʔ and qʷlqʷltiʔst

speakers. She, like many N'syilxcn learners, demonstrated the Syilx value of quietness

(Cardinal and Armstrong 1991:90); she was very respectful and listened more than she

spoke.

As the kitchen table conversation demonstrates, we succeeded in creating a space

where we felt safe enough to overcome our learner's shyness and fear of making mistakes

and find our first voices. In the scene, Prasát, Staʔqʷálqs and I conversed at a qʷlqʷltiʔst

level while C'ə̓rtups silently looked on. Like all beginners (a second-language assessment

term defined below) we had difficulty understanding each other, spoke in one- or two-word

sentences, had almost no use of grammar and truly limited vocabularies. We conveyed

through one-word sentences and gestures that we were talking about a CD of traditional

songs. I tried to ask Prasát if she was the singer on the CD, but was only able to articulate a

single word *anwí* (you) and the sound *n'* from *n'kʷnim* (sing) and make a gesture as though

singing. I couldn't remember the word nkʷnim from our N'syilxcn 1 vocabulary (in second-

language acquisition terms, nkʷnim was in my *comprehension* vocabulary and not yet in my

productive vocabulary) and hoped Prasát would remember it. Sharing a common vocabulary

from TPCLA's level-one curriculum was a great advantage to us as incipient

conversationalists. Prasát said the word (thus assisting its transition from my comprehension

to productive vocabulary) and answered in the negative that no, she was not the singer on the

CD in a three-word sentence, "lut *incá* nkʷnims (not *me* sings)." None of us had used person

markers to conjugate the verb (finding it much harder to do in real life than in a grammar

exercise), and only one of us had actually remembered the verb *sing* at all. At this point, unable to employ further words, one of us ran to get the CD.

We demonstrated slightly higher level abilities in monologue (our personal narratives and Goldilocks storytelling) than in our group conversation at the kitchen table. Our Goldilocks narratives demonstrate qʷlqʷltiʔst and n'łəqʷcin speech. Staʔqʷálqs and C'ə́ɾtups' narratives were qʷlqʷltiʔst—employing short sentences of one or two words. They both trailed off into silence and laughter, unable to complete the story. Staʔqʷálqs turned out to be gifted at storytelling with non-verbal gestures and sounds. Prasát and I storytold at very basic n'łəqʷcin levels, speaking in in longer, audible sentences and completing the story, though with very simple vocabularies, incomplete grammar, and no details, descriptions, or embellishments. X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam's storytelling was already n'łəqʷcin—her narrative was quite complete, though it was simple and her voice was quiet. Over five months in the house she gained confidence and was a stronger storyteller in the second telling.

Goldilocks II

In the five months between *Goldilocks I* and *II* we transformed from qʷlqʷltiʔst to n'łəqʷcin—a vast transformation. After five months in the immersion house Sʕamtíc'aʔ proudly pronounced all of us n'łəqʷcin, which literally means clear voiced. The clarity indicates several things—we had overcome our shyness and fear, gained confidence and become clearly audible. Each of us now told the story from beginning to end with more fluid storytelling, greater vocabulary, and much improved grammar and pronunciation. C'ə́ɾtups showed a remarkable improvement from not being able to complete the story to telling the story from beginning to end with increased use of grammar, details, and humour. Staʔqʷálqs

was unavailable for the final interview but would also have demonstrated remarkable improvement—Sʕamtíc'aʔ noted that Staʔqʷálqs was also n'łəqʷcin. X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam's transformation was remarkable—in her narrative she became an animated, colourful storyteller with gestures, inflection and confidence in her voice—truly n'łəqʷcin (clear speaking).

One very telling comparison is the sheer *amount* of language used in the second film compared to the first. There is a great deal more language used than in the first Goldilocks telling. We also added Syilx-style storytelling elements the second time around. The little girl may have been out "picking saskatoon berries" (Prasát, *Goldilocks II*, 01:10)—saskatoon berries are one of our sacred foods, plentiful in Syilx territory, often mentioned in Syilx captíkʷł (story). C'ə́ɬtups and I added Syilx-style endings—the bears ate the little girl—also reminiscent of stories from captíkʷł: "tkaʔkaʔłís iʔ skmxist sʔiłns iʔ tkʷriʔqn. way' ixíʔ put." *[The] three bears ate Goldilocks. And that's it* (C'ə́ɬtups, *Goldilocks II*, 06:29).

We still made frequent grammatical and vocabulary errors and had limited ability to communicate but we were more clearly comprehensible to each other and other listeners, like our Elder and the fluent speakers who visited occasionally. Language tasks, such as comprehensibility, are described by second-language assessment strategies. In the next section I attempt to untangle the web of second-language assessment in Indigenous contexts and apply international second-language assessment benchmarks to our narratives.

Indigenous second-language assessment benchmarks

Language assessment is seldom employed or discussed in Indigenous Language programs (Miller 2004; Peter *et al.* 2003; Haynes *et al.* 2010), possibly due to mistrust and fear of

negative evaluations and political consequences (Peter *et al.* 2003:7; Peter and Hirata-Edds 2006).

I found few published situations where an assessment strategy was applied to an Indigenous language program. In one, the teachers in Cherokee schools found assessment to be of value after an initial period of doubt (Peter *et al.* 2003:7; Peter and Hirata-Edds 2006). A small number of publications evaluate assessment strategies and recommended them for Indigenous languages. Seneca teachers evaluated several assessment rubrics and found the Foreign Language Oral Skills Evaluation Matrix (FLOSEM) and the Ögwehöwe:ka: Native Languages for Communication: New York State Syllabus to be the most useful (Borgia 2009). The latter uses a three-point assessment strategy, roughly corresponding to beginner, intermediate and advanced (Borgia 2009). Adult Mohawk students suggested that future language programs would be improved by building in assessments, "so they could determine where they were in their language learning" (Maracle 2002:399). Maori researchers and Hawaiian researchers have recently developed and trialed assessment strategies, discussed below.

I did not set out on the path of Indigenous language assessment; I set out as a language learner in search of successful learning strategies, which I found through TPCLA curriculum. Like other Indigenous teachers and learners, I was afraid at first to broach this topic, fearing that assessment was a non-traditional activity (Peter *et al*. 2003), or that I was falling into the trap of applying the tools of the colonizers (Smith 2003).

At first I questioned whether assessing our language ability might reflect a damaging, judgemental, or invasive process. After much reflection, I came to accept that assessments are one of several second-language acquisition techniques that are necessary to the success

of Indigenous language programs—and that not to use them would be engaging in my own politic of distraction—succumbing to doubt and confusion, rather than action.

N'syilxcn and many other Indigenous languages do not yet have a method to assess our learning on an honest continuum from zero to advanced and it is common to employ undefinable terms like speaker, semi-speaker, semi-fluent and fluent. Arguments about the definition of *fluency* are well-documented in second-language literature (Lennon 1990; Rifkin 2003). As discussed in the previous chapter, I decided to drop the undefinable goal of fluent in favour of a clearly definable goal of advanced proficiency.

Maori and Hawaiian language efforts have been an inspiration to Canadian Indigenous language revitalization (McIvor 2005:27). I was surprised to read that initially, Maori immersion efforts (as well as Hawaiian programs) were inspired by and based on Canada's successful French immersion programs (McIvor 2005:27; Warner 1999:75), and that these programs are arguably the most successful programs in heritage language teaching (Krashen 1984; Hammerly 2011). Upon further research, I found that Canadian French immersion programs employ cutting-edge language assessment techniques, which are highly detailed and fully described (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000). The Maori and Hawaiian educators have created their own language assessment benchmarks, discussed below.

The goal of Indigenous language revitalization is the creation of a generation of proficient speakers who will then bring their languages back to their homes and communities. In the initial phases of language revitalization, at our levels of critical endangerment, our learning methods will necessarily be "artifical" classroom-based learning, following second-language principles (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:79; McIvor

2005:100). As learners progress, their curriculum must become more complex and challenging, as will their assessment strategies. With this in mind, it is vital to employ regular assessment with definable proficiency stages to our learners as a proactive measure which will safeguard us against reproducing unsuccessful programs. Assessment and evaluation is increasingly recognized as critical to success of Indigenous language programs in our changed colonial context of advanced language loss (Edmonds 2008; Edmonds *et al.* 2013; Haynes *et al* 2010; Housman *et al.* 2011; Miller 2004; Peter *et al.* 2003; NILI 2012), and I believe filmed assessments can honour our voices and provide valuable learner motivation—a critical factor in second-language learning (Asher 2009; Dornyei 2003; Ellis 1997; Richards and Maracle 2002).

Maori researchers have been attempting to assess language proficiency in schools since 1989 (Hohepa and Smith 1992). Graduates of Te Kohanga Reo were generally assessed as having "considerable expertise" in Maori (Hohepa and Smith 1992). Assessment strategies previous to 1999 were found to be not "reliable or valid" for assessing Maori student proficiency, and therefore researchers developed and tested a five-step assessment scale, named Kaiaka Reo (Edmonds 2008; Edmonds *et al.* 2013). Edmonds *et al.* (2013) tested Kaiaka Reo on 707 students from year one through year eight, found it "reliable and valid" for assessing proficiency and recommended that it be adopted at a national level. The Kaiaka Reo five-step language rating system is:

1. Very limited proficiency
2. Limited proficiency
3. Basic proficiency
4. Elementary/confident proficiency
5. Native-like proficiency (Edmonds *et al.* 2013:51)

Maori students scored between 2 and 3.8 on Kaiaka Reo, gradually improving over

their eight years in school, with the greatest improvement between years 1 and 3, after which the learning curve became less steep (Edmonds *et al*. 2013).

In my opinion, the Kaiaka Reo descriptors (see table of descriptors Edmonds *et al*. 2013:52) are very general, and not as detailed as, for example, the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006), discussed below. The Kaiaka Reo levels 1 and 2 appear similar to CLB beginner, level 3 is similar to CLB intermediate, and 4 appears to be advanced. Like many Indigenous language assessments, the Kaiaka Reo model appears to over-represent beginner levels and under-represent intermediate levels.

Hawaiian researchers developed and trialed a Hawaiian Oral Language Assessment (H-OLA) tool in 2009-2010 for use in Hawaiian immersion schools, with similarities to the Maori Kaiaka Reo assessment system (Edmonds 2008), particularly the story-telling picture series for assessing oral proficiency and the scoring rubric (Housman *et al*. 2011:19). The Hawaiian assessment strategy utilized three levels of proficiency: "1 novice, 2 intermediate, and 3 pre-advanced, in seven proficiency domains: communicative skill, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, language steadfastness, and cultural and linguistic authenticity" (Housman *et al*. 2011:24). In my opinion a 9-tiered assessment, as I discuss below, would be of greater utility than a 3-tiered assessment.

Haynes *et al.* (2010) reviewed several Indigenous language programs and their methods of assessment, many of them appearing, in my opinion, overly general or heavily weighted towards beginner testing functions. The Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI), in Eugene Oregon, developed a Native Language Proficiency Benchmark (NILI 2012; Underriner, Fernandez and Atkins 2012). The strength of their assessment tool is that it incorporates task-based cultural language *functions* such as giving speeches in the

longhouse and praying, at advanced levels. However I find their assessment scale strongly weighted towards beginner, and the intermediate and advanced levels have been conflated. I worry that weighting Indigenous assessments towards beginner will contribute to a tendency for our efforts to plateau at beginner (Johnson 2013). Indigenous language learners need to adopt an assessment that fully articulates the wide range of abilities within intermediate and taht includes the entire range of speech, including fully proficient speech.

There are several non-Indigenous second-language assessment scales with detailed descriptions of the entire speech range from beginner to advanced (and beyond), including the American Council for Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012), the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR 2001) and the Canadian Language Benchmarks (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000). Each assessment strategy names and describes language benchmarks, generally broken into beginner, intermediate, and advanced, and further subdivided into either nine (ACTFL) or twelve (CLB) sub-levels. ACTFL benchmarks are widely-accepted in North America, and have often been informally adopted by North American Indigenous groups (Haynes *et al*. 2010). The Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) system was designed to create a common categorization system for Canadians (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Pawlikowska-Smith 2000). The CLB descriptions are very thorough at each level and noteworthy in that they employ real-world *task-based* proficiency descriptions such as, "ask about and tell time," and "summarize a lecture," to ensure that proficiency is tested, rather than non-linguistic skills (Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000:viii). In a comparison of international assessments by Vandergrift (2006), CLB categories correspond more closely to the European (CEFR) rating system than the ACTFL,

being much more complete in the advanced levels than ACTFL. Interestingly, CLB benchmark 12 includes a very honest real-world challenge: the ability to respond appropriately to simulated sarcasm and hostility in the workplace or academia (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006:46).

Jack Miller (2004) partnered with Interior Salish (Secwepemc) teachers near Kamloops, BC and responded to a need identified by teachers to assess student's language progress and achievement. Miller combined CLB and ACTFL scales and adapted them to First Nations contexts to develop culturally appropriate *First Nations Language Proficiency Benchmarks* specifically for Indigenous and Interior Salish languages (Miller 2004). He created nine-tiered descriptive benchmark checklists roughly equivalent to CLB and ACTFL's, provided in an excellent table at the end of his EdD thesis (2004:163-165). I provide an adaptation of his benchmarks in Appendix 2. Miller's scale is useful, though simplified, and I often refer to the more detailed CLB and ACTFL sources he drew from.

Because of its task-based descriptions and strength in describing advanced levels, the CLB is my favoured assessment strategy for Indigenous language application, used in combination with Miller and ACTFL. For simplicity's sake, I merge CLB, ACTFL, and Miller's classifications into Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced, divided into low-, mid-, and high- subcategories, rather than their complex numbering and naming systems. Similarly to Jack Miller and ACTFL, I conflate CLB's twelve categories into nine benchmarks (I conflate their second and third of four tiers into "mid"). I blend assessment strategies with my understanding of N'syilxcn acquisition stages. I refer to these merged benchmarks in the table below and in the next section in reference to our N'syilxcn narrative. In the table

below, the estimates of hours of study are from our experience in the house blended with second-language acquisition research (Jackson and Kaplan 1999; Rifkin 2003).

Table 2. Benchmarks, acquisition stages, and hours of study

Assessment Benchmarks (blended from CLB, ACTFL)	N'syilxcn acquisition stages (approximate and preliminary)	Approximate hours of intensive study to reach benchmark in N'syilxcn
Beginner -low	k'lp'xʷínaʔ	very few
-mid	qʷlqʷltiʔst	100
-high		200-400
Intermediate -low	n'łəqʷcin	400-600
-mid		1,000
-high		-
Advanced -low	n'tłłcin	2,000+
-mid		-
-high		-

Summarized simply: beginner speakers can sustain simple question and answer exchanges including yes/no and one-or two-word sentences; intermediate speakers can sustain informal conversations on concrete topics, recite simple stories and legends and hold informal meetings; and advanced speakers can participate effectively in discussion on a broad variety of topics, including presentations, debates, lectures, and rapid shifts between languages (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Miller 2004: 132-135).

I need to point out in the following assessment of our filmed narratives I refer only to *speaking* ability, though there are four distinct language-learning categories: speaking, listening, reading, and writing (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012; Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Miller 2004). As our focus was speaking, I did not assess our listening, reading, or writing abilities.[32] Other than the kitchen table scene, I

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[32] I later became curious and self-assessed my speaking, reading, writing, and listening, based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB 2000). I am approximately mid-intermediate (5-6) speaking ability and considerably lower for listening, reading, and writing; mid- to high-beginner (3-4).

refer mainly to monologue speaking ability. Back-and-forth conversing is regarded as more difficult than speaking in monologue. It bears mentioning that we spoke better in monologue than conversing. Our speaking abilities (in my opinion) were considerably higher than our reading and writing abilities. Our listening abilities varied considerably, depending on how much exposure we had had to the language. To develop the areas of listening, reading and writing, I recommend future students to transcribe Elders (described in Chapter seven), and follow Paul Creek's recently developed phonics lessons.[33]

Indigenous languages need to develop each of these assessment areas. We will need to create assessments for speaking, listening, reading, and writing, written in Indigenous languages, so that immersion can be maintained during assessment.

Second-language assessment of Goldilocks I and II

In *Goldilocks I* our narratives reflect simple mid-beginner speech, with very few details or embellishments. We use short sentences and make many errors that would make it difficult for an Elder to understand us. These traits are typical of low- to mid-beginner speech levels. Mid-beginner speakers can sustain simple question and answer exchanges though often with very short responses and only in areas they are familiar with (Miller 2004). Mid-beginner speakers are extremely difficult to understand, even by the most "sympathetic" listeners (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012:9).

Our first immersion conversation demonstrates classic mid-beginner speech: "little control of basic grammar structures and tenses, and context strongly supports the utterance (e.g., by gestures, objects or location)" (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006:8). Mid-beginner speakers communicate "minimally and with difficulty," responding with two- or

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[33] These did not yet exist while we were in the language house. See links to the N'syilxcn alphabet song and phonics wall charts at interiorsalish.com.

three-word incomplete sentences, pauses, hesitations, and lack of vocabulary (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012:9), evidenced in our kitchen table discussion as well as our Goldilocks narrative. Mid-beginner speakers often resort to repetition or silence, as evidenced by one of us running off to get the CD rather than describe it. Silence played a role in our Golidlocks I storytelling when we were unable to complete the story while bluejays laughed in the background.

We displayed slightly higher speech skills in our Goldilocks monologues than our group conversation, demonstrating some high-beginner speech traits. High beginner speakers, like mid-beginner speakers, have short, hesitant, present-tense, incomplete, inaccurate sentences, however if they are comfortable with their topic they can briefly appear "surprisingly" proficient and respond in "intelligible sentences," though they are not "able to sustain sentence level discourse" (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012:9). For the most part we were at a low- to mid- beginner level. High-beginner level speakers can describe things and take part in simple routine conversations (Miller 2004), clearly not yet evident in our kitchen table conversation. X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam was not present for the kitchen table conversation, but she would likely have conversed at a high-beginner level (though probably very quietly).

Our transformation from qʷlqʷltiʔst in *Goldilocks I* to n'ɬəqʷcin in *Goldilocks II* roughly corresponds to a shift from mid-beginner to low-intermediate—a remarkable achievement in five months. In *Goldilocks II* we still made frequent errors but our narratives were more complete and comprehensible. Becoming intelligible to Elders is a hurdle the learner will surmount just before or after mid-intermediate, according to Miller (2004), CLB, and ACTFL benchmarks. At mid-intermediate "errors are still frequent, but rarely impede

communication" (Miller 2004:164). When learners pass mid-intermediate their intelligibility grows from "understood with great difficulty" to "generally understood" by "sympathetic" listeners (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012:9). According to Canadian Language Benchmarks, mid-intermediate speakers make frequent grammar and pronunciation errors, self-corrections and rephrasing, but their errors "rarely impede communication" (Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000:54).

In *Goldilocks II* we were able to narrate the entire story. Miller defines intermediate speaking as including the ability recite simple stories and legends (Miller 2004:133). According to Canadian Language Benchmarks, mid-intermediate speakers can speak about "familiar concrete topics at a descriptive level for five to ten minutes" (Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000:54). Intermediate speakers perform best when assessed with non-personal, concrete topics (i.e. a Goldilocks narrative) in formal or semi-formal exchanges (i.e. an interview) and a familiar setting (i.e. a language house), rather than in group discussions or informal debates (Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000:60). We demonstrated storytelling traits of mid-beginner speakers, however we did not yet have traits indicative of high-intermediate speaking ability, for example we would have been completely out of our depth participating in a "seminar-style or business meeting, discussion, or debate" (Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000:71). We had difficulty conversing outside of our interviews and formal lessons, though we had brief flashes of brilliance in our clasroom lessons as can be seen in our third film.

kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin (we speak clearly): Chopaka Immersion House

In our third film, *kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin (we speak clearly): Chopaka Immersion House,* we share personal reflections about our transformation. The six-minute documentary was filmed during our last month in the language house. *kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin* represents a more open-ended

assessment, a blending of the gathering process, fire-building, enjoying, and evaluating the flames. We explain in our own words that our language improved and we hope to become n'tłłcin (true speakers) one day. We discuss our language levels, the efficacy of TPCLA curriculum, our experience and the methods we used. Footage includes TPCLA lessons, curriculum and learning methods, scenes in and around the house in nearby forest, working with Sʕamtíc'aʔ in our garden and narratives from our final interviews.

Figure 8. Sʕamtíc'aʔ, in opening scene from kʷu n'łəqʷcin

Sʕamtíc'aʔ's interview sums up our hard work and transformation in the house:

kn aláʔ l' sp̓əp̓ƛ̓m̓salq̓ʷ, incáʔ iskʷíst Sʕamtíc̓aʔ. aláʔ cyʕáp iʔ smam̓ím. xminksəlx cakʷ mypnwíłn t ksn̓qilxʷcnmsəlx. uł aláʔəlx uł t̓i kmax n̓qilxʷcn iʔ ksqʷəlqʷiltsəlx. əcm̓aẏtwíxʷ, uł m̓am̓áẏaʔməlx, uł way' taʔlí n̓łaqʷcínəlx.

Translation:
I am here at sp'əp'ƛ'm'salq'ʷ (treeline, a place name at the South end of Chopaka road), my name is Sʕamtíc'aʔ. The women arrived here. They wanted to learn to speak n'qilxʷcn. They stayed together here and did n'qilxʷcn immersion. They told each other stories and they studied. They now speak very clearly (Sʕamtíc'aʔ, *kʷu n̓łəqʷcin,* 00:33).

In Sʕamtíc'aʔ's narrative, reproduced at the beginning of this dissertation, she explains that we capsíw's became better speakers from studying and living together in immersion; in fact we became n'ɬəqʷcin (clear). N'ɬəqʷcin literally means clear, comprehensible speech. As a language-level I believe it indicates we moved through the difficult k'lp'xʷínaʔ (the silent, or comprehension phase, a shy, inaudible phase) and qʷlqʷltiʔst (first speech, a phase where we are difficult to understand, into a phase where we have clear (ɬaqʷ) voices—a profound transformation. This doesn't mean we don't make a *lot* of errors in our speech—we do—or that our speech is not simple—it is. However, n'ɬəqʷcin means that we are clearly audible and are comprehensible to others—an Elder would be able to understand us though perhaps with difficulty. N'ɬəqʷcin means there is still a long way to go, but we have found our voice. This is no small feat for adult Indigenous language learners, considering the generations of language loss and the damage wrought by colonization and residential schools.

A kitchen scene following Sʕamtíc'aʔ's interview illustrates what n'ɬəqʷcin sounds like. Our immersion activity that day was making frybread with Sʕamtíc'aʔ and in the scene Staʔqʷálqs opens the oven door and says (in what can only be described as n'ɬəqʷcin, a clearly audible voice), "Oh, lut lkalát? kn nstils . . .! (Oh, [it's] not bread? I thought [it was bread]!)." Sʕamtíc'aʔ is heard in the background saying, "snċaċíx̌laʔxʷ" (frybread). Humour and confusion often accompanied our immersion conversations.

Many scenes illustrate n'ɬəqʷcin in classroom activities where we are practicing exercises from TPCLA's N'syilxcn 2 textbook. In one scene (2:11) C'ə́rtups and Prasát are working through an N'syilxcn 2 partner-exercise about bird behaviour. C'ə́rtups, reading from the exercise, asks Prasát in a clear voice, "stim a c'iɬsts iʔ c'ris?" (what do kingfishers

eat?) and Prasát answers, in a similarly clear voice, "iʔ c'ris c'iɬsts iʔ qaqʷəlx" (kingfishers eat fish).

In a later scene the capsíw's are studying another chapter from N'syilxcn 2 on fish species and fish behaviour. The scene shows us working from our open textbooks and repeating sentences after a CD recording of Sʕamtíc'aʔ (03:25). The sentences, repeated twice, were, "laʔkín iʔ kisú k'a caʔúʔsaʔm?" (where do Coho salmon spawn?) and, "k'l sʕatítkʷ uɬ cuʔcuʔíxaʔ k'a caʔúʔsaʔm" (Coho salmon spawn in creeks and rivers). All TPCLA curriculum is designed with many group- and pair-exercises to stimulate maximum language use at the students' level. Each lesson progresses from simple repetition to constructing original sentences. This is when language gets a little more complex and interesting. The fish-behaviour lesson continued in a later scene, with a question-and-answer exercise designed to elicit original responses. C'əⱡtups and Prasát briefly exchange original sentences, reproduced below. C'əⱡtups, reading from the text, asks Prasát:

C'əⱡtups: (4:12) Pənkin iʔ xʷəxʷmína əɬplak ƙl səlxʷʔitkʷ ?
Prasát: hmmmm, cmay ... q̓ipcm?
C'əⱡtups: iʔ xʷəxʷmína lut ⱡa cʔímx.
Prasát: oohhh ... lut acmistín ...
C'əⱡtups: iʔ xʷəxʷmína lut ⱡa cʔímx ... lut ⱡa cʔímx iʔ xʷəxʷmína ƙl səlxʷʔitkʷ.
Prasát: ohhh, ki. nikxəná! ... ƛaxt! (kʷu ʕayncút)

Translation:
C'əⱡtups: (4:12) When do trout return (migrate) from the ocean?
Prasát: mmmm, maybe ... Spring?
C'əⱡtups: Trout don't migrate.
Prasát: Oohhh ... I didn't know ...
C'əⱡtups: Trout don't migrate ... don't migrate from the ocean.
Prasát: Ohhh, yes. Gosh! ... [you are] Fast! (group laughing).

We were laughing because it had turned out to be a trick-question and C'ə̓rtups had quietly

"schooled" us on the complex lifeways of trout (sometimes they migrate and sometimes they

don't), adding her ecological knowledge to the lesson.

In our interviews we commented on our progress. Each of us expressed that our

speaking had improved. We attributed our success to hard work, immersion, and TPCLA

curriculum:

> **Sʔímlaʔxʷ**: kn ntils uníxʷ, kn qʷəlqʷilt mis x̌ast ʕapnáʔ … ’l … q̓sápi, ałíʔ …
> k̓iʔ kn mut l citxʷtət ṅqilxʷcn l c̓upáq, uł kʷu qʷaʔqʷʔál ṅqilxʷcn yaʕt iʔ
> sx̌əlx̌aʕlt. uł kʷu kł taʔlí x̌ast iʔ sʔaʔúms q̓əy̓ánt[ísəlx] ’l ʕAṅn uł Sʕamtíc̓aʔ.
> uł yʕat sx̌ə̓lx̌ʕalt ckic Sʕamtíc̓aʔ uł kʷu qʷaʔqʷʔál ṅqilxʷcn. (02:19)
> **X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam**: kʷu mypnwíłn yaʕt iʔ kłyankxó, Sʕamtíc̓aʔ naʔł ʕAṅn naʔł
> Qʷq̓ʷc̓w̓íyaʔ, iʔ sck̓ʷułsəlx. yʕat iʔ q̓əy̓min uł iʔ sʕaʕác. (03:06)

> *Translation:*
> **Sʔímlaʔxʷ**: I think truly I speak better now [than] long ago [before], because …
> I live in our n'qilxʷcn house in Chopaka, and we speak n'qilxʷcn all [every] day.
> We also have very good books write [written] by Chris Parkin and [forgot person
> marker for *and*] Sʕamtíc'aʔ. And every day Sʕamtíc'aʔ arrived and we spoke
> n'qilxʷcn. (02:19)
> **X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam**: We learned all the Paul Creek—Sʕamtíc'aʔ, Chris Parkin and
> LaRae Wiley's—work. All the papers and books. (03:06)

In our filmed interviews we commented that we now believed advanced proficiency was

possible. Five months of transformation had given us the tools and the commitment to

continue to become proficient. I included four English sentences from Prasát's English

interview because we did not yet have the ability to explain the abstract concept *fluency* (in

fact, I only learned the term n'tłłcin in time for X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam's interview). In the dialogue,

reproduced in the first pages of this dissertation, I ask Prasát (in English) if she believes she

will be fluent one day. She replies:

I believe I'm gonna be fluent. I believe I will be fluent before I leave this world. It's gonna take me a while, but—I feel that for all of us, we're on the edge of something (Prasát, *kʷu nɬəqʷcin,* 01:41).

X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam's interview concludes the film with her hope that she will one day be a "true"

speaker like her grandparents:

> **X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam**: lut t'ə tytýam iʔ sck̓ʷuɬtət. taʔlí xəċxaċt. nax̌əmɬ incá kn
> səcmypnwíɬn nqʷəlqʷiltn. uɬ … yaʕtmín qʷəlqʷilt nixʷ, uɬ nixʷ, ul nixʷ. (04:10)
> **Sʔímlaʔxʷ:** haʔ kʷ ntils, anwíʔ naqs sx̌əlx̌ʕalt kʷ ksṅtɬɬcin l ṅqilxʷcn? (04:47)
> **X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam**: kn musls. kn ɬə qʷəlqʷilt ṅqilxʷcn … kn ṅqilxʷcnm …
> iscqʷəlqʷilt tɬtaɬt, uɬ cʔxiɬ t̓ inƛ̓əx̌əx̌ƛ̓x̌áp, uɬ Syilx iʔ cawtət (05:20).

Translation:
X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam: Our work wasn't easy. It was very hard. But, I am learning to speak. I need [to] speak more, and more, and more. (03:43)
Sʔímlaʔxʷ: Do you think one day you will be n'tɬɬcin (straight and true speaker)? (04:47)
X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam: I hope so. When I talk n'qilxʷcn … I speak n'qilxʷcn … my speech will be tɬtaɬt (straight and true), like my grandparents, and our Syilx ways of being (05:20).

Indigenous language films and filmed language assessments

This section describes the potential of film and internet platforms for Indigenous research, language assessment, learning, documentation and providing language learning motivation. The personal story is of paramount importance in Syilx methodology. Film is therefore suited to Syilx research and dissemination because it honours individual voices and stories and allows personal narrative to take a primary role (Giard 2006; Jack 2010). Our narratives, presented on multimedia and film can "cut space" or forge a path for Okanagan scholars within the colonial constructs of the academy (Jack 2010:3-19).

There are only two feature length films in North-American Indigenous languages, that I know of. An early language revitalization film was an Arapaho community's dubbed

version of the feature-length Disney film *Bambi*, entirely in their own language, a courageous, proactive language-revitalization effort. The film and community language effort is described by Stephen Greymorning (2001). *Atanarjuat* is a recent excellent example of a feature-length Indigenous film, filmed entirely in the Inuit language, depicting an Inuit story structure, with English subtitles (Knopf 2008). A recent news release stated that the Navajo Nation Museum in Arizona is planning to dub Star Wars for release in September 2013, as an effort towards language preservation (Schwartz 2013).

Film and multi-media are well-suited to language documentation in order to record and safeguard the language (Hinton 2001a). However, while essential, language documentation should not be the end-goal of any language revitalization effort (Hinton 2001c). Rather, multi-media efforts should be directed into teaching and learning aids (Hinton 2001a). Internet spaces are well suited to Indigenous voice because they can incorporate multiple levels of reality, multi-media, personal stories and languages, and information can be made available to multiple diasporic users (Moore 2009; Landzelius 2006; Wemigwans 2008).

Google created a space for Indigenous languages to redefine themselves on the net in 2012: The Endangered Languages Project, at www.endangeredlanguages.com/, designed for sharing advice and documenting endangered languages. The website was transitioned to Indigenous oversight in August 2012.[34] The languages and information are provided by website managers, and appear to focus mainly on documentation; however, users can "add information" to the language pages. Paul Creek uploaded nearly all of their teaching materials and films, I uploaded my three films, John Lyon uploaded his three films, and the

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[34] Endangeredlanguages.com is overseen by First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) and The Institute for Language Information and Technology (The Linguist List, Eastern Michigan University) in coordination with the Advisory Committee. Language information is provided by Catalogue of Endangered Languages (ELCat), produced by the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and The Linguist List, Eastern Michigan University.

Sinixt Nation uploaded one film. Okanagan is listed as having eighty-five submissions as of October 15, 2013. Learners can access and upload N'syilxcn video, audio, songs, textbooks, video of Elders, and children's books at www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/oka.

I found the process of filming, honouring our voices, enjoying the films in community, and ascribing value to our process (assessment) provided valuable focus and learner motivation. I placed our films on YouTube and endangeredlanguages.com in order to share our language journey with others, create a lasting record of our transformation, our methods, a preliminary assessment, and motivating proof that higher than beginner levels are possible for Indigenous language learners.

The three videos we posted from the language house may be the first detailed examples of a filmed Indigenous language assessment. If there has been very little written about Indigenous language assessments (Miller 2004; NILI 2012; Peter *et al.* 2003; Peter and Hirata-Edds 2006), there has been even less written about *filmed* Indigenous language assessments. I can find only two academic reference to Indigenous filmed assessments, Leanne Hinton (2001c), and Borgia (2009). Learners in the Master-Apprentice program were described as being video taped approximately once a year, answering questions and describing a picture (Hinton 2001c:222-3). Comments were solicited from the Masters about the Apprentice's grammatical accuracy. The narratives were not compared to assessment strategies such as CLB or ACTFL, but were subjectively evaluted by trainers who do not understand the language. Trainers listened for what strike me as beginner traits such as one-word, short or long sentences, length of speech, frequent pauses, false starts, or a "flowing stream of words" and have "the idea in mind of someday comparing early assessments with later ones" (Hinton 2001c:222-3). In Seneca school, students were filmed and compared by

trained teachers to a three-stage assessment strategy in a pilot language assessment (Borgia 2009).

YouTube is increasingly becoming a platform for Indigenous language learners. A quick YouTube search of "Indigenous language" yields nearly 5,000 results. One noteworthy young YouTube contributor is Dustin Rivers, or Khelsilem. He is the subject of several films posted by WAYK (Where Are Your Keys?), an interactive Indigenous language learning method developed in Portland, Oregon (Arcand 2011).[35] He posted his own film (linked below) entirely in the Squamish language, and started a website to support Squamish language revitalization and activism:

www.youtube.com/user/dustinrivers?feature=results_main

The Salish School of Spokane's immersion language nest is documented in a series of short documentary films, posted to YouTube (LaMere 2010; LaMere, Wiley and Parkin 2010), as well as numerous educational videos posted at interiorsalish.com and www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/oka.

Linguists and language superlearners

Linguists are primarily concerned with documenting languages based on linguistic theory (as described in Chapter three), however in the process they often become quite proficient speakers of Indigenous languages. Ken Hale, a U.S. linguist and polygot, was renowned for his ability to pick up languages quickly, and raised his sons in an endangered Australian Indigenous language, Warlpiri (Hale 2013). As discussed in Chapter three, some Indigenous language learners have used linguistic techniques to become proficient in their languages.

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[35] To see his several films, type Dustin Rivers, Khelsilem, or WAYK into the YouTube browser. I found out about Dustin by attending a WAYK workshop where he was a participant/teacher. His website is squamishlanguage.com.

Some linguistic techniques could be useful to Indigenous language learners. Particulary, I feel the techniques of elicitation, recording and transcribing could be useful in developing reading, writing, and comprehension skills. I did not use linguistic theory or methods in my research, as mentioned previously. However, I note that after reading *Linguistics for Dummies* (Burton, Déchaine and Vatikiotis-Bateson 2012) I was able to understand many terms used in linguistic analyses of N'syilxcn, and I recommend this reading for Indigenous language revitalization activists and Indigenous language learners.

I recently had the opportunity to meet a linguistics graduate student at the University of British Columbia who had focused on N'syilxcn and other Interior Salish languages. John Lyon is a soft spoken linguist from the southern United States, is passionate about language, and has excellent N'syilxcn pronunciation. I found in speaking with him that we were at approximately the same level of speaking proficiency. He was kind enough to self-assess his language level, based on the Canadian language benchmarks (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000) which I provided him (the CLB system is composed of twelve numbered levels, with B5, B6, B7, and B8 representing low, mid, mid, and high intermediate, as described above). This was an interesting comparison because we had each spent four years of focused graduate-level research on N'syilxcn, though I had been following a language revitalization path and he, a linguistic path. Here is John Lyon's self-assessment:

> On page 54, I'd say I'm an intermediate B6 speaker at the very most, probably somewhere in between B5 and B6 though, same for writing (transcribing is a little different, since you only have to "hear" what's being said. The benchmarks here seem to be more for creative writing, which is a bit different, something I don't have much practice at). Between an intermediate B6 and B7 in listening, same for reading. That's my self-diagnosis. Interesting how listening/reading comes easier than speaking/writing. That's how we learn maybe. (Lyon Pers. Comm. Email April 12, 2013)

I am impressed that Lyon achieved intermediate levels in all four learning categories. Our

spoken language levels were identical, but his written, reading, and comprehension levels were considerably higher than mine (mid-intermediate, compared to my high-beginner).

John told me that much of his language learning occurred during his field research, and later documenting his "elicitations" from his Elder speakers Sarah McLeod and Lottie Lindlay. Elicitation is a linguistic exercise designed to record all aspects of a language, from word formation to complex sentences and narrative. John Lyon collected and recorded 14,000 words and sentences in elicitation notebooks. My rough estimate is that Lyon spent twenty hours per week for half of the weeks out of two years, or approximately 1,000 hours in dedicated listening, reading, and writing exercises. I note that the elicitation techniques appear to be extremely effective in creating an intermediate speaker, reader, writer, and listener within 1,000 hours. John Lyon collected numerous stories in N'syilxcn (Lyon and Lindley 2013) and wrote a number of linguistically based articles (2010a,b, 2011a,b) and a PhD dissertation (2013d) about the structure and syntax of N'syilxcn.

He dubbed three films in N'syilxcn and uploaded them to YouTube (Lyon 2013a,b,c).[36] He chose three older films (*We Don't Want the Train to Go Through*, from *the Invaders*, 1912; *Casper the Friendly Ghost* 1912; and an educational film, *The Beavers* 1930), downloaded for free from the public domain. His filming technique was to have his Elder watch the film in English to get the gist of the plot, and then to turn the sound off, and have the Elder narrate the activities in the film. Lyon then synched the narrative with the film and provided subtitles in N'syilxcn. These films are of excellent value to future intermediate and advanced N'syilxcn learners, and provide an interesting and educational example of spoken narrative in a variety of contexts.

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[36] *We don't want the train to go through*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YN5C6KMVLBY;
Casper the Friendly Ghost: www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKPod9KKBsg;
The Beavers: www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c_Yzz6a8Hk.

It is not common for linguists to assess their language levels (perhaps this is an area of future research for Indigenous researchers). However, there are numerous instances of non-Indigenous language self-assessments and demonstrations on YouTube, by non-academic learners. In fact YouTube has become a global platform for a wave of "postmonolingual" polyglots who are challenging themselves to learn multiple languages and document their progress on YouTube (Erard 2012). These superlearners spend up to fifteen hours a day studying languages from books and computers, doing sentence drills, journalling, talking out loud, logging their progress, generally finding ways to self-teach languages they have little exposure to (Erard 2012). They are undaunted by lack of access to speakers and create their own self-study techniques. At fifteen, polyglot Tim Doner (a Jewish New-Yorker) posted a video of himself speaking Ojibway after ten days of learning it from the computer.[37]

Tim Doner speaks to YouTube for two full minutes in complete Ojibway sentences, seldom pausing or re-starting. His subtitles tell us he has never spoken with or met an Ojibway person, he learned from the computer over ten mornings "if I wasn't busy," his language skills are not yet good and he resolves to speak properly in the future. There are over 20,500 views and many Ojibway speakers comment on his impressive and inspiring speaking ability. An Ojibway teacher commented: "You seem to have found a better learning system than what I started with. You would do the Ojibwe [sic] community a great favor if you could tell us how you were able to learn so much so quickly."

I believe super-learners' techniques are of value to Indigenous second-language learners; they found ways to motivate themselves to put in long hours and achieve proficiency quickly. At the very least their achievements are a fascinating example of

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[37]www.youtube.com/watch?v=X8ZAYpZKRPE&playnext=1&list=PL83480A101AE7267B&feature=results_video>

learning potential. Since discovering superlearners on YouTube, I became motivated to adopt some of their self-study techniques: journalling, home-study and logging my progress. Perhaps superlearners will inspire Indigenous learners to post more videos in our languages.

Memory and dreams

After studying in Grizzly's den, I wondered if second-language acquisition techniques could provide shortcuts to learning languages. Popular-media is rife with inside secrets to rapid language-acquisition (a Google Search, "how to learn languages fast" yields 119,000,000 results), and researchers have documented the varied cognitive processes involved in language learning (O'Malley and Chamot 1990). However, there are no peer-reviewed shortcuts to side-step the hard work required to learn a second language. I came across fascinating research on memory techniques for learning languages and on language dreams. I mention them briefly in this section as they may be interesting for future language and memory researchers, though they are outside of the scope of my research.

Memory research identifies techniques such as the "memory palace" or "method of loci" that can greatly speed language learning (Godwin-Jones 2010). The memorization technique has been popularized by journalist Joshua Foer in a recent book (2011) and article (2012). According to the method of loci technique, memories are strengthened if they are linked to an individualized system of geographical or architectural features in the mind. These techniques have historically been used to memorize speeches, lists and hundreds of random digits, but have also been applied to learning languages quickly (Godwin-Jones 2010, Foer 2012). Many popular websites offer methods to speed the acquisition process (learn a language in ten days!). A drawback to this technique is that it depends on creating pictures from syllables that sound like English words, which is not possible for most

N'syilxcn syllables due to the frequency of non-English sounds. I made several notes about the keyword and method of loci techniques:

> *For example, one learner managed to memorize his 1000 word French dictionary in 10 days. However the keyword and method of loci techniques rely on choosing L1 words that sound like the L2 words (ie L2 spanish cabeza (head) would be broken into L1 words cab, bees, ha, and then combined into a funny imaginary picture). I could find no references to L2 that are very dissimilar sounding to L1 (i.e. when I try this technique with a number of N'syilxcn words, I draw a blank). (Personal notes, Nov. 30, 2012)*

Language acquisition researchers remind us that there are no "shortcuts" to advanced proficiency (other than perhaps for achieving "survival levels"), and that "time on task" is the best determiner of language acquisition (Jackson and Kaplan 1999; Rifkin 2003:585).

I briefly experimented with the method of loci. I chose ten words from the N'syilxcn dictionary; words I did not know and that were not too simple. I created a memory palace in my mind out of my childhood home. The idea is to situate images around your memory palace and then later to walk through the palace to retrieve them. Memories last best if they are outrageous or silly, and time must be taken to creatively construct the images. For example, the third word on my list was *haw'iɫp*, weeping willow. In my mental kitchen, I placed an image on top of the refrigerator. The image was a stereotypical wooden First Nations statue with his arm raised up, saying How (*haw'*), weeping, and holding a leafy willow branch in his hand (*iɫp*). In N'syilxcn, the suffix for vegetation ,*-iɫp*, was already familiar to me. My notes on the memory experiment indicate only partial success:

> *3 weeks later, I note that most of the words have been lost in my memory, I have a recollection of the images as I walk around the house, but the words are difficult, because of the foreign sounds to English. I cam remember 2 out of 10. I will have to spell them, which is a slow memory method. However…working with Herman this week he read a story aloud, which had a hawiɫp (weeping willow) tree in it, and I knew the word! I immediately "saw" the image in my mind of the old man standing on top of my fridge with a branch in his hand. I see this as a success. maybe I should try to memorize some random lists that have similar sounds to English. (Personal notes, Dec. 21, 2012).*

I had a memory-palace-type language dream at the language house, before I had heard of memory palaces. In my dream, the landscape was the sagebrush hillside near the house. The animals were walking downhill towards the house and I could see and hear their N'syilxcn names attached to each animal. I may have been generating a "memory palace" from the hillside and placing each animal name on it. My dream reminded me Syilx stories are often linked to the landscape. According to some research, dreaming in the language indicates, or results from, rapid aquisition. In the 1980s, "Canadian psychologist Joseph de Koninck found that students of French who made the fastest progress were those who reported speaking French in their dreams sooner than fellow students" (Erard 2012:48). I had several language dreams while still a beginner in the language house. (In the next chapter I share quotes from my personal notebooks about language dreams.) In one dream I was at a ceremony and we were reciting conjugations all night long, Elders, children, adults. I woke up tired to study again all day after studying all night.

In the next chapter I describe our daily and monthly activities in the language house and provide several excerpts from my personal notebooks.

Chapter 6: iʔ scəwcawtət iʔ l citxʷtət (our way in the language house)

iʔ tl cxʔit iʔ sx̌əłx̌aʕlt, kʷu cxʷəlxʷaʕlt uł kʷu łəxʷncut n'qilxʷcn.

From day one, the language house became a transformative space where we lived, breathed, and studied n'qilxʷcn—a domain of language use for five months. This chapter provides a sense of how it feels to live n'qilxʷcn from within the Grizzly's den. I provide month-by-month details, including (italicized) excerpts from my notebooks. I kept notebooks throughout our time in the immersion house, noting attendance, schedules, lessons, visitors, epiphanies, struggles, and personal observations. I wrote them at night and at the end of each week. I share our co-presentation at the 2011 Celebrating Salish Conference in Spokane, and describe the expanding web of learning in our communities since the language house, including adult and children's classes. In the house we applied many excellent second-language acquisition (SLA) techniques, introduced in Chapter three and discussed in more detail in Chapter seven. The next sections describe our daily and month-by-month activities.

Our daily routine in the language house: January-May 2011

The language house was our home from Monday to Thursday and we returned to our homes on weekends. We decided on a strict no-English rule between 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Sʕamtíc'aʔ provided one and a half hours of immersion conversation per day. We studied TPCLA curriculum four hours per day. From 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. we capsíw's sat at our worktable, circling round and round with TPCLA exercises from N'syilxcn 2 (1 lesson per day for 40 lessons) and later, Captíkʷł 2 (1 story per week for 10 stories).

Table 3. Daily Schedule: January 10 - May 19, 2011, Mon.-Thurs. (19 weeks)

11:00 am-7:00 pm	strict immersion time
12:00-1:30 pm	immersion with Sʕamtíc'aʔ: 1.5 hrs
2:00-6:00 pm	TPCLA group curriculum study: 4 hrs
Total Hours	(5.5) * 4 days/wk * 19 weeks = 418 intensive hours

Most of our time was spent learning new TPCLA lessons including partner exercises, written exercises, testing and regular assessment. We spent one hour per day reviewing previously learned material, N'syilxcn 1 and Captíkʷɬ 1. For half an hour per day we had group immersion-conversation such as *what did you do last weekend*? We had many hours of immersion outside of classtime and occasional visits and dinners with neighbouring N'syilxcn speakers, Salʕáwaʔt and Q'iyusáxlqn. We stayed in the language through dinner until 7:00 p.m. when we allowed ourselves to switch to English. When we switched to English it felt like switching from slow motion to high speed.

It was a testament to our strength and dedication that we lived and studied together through the darkest months of winter in our version of Grizzly's den. We held monthly fundraisers in the house to raise the rent and raise awareness with the community. Classtime and Elder immersion added up to five and a half hours per day, twenty-two hours per week, and eighty-eight intensive immersion hours per month, not including homework. In five months we logged 420 intensive hours of immersion classtime and immersion Elder interaction (rounded up from 418).

The following sections describe the language house on a month-by-month basis, between January and May 2011.

sqʷsus (January)

January was a hectic month; we moved our belongings into the house, went cold-turkey on English and began studying N'syilxcn full time. My notes from January are filled with lesson plans, attendances, scheduling, new words, descriptions of my new capsíw's, and personal observations. From my notes on the first day:

> *On move-in day P'ip'q's [Sta?qʷálqs] arrived the night before and made soup for us and had cookies baked (wheat and wheat-free) for when we arrived. At eighteen years of age she was already a house-mother* (Personal notebook, Mon. Jan. 10, 2011).

In our first weeks everything was new, our new living situation, our new neighbourhood, to the difficulty of memorizing new words, to our first interactions with the neighbours. I resolved to meet the new challenge with a balance of hard work, gratitude for the process, and regular exercise. My notes from the third day reflect some of the sense of newness, excitement, bewilderment, gratitude, and a humorous interaction with our new neighbour:

> ***Jan 12, 7am, Wednesday***
> *I woke up at 7am to my own internal clock.*
> *Oh my god I can't believe we are really doing this.*
> *I am grateful for this opportunity, for my cohort, for my comfortable bed, for chairs and a table. For running water.*
> *[later in morning] a.m.—running at first light—remember this is Canada in January, first light is about 7:30*
> *a truck stops and asks what we are doing,*
> *I say, going for a run*
> *she asks where we're staying*
> *I say, that house at the end of the road*
> *she says, "Oh! my mom's house," laughing, "I thought you guys were coming across the border."* (Personal notebook, Wed. Jan. 12, 2011).

Our house was on the end of Chopaka road; the last house before the Canada/U.S. border. At the end of our driveway, the road quietly shrunk in stature from a maintained dirt

road to an unmaintained two-track farm road, gated with a barbed wire gate. A kilometre or so down this farm road was the border, marked by a locked iron gate, some signs, and a length of barbed wire stretching East-West in both directions. The barbed wire travelled in an unbroken line through fields, across marshes, and over mountains. There was very little traffic on Chopaka road, other than the on-reserve residents. Our neighbour was surprised to see two strangers jogging away from the U.S. border on a cold winter morning.

Our first immersion conversations were thrilling. There was excitement in our new venture. I captured our first immersion conversation on the first film (*Goldilocks 1*, discussed in Chapter five) and made the following notes about turning off English that first day:

> *At 11:30am there was a magical, natural, clear shift in energy and intention. [Prasát and I] stood up and started talking about what we would have for lunch, whether we liked this or that, what we would have later on, and cooked & had lunch in N'syilxcn... . we sat, we talked, we laughed ... Brandy arrived... I filmed a bit of this ... I can't say enough about that hour—it was surely a state of flow— but a <u>group</u> state of flow.[38] It was much later in the day I looked back at that <u>first hour</u> with a feeling of real pride. We really did it. We walked past a sense of impossibility, (which I think at some level we all had, Prasát articulated this morning pre-11am that a few years ago, she had believed it was impossible for her to become fluent)* (Personal notebook, Fri. Jan. 14, 2011).

Chris Parkin introduced us to our new schedule and our new textbook, N'syilxcn 2, during the first week. The classes were 95% immersion, with the occasional English word or sentence about grammar. He told us that we would need to study hard each night. Each N'syilxcn 2 lesson begins with a quiz on the approximately thirty new vocabulary words. The lesson starts by listening and repeating the words after a recording of Sʕamtíc'aʔ. Exercises become increasingly complex (I later learned this is called "scaffolding"),

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[38] Flow is referred to in Mihaly Cziksentsmihaly's *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (1990), and describes a pleasurable state of complete absorbtion, midway between boredom and anxiety, where time loses its meaning and learning is optimized. Flow is known to be a positive factor in second-language acquisition (Egbert 2003; Spielmann and Radnofsy 2001).

involving questions, partner exercises, and gradually incorporating original input. I provide

an example of the capsíw's working through an N'syilxcn 2 lesson in *kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin*, in

Chapter five. The filmed footage shows us repeating vocabulary words and progressing to

original responses about fish spawning and migration. After dinner we studied new

vocabulary on flashcards—about thirty new words a day. We learned hundreds of new

words and several grammatical forms each week. For the first weeks (as warned in Hinton,

Vera and Steele 2002:9) turning off English gave us headaches. Every night we made

flashcards to remember new vocabulary words. The new words infiltrated my dreams. In my

first waking moments I found I was able to recall words from our lessons:

> *7am: It's working—I can still remember some of the slippery fish I was trying to fit in my mailslot of memory last night—sxʷəxʷmínaʔ—trout. But there are so many more—Elk, coho, dried meat, dried fish.* (Personal notebook, Wed. Jan. 12, 2011) . . . [and a few days later] *I woke up this morning full of words from this week—snikɬcaʔ! elk! a word that eluded me all week, and then sc'win—dried meat* (Personal notebook, Fri. Jan. 14, 2011).

The first week passed like minutes. By Thursday our transformation was well

underway. It felt like we had created a new world, very different than our other life:

> *We talked* [in English] *until after 11 last night. We said it would be strange to go home tomorrow. It will be strange to pack up and leave this family today and return to another life that already seems less real* (Personal notebook, Thur. Jan. 13, 2011).

Sʕamtíc'aʔ arrived every day for one- to two-hour immersion activities. Following

Chris's advice, we planned to repeat each activity several times in order to learn the new

words associated with the activity. We started with the card game *Uno* for the first two

weeks, which was an excellent language generator (the importance of games, repetition, and

planned activities in SLA is discussed in the next chapter). After two weeks we planned to

move on to other activities such as making tea, baking bread, and cooking. Like all beginner

speakers we still struggled with basic conversation and household words like "boil water," and "make tea." My speaking confidence was high, and I tried out new words and sentences as much as possible, starting rudimentary conversations and practicing vocabulary.

During the second week we transitioned to teaching ourselves as a group, and Chris provided helpful feedback. We took turns leading the lessons, deciding each night who would lead the next day. I volunteered to take the first turn, on January 17, noting later:

> *How do I feel after my first day of facilitating the afternoon class? Accepted. Chris said I was brave and I did well, and P'ip'q's [Staʔqʷálqs] thanked me and gave me a hug* (Personal notebook, Tues. Jan. 18, 2011).

I found that I experienced a heightened state of learning while teaching—a "*state of Flow and the acquisition of words*" (Personal notebook, Tues. Jan. 18, 2011).

On that already full day, Q'iyusálxqn (Herman Edward) arrived early for dinner and storytold in N'syilxcn for three hours. My comprehension was still quite low—I only occasionally caught the gist of his narrative, and none of the details. I found my limited understanding "*frustrating, tiring, headache-inducing*" in contrast to teaching, which had been inspiring (Personal notebook, Tues. Jan. 18, 2011). The next day was another long day:

> *A long day—woken up at 5am by loud banging noises [which turned out to be a dog]. Difficult curriculum. We all felt worn out by this afternoon. Tired. deep brain tired. Chris left today at 6pm. I felt a deep sadness when he left. A sense of the difficulty ahead of us* (Personal notebook, Wed. Jan. 19, 2011).

We took turns leading the class. On January 24, C'əɬtups led the class, and the next day C'əɬtups and I co-led, which was a good partnership:

> *C'əɬtups and I co-lead the class, a good combo, she sits up with me at night and we come up with questions and a plan, and I basically led it, we will do the same thing tomorrow. The lesson for tomorrow looks less exhausting* (Personal notebook, Tues. Jan. 24, 2011).

Our first month was intensive but we had fun which balanced out the work. One night four of us went skating at the outdoor skating rink in Keremeos. It was not yet seven o'clock so we tried to maintain immersion as long as possible. We chatted in beginner N'syilxcn in the car until we hit the rink, laughed and joked while we put on our skates and shouted out our new compound-word "qʷaʔqʷaʔxníkxmn!" (*skating*) on the rink. From my notes:

> *qʷaʔqʷaʔxníkxmn = skating! X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam's idea. It was so much fun. The girls looked picturesque—movie quality in their big, almost isolated rink, lit by outdoor flood lights* (Personal notebook, Tues. Jan. 25, 2011).

The first month passed quickly. We had created a domain of use, no small task, and made incredible gains in our language. We were living the language and applying all kinds of second-language acquisition techniques, though I didn't realize it until later. In the third week of January we filmed our first language assessment—we each told the Goldilocks story, which became the content of *Goldilocks I*, discussed in Chapter five. Right away I looked over the footage and shared a rough-cut film with the capsiw's. From my notes:

> *The film footage looks awesome! … wow, looking at the footage I can see I am speaking much more fluidly already!* (Personal notebook, Sun. Jan 23, 2011).
> *Showed off the rough cut film (8 min.) [to the capsiw's]. We laughed.* (Personal notebook, Mon. Jan. 24, 2011).

Watching the rough-cut film, I felt pride in our efforts and began to believe our hard work would produce results. We were discovering the lived-experience that intentional, deliberate practice, if sustained for a long time, can lead to proficiency—something some had not thought possible before. I added a later interview question: "do you believe you will be fluent?" (Personal notebook, Mon. Jan. 24, 2011).

spaqt (February)

February started out strong:

This has been an amazing week for extra-curricular activity. On Tues. we had the amazing visit with [an Elder] Uɬxnic'a, and last night we had dinner with Herman and Salʕáwaʔt. Monday, Herman came for dinner. There was no Sʕamtic'aʔ all week but we did OK anyway. We got really good at playing UNO (Personal notebook, Thursday, Feb. 3, 2011).

One day, Prasat and I walked the two-track road behind our house to the Canada/U.S. border and looked across the barbed wire fence that bisected our language territory:

I felt that same feeling of awe and intimidation I always feel at international borders—at the arbitrariness of a straight line across the earth. Especially profound because it is a straight line across the təmxʷúlaʔxʷ [land], separating families (Personal notebook, Thurs. Feb. 3, 2011).

However, our initial excitement began to wane. The house became quieter in between activities though we continued to work hard during our lessons, fully immersed in our Grizzly's den and our personal transformation. On Feb 1st I note, "the house is so quiet," and on Feb. 3rd that "other than Prasát and I," the capsíw's are shy speakers even during classtimes and lessons (even more so outside of lessons). The ticking of the clock was a constant companion, "*As always in the house when no one is talking—the clock ticks*" (Personal notebook, Thurs. Feb. 3, 2011).

The immersion house affected me when I went home on the weekends. I experienced a sense of murky confusion and stress when I returned to life in English. I described it to myself as reverse culture shock, which sometimes made me feel "*sad and weepy*" (Personal notebook Tues. Feb. 1, 2011). I later learned my emotions resulted from the personality shift that learners commonly develop in their new language (Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001). I later named this and similar effects *language tension*, discussed in Chapter seven. C'əɬtups

told me she experienced a similar effect; at a university meeting she had trouble speaking her usual fast-paced English (Personal notebook, Mon. Jan. 31 2011). I was also experiencing a tension between the lived-experience of revitalizing N'syilxcn, the intuitive "knowing" that our methods were right, and the idea of writing about it in English, later:

> *Can I speak from the heart within academia? And within language revitalization? … Operating within community—I "know" language revitalization is right, and I can intuitively sense the right direction to take—can I operate at this level of heart? Have other Indigenous scholars done so?* (Personal notebook, Fri. Feb 4, 2011).

By now I had dreams in n'qilx^{w}cn—I was studying, studying, studying, or struggling to find the right word. New vocabulary words sifted into my consciousness as I woke up:

> *Words are beginning to infiltrate my sleep, and my dreams have sound and forms from my days. Sometimes I am confused, there are so many. When I first wake up, I wake up with a clarity of words that were giving me trouble the day, or days, before—in the soft moments between sleep and wakefulness my brain filters words from subconscious to conscious. Today I woke up with sk^{w}ək^{w}usnt – stars, and 3 days ago I woke up with sk^{w}nk^{w}inm – Indian potatoes, a word that plagued me for days. One day this week [I dreamed] the sounds of the animals coming down from the mountains. My waking mind placed the words on the sides of mountains in my mind's landscape. styíɫc'a [caribou].* (Personal notebook, Sat. Feb. 12, 2011).

The next day, I noted that time had noticeably shifted—we had already packed a lifetime of moments into a few weeks:

> *Today I have been studying all day, for the midterm, and am amazed at how long this month has been—has it really only been a month? We are transformed, transforming…living fully in the moment* (Personal notebook, Sun. Feb. 12, 2011).

Sʕamtíc'aʔ visited every day and chatted and joked with us, keeping the mood as light as possible. As an experienced language teacher, she was no doubt aware that our transformation in Grizzlys' den involved implicit language tensions. We played *Uno* in the first weeks of February and our *Uno* vocabularies improved—skip a turn, wild card, place a

card, deal the cards, your turn, numbers and colours. We created new language-generating rules, such as *if you don't say what you are doing, you miss a turn*.

By February 21, we no longer had immersion "activities." While we continued to have daily immersion time with Sʕamtíc'aʔ, it was no longer a planned activity, but rather a simple chat. According to my notebook, *"Immersion activity a problem—we haven't done one in 2 weeks, we melmilt* [chat] *with Sʕamtic'aʔ (the easy road) instead"* (Personal notebook, Mon. Feb. 21, 2011). This pattern continued over the next three months, other than sporadic activities helpfully initiated by Sʕamtíc'aʔ. Skipping our activities was our first sign of language tension, and we were reducing our level of learning. Learners will do almost anything to reduce their language tension and thereby plateau their learning (Hinton, Vera and Steele 2002:9-10). I noticed we studied less without Chris there to motivate us. I noted we sometimes were just showing up, *"just doing lessons, and at times doing the bare minimum*," rather than following Chris's advice to "*study our guts out,*" maximizing our learning by speaking and practicing as much as possible (Personal notebook Thur. Jan 27, 2011).

I kept looking for opportunities to practice, and one evening in February I got up the nerve to knock on Salʕáwaʔt's door (Tony Qwaltier lived across from us; his house is in Figure 2) for an immersion visit. As a beginner speaker I had limited ability to speak or comprehend, but thankfully Salʕáwaʔt has the gift of humour and patience. He brought out an English translation of a captík^{w}ł story and we practiced translating it to N'syilxcn, mostly him translating and me helpfully agreeing and offering suggestions. With his permission I filmed him so I could share the story with the capsíw's and I could practice transcribing and understanding the story later. Working through a captík^{w}ł turned out to be good

entertainment and good practice for both of us. Unlike his younger sister Sʕamtíc'aʔ, Salʕáwaʔt hadn't spoken as much N'syilxcn over the years. Like many Elders, he was a speaker, but his speech was rusty and he enjoyed the opportunity to practice, joke around and remember words.

Salʕáwaʔt visited frequently, often stopping by in the morning to say hello. His visits were a gift and gave us the opportunity to gauge our progress through conversation with an Elder. There were plenty of opportunities to notice that we had a hard time understanding ordinary conversation and Salʕáwaʔt had a good sense of humour, like his sister. One morning he came for a visit while we were finishing up breakfast. Prasát wanted to ask if he was hungry, but she unknowingly asked asked if he had *already* eaten. He answered *Yes*, I'm full. Prasát heard the affirmative and served him breakfast which he politely ate. Salʕáwaʔt stood up to leave and said he was satisfied he wouldn't have to eat until dinner time. Prasát asked me later, did he say *yes* he was *hungry* or *yes* he was *full*? We laughed when she realized he had been too polite to correct her error and probably left feeling very full.

Our speaking abilities were improving though it was difficult to notice our improvement at the time. We had frequent errors and gaps of understanding but were gaining the ability to talk about topics that were real to us (the next chapter discusses the importance of "meaningful" content in SLA). We were gradually becoming able to say things and understand each other (though only in limited, simple contexts). On Monday Feb 14, C'əɬtups, Staʔqʷálqs and I were driving together to the language house. It was 11:00 a.m., time to switch to N'syilxcn, so we switched in the car. We tried our usual Monday immersion activity, *What did you do last weekend*? We were excited to discover we could talk about real-life events on our weekend, what we did, where we went, and who we saw—

like a real conversation. This was a big improvement from the one-word sentences we used only four weeks earlier in the kitchen table scene in *Goldilocks I*.

skŵirmŵ (March): Celebrating Salish Conference

Our attendance remained fairly good in March, though it declined a month later. We took turns leading or co-leading lessons. From my notes,

> *Today and yesterday I had headaches because the learning has bumped up again, I can feel it. That's good, I haven't had the headaches in weeks—that's when I can tell I'm learning"* (Personal notebook, Wed. March 1, 2011).

Sʕamtíc'aʔ visited daily and we had occasional activities such as baking biscuits, scraping hides, and making a drum. One day in mid-March, I noticed my comprehension had improved. All of a sudden I could understand more (though certainly not all) of what Sʕamtíc'aʔ was saying—she was talking about putting in a garden. The capsíw's' speech had also improved. For instance, I remarked in my notes that Staʔqʷálqs' acquisition was "a*mazing—she is suddenly busting out full sentences. From zero to sixty in two months. Actual speech"* (Personal notebook, Mon. March 14, 2011).

In March Sʕamtíc'aʔ and four of the capsíw's (C' əŵtups was busy with her Master's work at another conference) travelled to Spokane, Washington to attend the 2011 Celebrating Salish Language Conference. Chris Parkin invited us to present our experience with other Salish learners. The second annual Celebrating Salish conference was co-organized by Chris Parkin's teams at the Salish School of Spokane and the Kalispel Language Program, and was held March 9-11, 2011.[39] About three hundred people from several Salish language programs attended the 2011 conference. Delegates from several

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[39] Celebrating Salish Language Conference 2012: www.kalispeltribe.com/celebrating-salish-conference/.

language programs spoke about their learning initiatives. There were presentations by youth learners, and speeches and plays in several Salish languages. It was very moving to see hundreds of Salish people intent on learning and speaking their languages. I was particularly interested to hear Jessie Fountain's presentation on the Kalispel Language program (introduced in Chapter three). Jessie has become an advanced speaker through teaching, and her Elder spoke with pride about her and their program. A conference highlight for me was the Salish Karaoke contest on the final evening. Singers took turns belting out fifties tunes in several Salish languages, to the thrilled cheers of Elders in the audience.

We capsíw's presented and spoke about the language house, TPCLA curriculum, and the hard work required to transition from beginner to intermediate speaking levels.[40] We introduced ourselves, shared our lesson schedule, demonstrated an immersion activity from N'syilxcn 2 and shared our film *Goldilocks I*, our experiences and recommendations.

When we returned to the language house a week later, the week away had put the brakes on our studying momentum. Spring had sprung and the capsíw's started skipping more lessons. We continued to study most days but attendance was sporadic. The quietness in the house was increasing, and our group energy was low during lessons. I reacted to the silence by feeling emotional stress, showing up in my notes as "a lot of weeping." I was tired of being the "squeaky wheel," of trying to drag my capsiw's through our lessons on the slow days (Personal notebook March 14, 2011).

I didn't realize it at the time, but the lowered attendance rates and low energy were a symptom of language tension, discussed in the next chapter. To take care of myself, I began to exercise daily and to study on my own one day a week, "*2 months in and my goals are more regular exercise*" (Personal notebook March 14, 2011). The house was quiet other than

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[40] Our conference handout is reproduced in Appendix 3.

during lesson times and our daily kitchen-table məl'milt (visit) with Sʕamtíc'aʔ. I wondered if the silence was a protracted "silent phase" and one day the capsíw's would suddenly start speaking, or if there was any way to spur more conversation in the house:

> *It makes me wonder (though the literature offers no clues) after a long "silent phase" will adult learners speak just as well or better than if they had forced themselves to talk?* (Personal notebook, Mon. March 28, 2011).

Sʕamtíc'aʔ remarked that we were all looking forward to spring and we could do outdoor activities such as gardening to give us a break from our studies. Reflecting back on previous months, it was easier to focus when we had regular visits from our motivating teacher, Chris Parkin. We were succumbing to language tensions and slowing down our learning, though we stayed on schedule and continued to complete lessons. Despite our quietness, our hard work was resulting in language gains, which became noticeable now and then, when speaking with Elders. One day after class, Staʔqʷálqs and I stopped off at an Elder, Ulxníc'a's, house and chatted for an hour in N'syilxcn. Ulxníc'a is a very clear speaker, and very patient with learners. From my notes:

> *Amazing—I think I can understand almost ½ the conversation, and I now get the gist of most conversational tracks. The last time we were there I think I could understand, or even get the gist of about 1/10th of what he said. He is a very clear speaker and animated storyteller. [Staʔqʷálqs] expressed the same thing— one month ago [she understood] "lut stim" [nothing], and now, some understanding. She even spoke a few sentences. We talked about the two-minded nature of English, of paper work, of academia. His word for two-minded is n'q'iyíw's k'ɬpaʔxmín* (Personal notebook, Wed. March 23, 2011).

We completed one N'syilxcn 2 lesson per day, finished the N'syilxcn 2 textbook, and at the end of March we studied for our final N'syilxcn 2 oral and written exams. Chris Parkin came for exam day and a mini-fundraiser dinner. We celebrated the completion of N'syilxcn 2, the third TPCLA textbook, and then took a well-deserved week off.

pckɬtan (April)

In April we took the first week off while Chris got new curriculum ready for us. Chris started us on a new book, Captík^{w}ɬ 2, and the new challenge gave us a boost of energy. Chris led the class for the second week of April, significantly bumping up the language level. Captík^{w}ɬ 2 included new exercises, methods, more complex grammar, and more homework. We were now learning complete stories sentence-by-sentence, with full complex grammatical breakdowns, and approximately thirty new vocabulary words per story. The more challenging intermediate material was a shock to our systems. From my notes, *"I could tell some of us were getting headaches from the increased learning, I know I was"* (Personal notebook, Tues. April 18, 2011). Maximum acquisition occurs when input is slightly beyond the learners' current level of comprehension (Krashen and Terrell 1988:32) and Captík^{w}ɬ 2 maintained a fast pace of acquisition. The fast pace was easier to maintain while Chris was present during the second week of April. The stories were difficult to understand without a teacher, particularly the grammar. Because we were the first group to study this book, we had to push through even though we sometimes didn't understand the story, and this felt stressful to us. Our stress showed up as silence and skipping lessons, and we lost many days in April due to absences.

We completed one story per week through April and May, completing the first six (of fifteen) stories. Now and then we organized immersion dinners with our neighbours, and one night it ended up just three of us, C'ə́ɬtups, our neighbour Salʕáwaʔt, and I. For the first time, C'ə́ɬtups broke through her shyness and courageously held up her end of the conversation:

We had a great dinner with Salʕáwaʔt. Just C'əⱡtups and I were there . . . I was amazed at how much comprehension there was on both sides—us and Salʕáwaʔt. C'əⱡtups held up her end of the conversation—though I had to 'translate' a few words [I pronounced them again after her in N'syilxcn, not English]. I was amazed to hear C'əⱡtups talking. It's a good example of a silent learner. She has [had] a hard time getting her point across because it's her first time trying. Does the silent phase need to be broken in order to learn? I think so. (Personal notebook, Mon. April 25, 2011).

I continued to study at home one day a week. I began to research second-language acquisition literature (discussed in Chapter seven). My notes in April show I discovered second-language assessment scales, (discussed in Chapters five and seven; American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012; Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Miller 2004).

This week I am writing my comp [comprehensive exam] and thinking about things like—operational definition of fluency. And numbers of new fluent speakers in the world. There are very few figures (Personal notebook, Mon. April 25, 2011).

I was fascinated that second-language teachers and learners were able to refer to objective ratings, and that it was possible to test for speaking, reading, writing, and listening abilities. In my notes I applied a preliminary, subjective rating to my speaking level: *"now I'm at low-mid intermediate"* (Personal notes, April 27, 2011).

sp̓iⱡmntn (May)

Winter was finally over and we were approaching the end of our scheduled five-month stint. We were excited to get outside and enjoy the spring and were planning outdoor immersion activities such as gardening. Our language intensity was lower in the final month. Our attendance became more sporadic in May; there were usually three of us present for lessons rather than five. In May we continued to lose days to stress, and we incorporated stress-

relieving measures such as gardening and a special ceremony. Sʕamtíc'aʔ brought soil, pots and seeds to the house and we began to plant seedlings and plan our garden, a restful activity.

We called a house-meeting and on May 2, we invited a healer to hold a women's circle and ceremony for the capsiw's to reduce the tension and to provide a sense of connection to community. My notes indicated that the next weeks felt better. I believe tension should be addressed early on, as discussed in the next chapter, and future language programs should incorporate talking circles and healing circles at regular intervals.

Salʕáwaʔt rototilled the garden plot for us and Sʕamtíc'aʔ showed us how to put in a garden. After a long winter indoors this was a magical time, like a storybook, laying out a garden under the watchful eye of Sʕamtíc'aʔ and the snow-capped Chopaka mountain. Gardening was a great stress-reducer and we enjoyed planting long straight rows of potatoes.

Salʕáwaʔt disced a field, and C'əɬtups and Staʔqʷálqs and I went out with Sʕamtíc'aʔ and plunked potatoes into straight lines. Not much language, but fun. And sunny (Personal notebook, Fri. May 6, 2011).

I got excellent footage of the capsíw's working in the sun, which made its way into the ending scenes of the film, *kʷu n'ɬeqʷcin*. Being outside was very healing, a great stress relief and an opportunity to commune with each other and I am grateful for happy memories of gardening with Sʕamtíc'aʔ and my capsíw's. However, as discussed in the next chapter, outdoor activities were ineffective in terms of language acquisition as we were all busy with non-verbal work. It is impossible to maintain language acquisition during outdoor activities because the activity itself is too distracting (Michel 2012a).

In the last week of May, our last week together, I filmed the second interview sessions.[41] Our second telling of the Goldilocks story became the film *Goldilocks II* and demonstrated a vast improvement from our first telling five months earlier. Our personal narratives became the content of *kʷu n'ləqwcin*. Our five month stint over, the capsíw's returned to our homes, planning to return to the house in September.

In five months we had achieved intermediate speaking levels. All of us had become better speakers, and had improved comprehension. Prasát later told me that her comprehension had become much better while living in the house, saying:

> *"What helped me the most was the conjugations"* now she can tell who said what to who. When she listens to CDs she notices she can understand way better. (Personal notes, January 9, 2012).

After the language house: the following year

After the summer we planned to return to the house in September and complete the second half of Captík^wł 2. However in September we did not return to full-time study in the house. Chris Parkin had moved to the University of Washington to start a PhD, and without him motivating us and providing outside accountability, the capsíw's' studies slowed considerably. C'əⱦtups and I decided to cut our travel times in half and meet in a condo in downtown Kelowna rather than Chopaka. We studied Captík^wł 2 twelve hours a week in Kelowna from September to October 2011. We pulled back from the stresses of immersion and no longer studied in full immersion but continued to progress through Captík^wł 2 and continued to practice immersion activities. For our immersion-conversations we grabbed a coffee downstairs, walked around the block and told each other about our weekends. In those moments the urban sidewalks of downtown Kelowna were exposed to the rare sound of two

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[41] Interview script in Appendix 4.

women laughing and gossipping in N'syilxcn. C'əɬtups and I completed five stories from Captíkʷɬ 2 by October, almost completing the book, before we ran out of steam. It was slow going because the second half of Captíkʷɬ 2 was incomplete and we were writing study material as we went. C'əɬtups and I kept in touch with the other three capsíw's by phone— they continued to live and study in the language house though they did not resume full-time studies or complete new Captíkʷɬ 2 stories.

A year later, in May 2012, Prasát and TPCLA hosted an intensive four-week beginner course at the language house with a new cohort of beginners, and this was the last classroom activity held there. In June 2012 we ceremonially closed and smudged the house and it reverted back to a family home. I was grateful for a sense of closure and to spend a day in the beautiful Chopaka landscape. We held a small final dinner and ceremony for close friends and supporters. Salʕáwaʔt, Sʕamtíc'aʔ, Chris Parkin, LaRae Wiley, the capsíw's and friends and supporters shared an evening that marked the ending of this part of our journey. I completed my three documentary films in time for the event and was proud to show them to community for the first time. The small audience watched the films and laughed at the funny sections. The evening was a healing time, replacing the tensions of learning with a sense of connection. We all felt connected through language, Sʕamtíc'aʔ and the Paul Creek Language Association.

The expanding web of TPCLA learning in Syilx communities

The capsíw's and I emerged from the house with intermediate language skills that are unique in our communities, and we are creating new domains to study, teach, and practice our language skills. Since the language house each of the capsíw's has continued to study

N'syilxcn, creating an ever-expanding web of language in our communities, supported by TPCLA curriculum materials. In this section I explain what we have worked on since the language house.

My first N'syilxcn teaching experience was a TPCLA N'syilxcn 1 adult intensive class in August 2011, shortly after emerging from the language house. The nine adult students were mostly teachers at band-operated schools and pre-schools. The three-week intensive course was held at TeePee Tots daycare in Cawston BC. Teaching N'syilxcn 1 was challenging, but I found it surprisingly *less* challenging than a live-in situation, co-learning without a teacher, in the language house. In a classroom, rather than a living situation, the teacher-student roles were crystal clear and I found it fun to be the motivational force in the room. Teaching N'syilxcn 1 improved my pronunciation, comprehension, classroom management and confidence, and I could see the same thing in my co-teacher, Q^{w}ayq^{w}ayáxn (Levi Bent).[42]

Several N'syilxcn 1 students wanted to continue, so I taught Captík^{w}ł 1 in Penticton from September 2011 to March 2012, my first experience facilitating and organizing within community. Outma Sqilx^w Cultural School generously donated classroom space, textbook photocopying, and a teaching honorarium. The class met five hours per week (two evenings) and was attended by five students, all women, though only one wrote the final exam in March 2012. Now down to one motivated student (Dawn Machin) (more about the key value of motivation in Chapter seven) and three or four sporadic attendees, we continued studying together for two more months, completing the first twelve of forty N'syilxcn 2 lessons,

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[42] Listen to Q^{w}ayq^{w}ayáxn (Levi Bent), his wife Liz Bent and their two children speaking about N'syilxcn at home, on CBC radio, Daybreak program, June 20, 2012: www.cbc.ca/player/AudioMobile/Daybreak+South/ID/2248216369/?sort=MostRecent

before we broke for the summer. Teaching N'syilxcn 1, Captík^{w}ł 1 and N'syilxcn 2 gave me a heightened appreciation for TPCLA material. As a teacher I found their curriculum exceedingly well-organized, maintained high language acquisition levels, and incorporated fun activities to keep the affective filter low for students and teachers. I was proud to have taught these very strong women in my home for several months, and I value the experience we shared.

In July 2012 I organized two concurrent N'syilxcn 1 courses in Westbank (Sensisyusten School) and Penticton (En'owkin Centre). I trained six new teachers, all of them either my previous TPCLA students (including my most motivated student, Dawn Machin) or previous classmates from N'syilxcn 1 and Captík^{w}ł 1. The two courses produced six confident new N'syilxcn 1 teachers, fully trained in the methods embedded in N'syilxcn 1, and ten new N'syilxcn 1 graduates. One of the N'syilxcn 1 graduates attended Captík^{w}ł 1 in August, 2012, organized by TPCLA, co-taught by C'əi̇tups in Keremeos. My hope is that these teachers and graduates will organize the next N'syilxcn 1 and Captík^{w}ł 1 courses, and then, hopefully their own language house after that.

Prasát has been an active language activist in her community since moving from the language house. She and a board of directors formed the Inchelium language and culture association in Inchelium, Washington, and were able to secure a dedicated language house from the band. It is a spacious six-bedroom house, with a full kitchen and five bathrooms. They held their first adult intensive course in July-August, 2012, and a six-month adult immersion session in the fall/winter of 2012/2013.

The capsíw's and I met again and finally completed Captík^{w}ł 2 in July-August 2012. Four of the capsíw's (C'əi̇tups, Sta?q^{w}álqs, Prasát and I) attended the four-week intensive

course, held in the new Inchelium language house. Chris Parkin and LaRae Wiley designed the well-run course and taught the first two weeks. TPCLA curriculum maintains a high rate of acquisition and Chris and LaRae were able to keep learners' affective filter low through joking, repetition, songs, games and gestures. C'əɬtups, Prasát and I co-taught the second half, a very challenging language level for us. We studied six hours a day, or 120 hours total.

The four weeks were another transformative Grizzly's den experience, complete with headaches and stress from immersion. In four short weeks we made incredible gains in our language abilities. Fifteen adult students (including the four capsíw's) completed Captík^{w}ɬ 2, creating a new community of intermediate speakers from several Syilx communities in Canada and Washington. Captík^{w}ɬ 2 is the highest level that has been taught to date and I am proud to have learned and co-taught the first cohort. Nsilxcn 3 was taught in the summer of 2013 to Captík^{w}ɬ 2 graduates. And so it goes—the web of learning expands. TPCLA graduates bring their learning back to their communities, as teachers, parents and language activists.

C'əɬtups has taken on the responsibility to bring her immediate family to fluency. One of her younger sisters attended the six-month adult intensive in Inchelium in 2012/2013. C'əɬtups (as previously mentioned in Chapter 1) is a tireless language activist and continues, at the time of this writing, in a Master-Apprentice relationship with Sarah Peterson in Paul Creek BC.

Since the language house, TPCLA has continued to write, edit, and share their curriculum. Most of their publishing has shifted to the Salish School of Spokane. Chris Parkin and LaRae Wiley are full-time language revitalizers at the Salish School of Spokane, as described in Chapter three. The TPCLA six-book set of curriculum is still incomplete. At

the time of this writing Chris Parkin has completed writing and editing the fifth textbook, N'syilxcn 3, and associated learning materials. It is a great help that the six textbooks of Kalispel curriculum have been completed (they have the advantage of full funding from their Casino, as described in Chapter three), and this serves as a foundation for the N'syilxcn curriculum, particularly the interactive software, which is used by each language. TPCLA and the Salish School of Spokane are fundraising to complete the N'syilxcn curriculum. Chris and Sʕamtíc'aʔ are pushing to complete the audio and text components of the final 2 textbooks (level 3 curriculum) during Sʕamtíc'aʔ's lifetime, generously putting in long hours with limited funding.

The expanding web of TPCLA children's learning in Syilx communities

The Paul Creek Language Association curriculum is expanding outward from its base in Keremeos BC and its partner organization, the Salish School of Spokane. The materials are gradually being adopted in every Syilx community in both adults' and (mostly) children's programs. In most band schools we are still placing the burden of language revitalization on children and Elders. In this section I share a few anecdotes about teaching TPCLA curriculum to children.[43] I humbly acknowledge that I know very little about children's language acquisition or teaching—I have been thrown into the role of children's teacher simply because I am one of the few intermediate speakers.

Since emerging from the language house I have taught children in two non-immersion Band schools and one immersion-nest in Vernon. I substitute-taught non-immersion classes at Outma Sqilxʷ Cultural School in Penticton BC for a few days in January 2012. In October

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[43] For expert advice on children's language immersion nests please contact Chris and LaRae at the Salish School of Spokane: interiorsalish.com, the Chief Atahm immersion school in Chase BC, and Maori and Hawaiian language nests.

2012 I began teaching non-immersion classes at Ntamłqn school in Cawston BC, and taught three days a week for one full school year until July 2013. Both Outma and Ntamłqn schools have excellent cultural programs led by a vibrant Elder, and offer beginner N'syilxcn classes several hours a week. Teaching in English-environment Band schools gave me an appreciation of the challenges of teaching in a non-immersion environment. The children are eager to learn but are taught beginner material year after year, much of it from TPCLA's N'syilxcn 1 curriculum, though only taught one hour per day, without the benefit of immersion. Our band schools rely on Elders and beginner apprentice-teachers to teach N'syilxcn and have not yet adopted comprehensive plans to raise their apprentice teachers' proficiency above beginner.

I found in both schools, Outma and Ntamłqn, when I raised the language level and introduced immersion activities from Captík^{w}ł 1 the children responded positively, absorbing the language like sponges. At Ntamłqn school I had the opportunity to work with fluent speaker Q'iyusálxqn, who I became acquainted with while living in the language house. I hope that Outma and Ntamłqn schools will adopt immersion programs and increase their capacity to train teachers, thereby creating a domain of use for their children, teachers, and Elders.

In Natalie Chambers' ongoing PhD research, she facilitated rounds of community discussion which resulted in an immersion language nest pilot project in Nk'maplqs (Vernon reserve) in January 2012.[44] The Snínaʔ (Owl) language nest operates in partnership with the Nk'maplqs immersion school, which was formed by Natalie's husband, Bill Cohen, during his EdD research (2010). The Nk'maplqs immersion school initially encountered community

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[44] Snínaʔ language nest began its second year in September 2012. For background to the associated immersion school for older children, see Cohen 2010 and Brady 2012.

resistance, or "politics of distraction" (Cohen 2010, described in Chapter three), but has been operating successfully for several years. The Snínaʔ group has been engaged in ongoing rounds of community discussion, which they shared at the Okanagan Band School Conference in Nk'mip in February 2013 (Chambers *et al.* 2013). I applaud their initiative and the courage of their teachers and Elders.

The Snínaʔ nest started two afternoons a week with six five-year-olds, one intermediate-speaker teacher (myself), two beginner-speaker teachers, three Elders and no curriculum. I was invited to teach one day a week to introduce TPCLA material to the school from January to April 2012, and it was an honour and a privelege to be part of their school and to get to know their Elders, who are also some of my aunts. The language nest now operates out of a house in Nk'maplqs.

Having taught in three schools, I can provide general comments on teaching N'syilxcn to children, as an apprentice teacher. The first month is challenging—as an intermediate speaker, I found myself right back in Grizzly's den, learning as I went, getting language headaches, and addressing challenges daily. Classroom management was challenging in N'syilxcn, but luckily I had excellent advice from the Salish School of Spokane (LaMere 2012). Q'iyusálxqn and I followed their immersion classroom-management strategy and created a coloured behaviour chart and a poster of our five school rules, each rule distilled into an N'syilxcn command. I taught the rules every day to the students:

Table 4. Behaviour management in N'syilxcn

1.	ṅhʔilsnt (respect)
2.	kəkníyaʔx (listen)
3.	x̌əsmṅcutx (do your best)
4.	x̌əsɬcawt (be kind)
5.	mutx tə x̌ast (ready to learn, or sit well)

I sometimes found it a challenge to encourage Elder(s) to speak or lead activities in the classroom. Speaking at a beginner level does not appear to be natural or easy for them, and they are difficult to coax into repeating beginner words and sounds the hundreds of times that learners need. However, our band schools continue to place the burden on Elders to transmit beginner language to children and adults. I found it easier to encourage Elders to lead, and maintain immersion, if the children are under five years old, perhaps because activities are more like games than second-language learning, and because younger children respond un-selfconsciously to "natural" language spoken by Elders. In my teaching partnership with Q'iyusálxqn at Ntamłqn school, we developed a comfortable partnership where he led the immersion with the under six-year-old children (mostly games and activities) and I led the lessons with the over-six children (mostly TPCLA curriculum, activity, and games, taught in immersion chunks).

I am amazed by the huge impact TPCLA curriculum has on children's comprehension in a short period of time, even in semi-immersion environments, particularly the Captík^{w}ł 1 material. With Captík^{w}ł 1 material, I typically introduce new vocabulary words and sentences with TPR activities before introducing a new portion of a story. For example, the first story in Captík^{w}ł 1 is about Dog-monster. Dog-monster (kəkw'ap nʔałnasqílx^{w}tn) lived in a cave (cnłx̌^{w}ink). Dog-monster chased Coyote (Snk'lip). I taped laminated colour graphics of four or five new vocabulary words around the room and gave TPR commands to hop, walk, and fly around the room and touch the pictures. Then I could get more complex in my commands, such as "fly to the cave and touch it with your foot." After the TPR activities

we sit on the floor and the children listen intently to the story.[45] I repeat the same story for about six weeks, adding new sections every other week. From my notes:

> *I can see the beginnings of COMPREHENSION when I storytell with the captíkʷł. I had several moments where the language DISAPPEARED and I had little kids sitting as close to me as they possibly could while I read them a story, and acted out the new words with little animals and pictures. We had a mini-conversation about whether certain animals live in caves or not, almost philosophically, and the Elder nodded and contributed thoughtfully* (Personal notebook, (date withheld to respect school anonymity, 2012).

The children don't mind that the whole story is in N'syilxcn—they love the pictures and seem to understand the whole story. I gradually became more storytelling and was able to introduce little asides, pulling out stuffed animals and asking the children which animals lived in caves—"original" language production for me as a learner, and great category recognition for the kids. The first day I introduced Captíkʷł 1 an Elder said, "x̌ast iʔ sx̌əlx̌aʕltət," *our day was good,* and then "qʷam'qʷəmt," *very good*. N'syilxcn words from stories gradually infiltrated the children's imaginations. After only a few weeks the children had higher receptive vocabularies. I was able to hold up a picture, say the sentence, and the children acted out the story. In the Christmas concert for Ntamqn school, we did just that.

In the spring of 2012 I was storytelling a captíkʷł from Paul Creek curriculum to a small immersion classroom of five-year olds and for a few moments I felt the language disappear. The kids were at a k'lp'xʷínaʔ (comprehension) level and the story and pictures provided a true example of comprehensible input. The kids gathered in close to see the pictures and hear the words, and the room was filled with story.

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[45] To hear Sʕamtíc'aʔ storytelling and see text and colour graphics, go to interiorsalish.com. Click *Learn Salish—Web Apps*, *Storyteller,* then *Story,* then the green story select button (looks like a man speaking), select *Story 2. Coyote and Dog*, click *OK,* then the green Start button on upper left. Click the *next* arrow to advance the story after each frame. You can play interactive games with each story's text, audio, and graphics by choosing *Game 1* or *Game 2*.

I have by now experienced several sublime moments where the language disappeared, and we were simply learning and having fun. I have become more comfortable playing and ad-libbing in the language, lowering my *own* affective filter. With young children I can practice my full vocabulary without fear of causing language tension, making mistakes or being misunderstood, as happens with adult learners. One day (at a small immersion nest I taught at) the children and I were playing outside. I spoke N'syilxcn during recess and the children replied in English other than the occasional N'syilxcn word. One very imaginative six-year old boy was really into monsters, and one day he incorporated two new N'syilxcn vocabulary words into his play. He pointed under the slide and shouted, "Don't go in there, that's a *cnɬx̌ʷink* with a *kəkw'ap* in it!" I agreed, in full N'syilxcn sentences, the dog-monster was very scary in his cave. The boy yelled out to the arriving Elder, "Don't go in there, that's a *cnɬx̌ʷink* with a *kəkw'ap* in it!" The Elder asked, What did he say? I repeated, "cus, 'lut kʷ t sxʷúyaʔx ilíʔ, ixíʔ *cnɬx̌ʷink,* nʔałn'asqílxʷtn *kəkw'ap* iʔ snʔilíʔtns.'" (*He said, 'don't go in there, that's dog-monster's cave.'*) The Elder gave an indulgent smile, like it was the most normal thing in the world and fifty years hadn't passed since a child had played with an Elder in N'syilxcn. In that moment, as in many other moments teaching children I had a profound sense of pride in my language and a sense of hope.

To quote X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam from our third film in the language house: kn musls. *I hope*.

In the next chapter I provide recommendations for successful adult Indigenous second language programs, based on our experience in the language house.

Chapter 7: Recommendations for successful adult Indigenous second-language programs

In this chapter I humbly provide recommendations and advice to future x̌ex̌ʔmałs, language activists, language revitalizers and N'syilxcn speakers-to-be, drawing from my experience learning and teaching N'syilxcn, the language house, second-language acquisition (SLA), and Indigenous second-language acquisition theory. In writing these recommendations I am speaking directly to *you*, as a fellow Indigenous language learner, teacher, and activist in an endangered Indigenous language.

N'syilxcn learners are lucky to have the Paul Creek Language Association (TPCLA) curriculum that incorporates cutting-edge second-language acquisition techniques. In the language house we had a unique lived-experience of applying SLA methods. Chris visited regularly and brought new learning techniques to try. I found TPCLA curriculum highly effective both as a learner and later as a teacher. Most TPCLA techniques were effective even without a teacher present. It was only later that I discovered the wealth of SLA theory behind TPCLA curriculum. I arrived at SLA theory through a back-door, so to speak—by using the techniques first, and learning about the theory afterwards.

Though I briefly overviewed SLA theory and method in Chapter three, here near the end of my dissertation, I provide a deeper evaluation of SLA techniques through lived-experience. Some material about SLA techniques introduced in Chapter three is repeated and enlarged upon here, reflecting that my knowledge of SLA theory and its application to Indigenous contexts was and is continually growing. The knowledge I present here arises from lived-experience.

As introduced in Chapter three, there is growing agreement among Indigenous SLA researchers that SLA principles must be followed during initial stages of reversing language shift, and this is a critical step towards the end-goal of intergenerational transmission in the home (McIvor 2005, 2012; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998). Indigenous language programs must blend SLA strategies with Indigenous approaches that recognize our colonial context. I realized early on that to revitalize Indigenous languages, a generation of adults needs to adopt and apply SLA techniques to gain proficiency, and this step needs to happen quickly. I dedicated my PhD energies to applying TPCLA's curriculum to raise the proficiency of a small cohort of adults. From my lived-experience, I make the following recommendations: we (Indigenous language learner/teacher/activists) need to create *effective* and *safe* Indigenous second-language learning programs, keeping the end-goal in mind (proficient speakers and intergenerational transmission). These recommendations are summarized in the table below, and expanded upon in this chapter.

Table 5: Strategies for successful Indigenous SLA programs

1.	Create *effective* Indigenous SLA environments:
a.	Incorporate SLA tools: immersion, repetition, scaffolding, comprehensive curriculum, humour, games, fun, and meaningful content
b.	Incorporate regular assessments and 1,000 hours of deliberate practice
c.	Plan Master-apprentice activities
d.	Beginners teach beginners
e.	Keep beginner lessons simple; incorporate complex cultural content *later*, at intermediate levels
f.	*What did you do last weekend* exercise
g.	Incorporate TPR-S
h.	Encourage students to self-study using super-learner techniques
i.	Motivate learners, dispel myths of an "intermediate ceiling"
2.	Create *safe* Indigenous SLA environments:
a.	Train teachers *and* students in classroom safety
b.	SLA tensions: reduce negative and enhance positive tensions
c.	Never correct beginners
d.	Never *test* beginners
e.	Take *no* out of beginner vocabularies
f.	Incorporate talking circles for healing each week (in English)
3.	Keep the end goal in mind: proficient speakers and intergenerational transmission

Create effective Indigenous SLA environments

Second-language acquisition techniques, trained teachers, and intensive programs will enable individuals and groups to learn quickly. There is no time to lose. There is no longer time to argue about traditional versus non-traditional teaching styles. In early stages of reversing language shift (RLS), lessons will necessarily be "artificial" (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:78; McIvor 2005:100) classroom-based instruction for adults, following SLA techniques. It is only later, when learners reach intermediate levels that language programs can incorporate complex cultural content—all the more reason for achieving intermediate levels quickly. Onowa McIvor notes that:

Indigenous languages are at such a state of critical endangerment that we must create artificial ways to pass on the language. However, whatever strategies are taken must work towards reinstating Indigenous languages into common, everyday use in order that they become viable. We need to come full circle, back to speaking our languages to the babes in the cradle swings and on the streets of our communities (McIvor 2006:25).

In order to be effective, programs must focus on training new teachers in SLA methods. The Paul Creek Language Association adult and children's curriculum is incredibly comprehensive. N'syilxcn is at the point where (as Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer state about Tlingit), we have enough materials, we need to train teachers in methods to *use* the materials, and teacher training will be a critical component to successful programs (1998).

Effective SLA programs include teacher training, immersion, meaningful content, repetition, scaffolding, games, humour, fun, self-study, and regular assessment, described below. Indigenous contexts necessitate specific Indigenous SLA approaches, including Master-apprentice techniques, beginners teaching beginners, saving cultural content for later, meaningful dialogue such as the *what did you do last weekend* exercise, Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling (TPR-S), as well as training in methods. While teaching and learning our languages, we will be exposed to the ordinary tensions of learning a second-language as well as to anxieties particular to our colonial context. We need training in SLA and Indigenous cultural techniques specifically designed to create safe learning environments, also described below.

Incorporate second-language acquisition tools

Second-language acquisition theory has been well described (for examples see Asher and Adamski 1986; Cantoni 1999; Ellis 1997; Krashen and Terrell 1988; Krashen *et al.* 1984; Lightbown and Spada 2006; Ray and Seely 2004; Saville-Troike 2006; Selinker 1972). In this section I describe SLA techniques I experienced using TPCLA curriculum. The Paul

Creek Language Association curriculum is based on SLA cornerstones of immersion, comprehensible input, repetition, scaffolding, comprehensive curriculum, games, fun, and meaningful content.

Immersion is a cornerstone of Indigenous SLA (Aboriginal Task-Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures 2005; Anonby 1999; Billy 2012; Dick-Billy 2009; Cohen 2010; First Peoples' Culture Council of British Columbia 2012; Hinton 2001c, 2003a; McIvor 2012, Michel 2012a,b among countless others). Some Indigenous language teachers have found it difficult to maintain immersion due to lack of curriculum, grammatical explanations in English, or a host of other reasons (Maracle and Richards 2000; Maracle 2002; Richards and Maracle 2002:378; Sarkar and Metallic 2009).

The Paul Creek curriculum is designed to be taught by beginners, using simple, repetitive, fun activities. The methods are well described in the teachers' manuals and in training programs available through TPCLA. Beginner classes are composed of short (approximately 1.5 hours) immersion blocks, with breaks in English. I found that with well-designed curriculum, immersion is possible even for beginner teachers and learners. What I mean by immersion is full-immersion. No English during lessons.

Paul Creek lessons start with simple repetition of words and phrases and progress to more difficult sentence contstructions, successively building upon previous utterances, or scaffolding. The lessons continually build in complexity, ensuring learners are exposed to comprehensible input just at or beyond their current level—or maximum acquisition rate. Lessons scaffold upon each other and follow a comprehensive plan from beginner to advanced proficiency.

One of the most important factors in successful adult language acquisition is lowering the affective filter (Asher and Adamski 1986); what sqilxʷ people might call incorporating humour or fun. Activities, games, humour and fun are useful tools in lowering the affective filter, which creates an environment where learners can thrive (Cantoni 1999; Krashen and Terrell 1988:46; Gomez de Garcia, Olson, Axelrod and Melissa 2000). N'syilxcn 1 and Captíkʷɬ 1 employ matching games, guessing games, fly swatters, laser pointers, tag, and bean-bag throwing, among others.

Humour has an important role in Syilx pedagogy. There is nothing like a good belly laugh. This is the sqilxʷ way, the lighter side of deeper messages embedded in the captikʷɬ (stories). We know that the best way to learn is with a light heart. If you had been brought up in Syilx culture, you would clearly remember what happened when Snk'lip (Coyote) momentarily forgot his cawt and tried to show off his flying abilities. The messy evidence of his "flight" can be seen streaking the rock cliffs in Southern BC Syilx country. Humour is an important part of sqəlxʷcawt, and will play a role in language learning, language revitalization, strengthening relationships, and reconnection to the dream way.

As an immersion activity, playing *Uno* was an excellent (and fun) way to generate language at our qʷlqʷltiʔst (beginner) level and it turned out to be harder than it looked. For new speakers, even simple words like numbers and colours, can be challenging to articulate. The simple game made it fun to practice numbers and colours and learn new words and phrases. Chris explained that the point of an immersion activity was not to get carried away by the game itself, but to use it as a vehicle for using new words. Sʕamtíc'aʔ taught us new phrases such as skip a turn, wild card, and place a card. We invented rules to generate more

language—if the player didn't say *your turn* or *I place my card* or say the name, number, and colour of the card, they lost a turn.

Second language acquisition (SLA) is most effective when learners have meaningful, comprehensible input (Asher and Adamski 1986; Krahen and Terrell 1988; Selinker 1972) and N'syilxcn is no exception. What is meant by this is that content is learned best when it has real-world meaning. We enjoyed exercises more when they had meaningful, humorous, or personal content, or were a recognizable element of a story. We generated meaningful input in the Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling (TPR-S) technique, as well as the *what did you do last weekend* group conversation exercise, discussed below. We particularly enjoyed the "personal" question portion of TPR-S where we could share individual knowledge or the element of humour.

It is important for Syilx and Indigenous second language learners to augment meaningful and personal content in language lessons, as well as weekly sharing circles (discussed below). As discussed in Chapter two, communing, and connectedness to each other, the community, the land, Elders, ancestral beings, is an important component of sqəlxʷcawt, our ways. All the more reason for N'syilxcn learners to finish the six TPCLA books quickly, within an intense thousand hours (two years), so learners can move on to communing with Elders and complex cultural instruction in N'syilxcn.

Incorporate regular assessments and 1,000 hours of deliberate practice

Assessments are necessary to honestly gauge language programs' effectiveness as well as individual language levels. I discussed the effectiveness of detailed task-based benchmarks, similar to the Canadian Language Benchmarks (Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Miller 2004), in Chapter five, and will only briefly recap here. After the language house, I

applied benchmarks to our N'syilxcn speaking ability, as described in Chapter five. Paul Creek Language Association curriculum incorporates an excellent routine of quizzes and examinations, both oral and written, which is an strong step towards the utilization of objective language benchmarks.

Indigenous language programs must be structured to support full transformation from beginner to advanced, and time must be afforded for the full transformation. In my opinion, once a learner has reached at least an intermediate level, she can begin the real work of language revitalization, which includes teaching, creating curriculum, and developing full-time language domains.

Researchers have estimated the number of hours for average learners to learn second-languages to beginner, intermediate, and advanced proficiency. See the excellent tables provided in Jackson and Kaplan (1999) and Rifkin (2003:586). Different languages take different lengths of time, depending on their degree of difference from English (the usual comparison language), complexitiy of grammar, and other factors. Languages are rated from Category 1 (languages which are easiest to learn, such as French, Spanish, and Italian) to Category 4 (languages which are most difficult to learn, such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean). For the sake of argument, I assume that N'syilxcn and other Indigenous languages are Category 4 because they are quite dissimilar to English and have very complex grammar.

As previously mentioned in Chapter four, Rifkin (2003) estimates 480 hours of study for below average students to achieve high-beginner proficiency in Category 4 (very difficult) languages, and in the same amount of time "average" learners will achieve low-intermediate proficiency (2003:586). Rifkin estimates 1,320 hours to reach high-intermediate

for a below average learner, or low-advanced for an average learner. The Foreign Service Institute, with fifty-years of language teaching experience, estimates at least 2,200 hours to reach advanced, for "difficult" languages (Jackson and Kaplan 1999). This estimate assumes the learner is highly motivated, has effective curriculum, intensive classroom study of at least four hours a day, five days a week, and is doing her homework. The approximate figure of a thousand hours (or "years") comes up more than once as an estimate of the amount of time needed to achieve proficiency in an Indigenous language, as mentioned previously (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:81; Johnson 2013; McIvor 2012:53); I suggest that the proficiency achieved in 1,000 hours will be around mid-intermediate.

It is well known that college courses alone will not revitalize a language (Parkin 2012). For one thing, most university language programs fall far short of 1,000 hours of dedicated instruction, and do not provide enough immersion (Rifkin 2003:585; Rifkin *et al.* 2005). Typical university second-language instruction is only three contact hours per week, or approximately two-hundred hours of instruction in two years, an amount which creates the illusion of an "intermediate ceiling" (Rifkin *et al.* 2005). Most university-based second-language programs do not create higher than intermediate speakers, and most students in fact "stall" at an intermediate ceiling unless immersion is provided (Rifkin 2003; Rifkin *et al.* 2005). Advanced levels are not commonly achieved after four years of university language courses in any language (Rifkin 2003:582). Even with immersion, two-thirds of students do not achieve advanced levels (Rifkin 2003:585).

The thousand-plus hours of instruction must be focused and challenging. To achieve mastery in any subject (including language mastery), simply putting in hours is not enough, one's time must be spent in focused "deliberate practice" which is necessarily challenging,

difficult, focussed, planned, and regularly assessed (Ericsson 2006; Ericsson *et al.* 1993). This is one of the many reasons that TPCLA curriculum is such a gift to N'syilxcn learners—it affords learners 2,000 hours of deliberate, focused practice, and maintains a high level of acquisition. Their six-book curriculum requires approximately a thousand hours to complete, or approximately two years of full-time study. In my estimation, this will bring the learner to approximately mid-intermediate. Add another thousand hours to teach all six books, and the learner will have had 2,000 hours of intensive, deliberate practice. An advanced speaker will emerge if the learner is motivated, dedicated, and completes and teaches the entire curriculum, coupled with immersion with an Elder, in a newly created language domain.

Plan Master-apprentice activities

Master-apprentice learning, developed by Leanne Hinton, is a one-on-one adult immersion method for learning Indigenous languages in cases where there are very few Elders or learning materials (Hinton 2001c). Master-apprentice learners must be highly motivated, generate dialogue, plan activities, write down new words and ask for clarification. Hinton *et al.* remind Indigenous learners that their most difficult job will be to stick to immersion (2002:9-10). Master-apprentice learning is encouraged by Canadian language funders, specifically First Peoples Culture Council (FPCC), though they fund one-on-one rather than group learning and do not assess language levels of graduates (First Peoples' Culture Council of British Columbia 2012). Master-apprentice learning should be *active*, sessions should be planned in advance to ensure there is constant learning, and activities repeated for several days (Chris Parkin recommended approximately five days in a row) before a new activity is introduced (Hinton, Vera and Steele 2002). Master-apprentice sessions often begin

with a ritual, such as drinking tea or coffee and describing the tea-making in full sentences (Hinton 2001c; Hinton, Vera and Steele 2002). The immersion activity should be simple, repeatable, and not so complex that learners forget to talk.

Our daily visits from Sʕamtíc'aʔ were based on master-apprentice techniques. Sʕamtíc'aʔ brought various activities to us, including making tea, bread-making, cooking, setting the table, hemp twine spinning, hide-scraping, drum-making, planting seedlings, and day-to-day visiting around the kitchen table. Sʕamtíc'aʔ is endlessly patient and is gifted with a playful sense of humour. One day our baking powder biscuits turned out "cxiɬ tə xƛ'ut" (like rocks) so we threw them outside for the q'ʷásq'i (bluejays). Our failed biscuits provided good conversational material for later. Sʕamtíc'aʔ laughed when she arrived the next day—our biscuits were so hard even the q'ʷásq'i wouldn't eat them.

As I noted previously, we allowed many of our sessions to be spent visiting rather than in a planned activity. This was a case where a teacher could have augmented our acquisition by planning activities, organizing materials, and facilitating active learning. In a future language house, I would recommend that the activities be planned and agreed upon in advance, and that materials be set aside each day for the Master-Apprentice activity. I would also suggest recording and transcribing portions of Master-Apprentice time for reading, writing, and listening practice (such as employed by linguists' "elicition" techniques).

Learners become teachers

Indigenous language programs must now reflect the reality of people who are in a state of language crisis and change, and respond to ongoing forces of globalization and colonization. It is now necessary for beginner Indigenous second-language speakers to become teachers and activists (Hinton 2013, 2003a; Kipp 2009; Maracle 2000:135; Noori 2009:13; Parkin

2011), often developing our own language opportunities and then teaching them. Hinton refers to these courageous individuals as heroes (Hinton 2003a:79). There are several advantages to learning-speakers as teachers, most importantly that they are generally younger, and have more energy to spend with learners all day. They may also have teaching experience, skills in curriculum development, or other strengths.

As Chris Parkin puts it, beginner teachers will "lift the burden from our Elders," freeing them up for the critical work of language transmission to more proficient speakers and ongoing documentation (2011). The Paul Creek curriculum is designed to be taught by beginners, enabling us to bring the language alive in our classrooms. At this point, it is critical to train a new generation of second-language learners to be teachers, well versed in teaching methods (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998). Methods training, materials and motivations will, "determine the success or failure of a second language teaching program in any artificial situation" (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:82). We should no longer rely on Elders to shoulder the heavy burden of language teaching, or rely on children to shoulder the entire burden of language revitalization—what is needed is a cohort of adults to learn the languages well enough to teach them to others, creating a proficient wave of adults who will bring Indigenous languages back into full-time use.

In the past, learners have been discouraged from teaching, because only fluent Elders were considered qualified to teach. Beginner speakers must be encouraged to teach, using immersion-based curriculum designed for beginner teachers. This can save the time and strength of our Elders for teaching more advanced students.

Immersion is the goal of successful language programs. However, in my experience, both Elders and adult learners experience difficulty in maintaining immersion at beginner

levels (unless we are teaching from planned curriculum, as discussed previously). It is very difficult to have a satisfying day of immersion when you are at a k'lp'xʷína? level—both for the Elder and the beginners. By definition, k'lp'xʷína? speakers can understand a little, but are not able to converse. The Elders find it difficult to stay in the language when speaking to lower-level learners, and it takes a dedicated effort, even from the n'ɬəqʷcin speaker, to maintain a conversation. Not every Elder has the patience (and vast teaching experience) of Sarah Peterson, who was able to consistently maintain immersion with us in the language house. Immersion conversation with Elders is possible once we reach n'ɬəqʷcin (clear speaking) or intermediate levels.

The benefits of teaching for learners are well-known among teachers ("if you want to learn, teach"), but are seldom discussed in academic venues in English. The concept appears better represented in German publications. I found one English article that summarized the German method of learners teaching learners, and its benefits. The method is called *Lernen durch Lehren* (LdL) and was developed by Jean-Pol Martin for French instruction to German students (Grzega 2005). Grezga finds that teaching benefits learners by giving them increased attention to the material, hard skills such as grammar and an added benefit of soft skills such as group interacting, planning, and high level thinking (2005). However LdL teacher-students always have an experienced teacher present in the classroom, a much different scenario to Indigenous language programs where beginners need to become our own teachers.

Those of us that have gone on to teach TPCLA (and identical Kalispel material) curriculum have found that teaching supports and reinforces our learning (Fountain 2013). I found teaching to be highly beneficial to my own language learning—I was suddenly

producing and repeating hundreds of full sentences as part of the TPCLA method. Sentences are generated from pictures, and directed at the students. This is the gift of TPCLA curriculum—it is designed to be taught by beginners, it creates a high level of learning for the students, and it benefits our learning as we teach it. As mentioned in Chapter five, I experienced a state of "flow" while teaching TPCLA material and often experienced "flow" while a student (an enjoyable, timeless, peak experience described by Cziksentsmihaly 1990). I am not the only one to have related Cziksentsmihaly's "flow" to language acquisition—the high level of attention required by language teaching creates a state of "flow", a state that should be encouraged by second-language programs (Grezga 2005).

Keep beginner lessons simple: save complex cultural content for later

I draw upon X̌əx̌mʕaɬ's story, as I did in Chapters 1 and 2, to give me courage to share initial recommendations. My experience as an adult N'syilxcn learner contradicts some commonly-held beliefs about learning N'syilxcn as a second language, some of them articulated as walls of doubt in Chapter two. We had all heard, at one time or another, that the best way to learn the language is on the land. At some point I think all of us wondered if there were an easier way; is it possible (as some community members suggested) to arrange immersion hunting camps and berry picking camps and pick up the language that way? It seems intuitive that working together on the land would be an excellent way to transmit language. However, because of the severely threatened state of N'syilxcn and extremely low numbers of speakers, in outings which include extended family, outsiders, non-learners and beginner learners, it is impossible to maintain immersion. Don't get me wrong: I love a good field trip. Being on the land is *essential* for transmitting cultural knowledge. However we learners have found that it is not the best way to transmit language. It is also important to study with

people at the same language level rather than have multi-levels in the same lesson, which invariably brings the level of learning to a beginner level.

There is nothing published about the difficulty of maintaining immersion in multi-level classrooms or on field trips with Elders. However, I heard it discussed in the Chief Atahm Immersion School's annual 2012 Salish language conference. In their twenty-year experience in Salish language teaching, they found that classroom-based instruction provides the most effective learning for teachers, parents and children (Michel 2012a). The Immersion School teachers found it impossible to maintain immersion on field trips. Kathy Michel told the Chief Atahm conference audience that the berry picking field trips were essentially a "lost day" to language learning because of all the driving, and because the participants were separated by their berry patches. Michel found it very difficult to encourage the Elders to talk while they were picking, or even get close to them to engage in conversation—they would say, Hey get out of my patch!

As discussed in Chapter three, it is common to confuse goals of language transmission with goals of cultural transmission and therefore to attempt to connect adult beginner instruction with land-based activities and complex cultural instruction (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998). I believe this impulse needs to be saved for intermediate and advanced levels. This impulse can result in Elders speaking English in order to be understood (I have seen the most well-meaning Elders switch to English during adult language/culture classes). If cultural transmission is your main priority, that is fine, but be honest and plan your program with "prior ideological clarification" so as not to confuse language and culture (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998). Focusing too early on complex cultural information makes it impossible to maintain immersion and places a lot of pressure on teachers, often

Elders, as well as on students. In our language house we often resorted to silence if the task became too complex. In our Master-apprentice activities with our Elder, the complex activities (hide scraping, drum making, gardening) were conducted mostly in silence.

At beginner levels, successful SLA relies upon simple, repetitive, safe lessons. While lessons should be meaningful, as described above, they should not be overly complex or emotionally charged—especially for beginner speakers. Mohawk instructors found that complex cultural aspects are "not always appropriate" at beginner levels, "It's a language we're learning, and the holistic approach and some other cultural aspects don't come in till you actually know what you're saying. Then, the culture comes into play and it is important to teach culture and language at the same time" (Richards and Maracle 2002:380).

Beginner and intermediate learners perform best with real-world topics and not overly emotional content. Canadian Language Benchmarks' Assessment performance conditions stipulate that beginner topics are limited to "common everyday matters" and "interaction is empathetic and supportive" (Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000:8, 12). Intermediate assessment topics should be "familiar, non-personal, concrete" and of "everyday relevance" (Pawlikowksa-Smith 2000:56), which I take to mean not overly-personal, culturally complex, or emotionally charged.

In the first stages of RLS (as outlined for Tlingit, and discussed above), "artificial" methods of adult second-language acquisition is the first step; following this, learners will be able to receive cultural interaction from Elders, bring the language back to the home and hearth, and enable intergenerational mother-tongue transmission (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:61).

This is not to say that beginner and intermediate lessons cannot incorporate cultural

material. As TPCLA materials demonstrate, they can. Their beginner, intermediate, and advanced textbooks rely upon captík^{w}ł stories for transmitting language forms such as grammar, sentence-construction, vocabulary, as well as story-based cultural information, but lessons build upon each other in a simple, repetitive way that ensures teachers can maintain full-immersion, even at beginner levels.

Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR) was introduced in Chapter three. It is a minor component of the earlier levels of Paul Creek language curriculum. I have found TPR to be an excellent technique for teaching both adults and children at beginner levels. It is fun and effective with four and five-year-olds (as I described in the previous chapter), although it raises difficulties in classroom management (a complex topic for another Indigenous second-language teaching dissertation), as the activities are fun and sometimes noisy.

Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPR-S)

In February, Chris taught us an excellent method for generating language while reviewing captík^{w}ł stories. This technique, I later discovered, is called Teaching Proficiency Through Reading and Storytelling (TPR-Storytelling). This technique, a grassroots teaching movement developed by Blaine Ray in the 1990s, is becoming increasingly popular in Indigenous language instruction (Cantoni 1999:53). The technique incorporates the best pedagogical concepts from Total Physical Response (TPR), such as lowering the affective filter, comprehensible input, scaffolding, and learning through action (Dick-Billy 2009; Cantoni 1999).

The TPR-Storytelling method employs guided questions to elicit dialogue about a story. In our case, we discussed stories from Captík^{w}ł 1 and Captík^{w}ł 2, simplified versions

of our traditional stories, re-authored for our language level. The TPR-S technique gave us a way to incorporate meaningful input, fun and humour, in sentence-based learning, all important factors in second-language learning (Asher 2009; Sarkar and Metallic 2009; Schreyer and Gordon 2007).

Our version of TPR-S utilized three types of questions: discussion, comprehension, and personal. One student starts by reading a sentence aloud while displaying the graphic associated with it (for example, Dog chased Coyote). This gives an opportunity to hear the original sentence (repetition). Students take turns asking and answering the three types of questions, in turn. The discussion question is a simple yes/no question, taken directly from the story-sentence. In N'syilxcn we place a question-marker-word in front of the sentence to modify it into a question (Did Dog chase Coyote?). The next student answers the question, often substituting *yes* for the question-marker-word (*Yes*, Dog chased Coyote). Comprehension questions are slightly more complex who/what/when/where/why/how questions, requiring us to modify the original sentence a bit more (*Who* chased Coyote, or the more difficult, *Why* did Dog chase Coyote?). The personal question gives an opportunity for original questions and answers (Have *you* ever seen a Coyote? Do *you* have a dog?) With the questions, we were able to maintain a high level of dialogue and often asked playful or humorous questions.

This technique is so effective that I demonstrate it below. To use TPR-S, first you need a simple story at your language level (you may have to write one, with an Elder). If you are a beginner learner/teacher, start with a simple story with about twenty sentences, and not too many new words, approximately ten. Intermediate teacher/learners can use a slightly longer story, with up to thirty new words. At beginner levels each sentence should have a picture.

First study the new vocabulary, using TPR techniques for about thirty minutes. Before using TPR-S, teach the story, sentence by sentence, for an hour, using games, repetition and exercises outlined in TPCLA teaching manuals. Captík^wł 1 teachers use laminated colour graphics. The graphics, audio and text can be found online,[46] as shown in Figure 9 below. After learning and teaching the story, you can use the TPR-S. You can also use it later on, as a review. The graphic in Figure 9 is the seventh sentence (of twenty-four sentences) from story 13, Turtle and Eagle, in Captík^wł 1 (Peterson *et al.* 2005). In the story, Turtle's dream tells him how to win a race with Eagle and set the animal people free.

Figure 9. Captík^wł 1, Story 13, Turtle and Eagle

The TPR-S steps are simple: 1. read the sentence aloud; 2. ask and answer a discussion

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[46] Find story at: www.interiorsalish.com/StoryTeller_nselxcin/files/story.dcr.

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question; 3. ask and answer a comprehension question; and 4. ask and answer a personal question. In early lessons the teacher asks the questions; as students gain confidence they take turns asking and answering each other. For example:

1. i? sqiʔsəs cus, q̓ʷəq̓ʷúƛaʔxəntxʷ mlqnups łə xlap mi ɫəwnikst i? skəkʕáka?.
2. ha ? sqiʔsəs cus, q̓ʷəq̓ʷúƛaʔxəntxʷ mlqnups łə xlap? ki, ? sqiʔsəs cus, q̓ʷəq̓ʷúƛaʔxəntxʷ mlqnups łə xlap.
3. swit sqiʔs? ʔarsíkʷ sqiʔs. kəm, səxkin ʔarsíkʷ q̓ʷəq̓ʷúƛaʔs mlqnups? mat, ałí mi ɫəwnikst i? skəkʕáka?.
4. ha kʷ qiʔs tə snkʷkʷʔac? tə stim?

As you can see, most of the questions and responses are simple re-iterations of the original sentence. Translation:

1. His dream told him, you will race Eagle tomorrow and set the animal people free.
2. Did his dream tell him to race Eagle tomorrow? Yes, his dream told him to race Eagle tomorrow.
3. Who dreamed? Turtle dreamed. Or: Why did Turtle race Eagle? Because he will set the animal people free.
4. Did you dream last night? Of what?

In the language house, we had learned Captík^wł 1 stories previously so we were able to make up questions on the fly. Generating dialogue at my own level felt empowering to me, as a learner. Captík^wł 2 stories were more challenging for us, and Chris had helpfully written TPR-S questions into the textbook after each story, which we asked and answered as partner exercises. TPR-S is one of the techniques that I highly recommend for groups without a teacher. Cantoni (1999) remarks that TPR-S relies on having an enthusiastic and positive teacher, however in the language house we found it worked well in a group situation without a teacher, because it was straightforward, fun, involved turn-taking and a lot of repetition.

I have tried TPR-S both as a learner and a teacher (Captík^wł 1 and Captík^wł 2), and it is

my favourite exercise for generating language. As a teacher, it is exciting when my students arrive at the level where TPR-S is possible (about halfway through Captíkʷ 1, or approximately mid-beginner). During TPR-S students suddenly find themselves able to discuss the stories in a meaningful, funny, albeit simple way. I have found TPR-S to be an excellent review and self-study technique (discussed further below).

"What did you do last weekend?" conversation exercise

In the language house, we spent half an hour per day in a group conversation, guided by a chosen topic. These guided conversations were a group immersion activity separate from our immersion visits with Sʕamtíc'aʔ. Monday's topic was: *what did you do last weekend*? On other days we discussed: *what did you do last night*? We spoke (in simple dialogue) about where we went, what we did, and who we saw. This exercise generated excellent dialogue, provided meaningful content, was straightforward and involved turn-taking in monologues. It worked well even without a teacher present (situations without a teacher are mentioned in Chapter six). We tried a few other topics, such as *what did you dream last* night, and *what was your most frightening moment*, but we kept going back to *What did you do over the weekend/last night?*

This exercise was one of our favourites as it seemed to generate more dialogue than other topics. Our narratives were in simple past tense, which I found to be the simplest tense, in N'syilxcn (unlike English, our simplest conjugations occur in simple past tense). I highly recommend this type of guided conversation at beginner-intermediate levels, choosing topics that are simple, interesting, and potentially humorous. We occasionally took this exercise outside and took turns narrating while walking outside. I enjoyed combining conversation with the outdoors, and this was one exercise that was possible to take outside the classroom,

at our level.

In April Chris taught us to add "discussion-stops" to our daily immersion conversation. We were to have our usual group immersion conversation but listeners would intermittently shout "stop" and then ask each other to paraphrase what was said, in an attempt to produce heightened listening and group dialogue rather than simple monologue. In this case the activity worked better with a teacher present. While Chris was there, he could moderate the dialogue in a fun way; however, after Chris left we found it difficult to shout "stop" (interrupting while people are speaking is considered very rude to Syilx people). We dropped the interruptions but continued to generate dialogue by turn-taking as usual. This technique worked well with a teacher present, but I do not recommend it when a teacher is not present—see comments below about creating a safe, respectful classroom environment.

Encourage self-study using personalized techniques

Language-learning requires motivation and ongoing commitment in order to stick to a comprehensive learning strategy. Indigenous language learners need to continually find ways to motivate ourselves, and I believe we can take inspiration from language superlearners who have learned several languages as adults. Language superlearners are highly motivated, creative, innovative, and resilient, and demonstrate excellent self-study techniques (Erard 2012). Language superlearners set language goals, self-study in a systematic way, journal and log their progress in notebooks (Erard 2012).

Michael Erard searched the world to find successful second-language learners, and found them incredibly hard-working, spending hundreds of hours in self-study, which they found fun rather than tedious. In the final chapter of his book, he summarizes their traits, provided as advice to future learners: develop an identity as a language learner (2012:239),

find, or construct a niche as a learner, live and work in the language, find places where learning is rewarded, or at least valued, don't use native speakers as the (rather impossible, and discouraging) end-goal, but rather as a metric of progress, find ways to make learning pleasurable (find flow) to stick to hundreds of hours of studying, build executive function and working memory skills through extensive training, such as grammatical drills, and finally, stick to the method, whatever the method, not looking for quick success (Erard 2012:260-265).

Superlearners have generated a wave of language learning documentation on YouTube. I believe that YouTube-ing ourselves can motivate learners, and hope that Indigenous learners will submit films such as the ones submitted and described in Chapter five.

Between November and December 2012 I tried a few techniques, inspired by superlearners on YouTube and Erard 2012. I tried goal-setting, logging my time, journalling, and systematic grammar-exercises, and found them effective. I also tried a memory technique, described in Chapter five. I found self-study techniques an excellent way to augment learning. The new techniques inspired me to study more. I studied for a half-hour in the morning before breakfast and logged my time in a spreadsheet, approximately two mornings a week. I spent twenty minutes working through a difficult textbook (Mattina 2000b), and ten minutes journalling.

I found that simply having a log increased my study motivation. By setting goals (i.e. a chapter a day), logging my progress and making notes, I was able to learn on my own from otherwise incomprehensible textbooks. I read sentences and grammar exercises aloud and asked myself TPR-S questions. I journalled for ten minutes per day and logged my words-

per-minute. My first journalling attempts were awkward, simple and childlike, but quickly improved in speed and grammatical quality. At the start of the exercise Sept 2012 I was able to write approximately four words per minute, as calculated by my Microsoft Word program. Three months later in Feb 2013 it had increased to ten words per minute.

In N'syilxcn, similarly to many other Indigenous languages, we have many resources and textbooks written by linguists that are seldom used, possibly because they are complex, liguistically-based, and do not include a teaching method (see for example Mattina 1996, 2000a, b).[47] There is also wealth of recorded, published, and transcribed stories in N'syilxcn (Mattina and deSautel 2002; Mattina and Seymour 1985). All of these resources could be paired with second-language acquisition techniques and with self-study techniques.

Teaching proficiency through reading and storytelling (TPR-S) questioning, described earlier, works exceptionally well for self-study. I have Captík^{w}ł 1 and Captík^{w}ł 2 recordings on my iPod and often review stories while I drive. I listen to a sentence, then pause the story and ask myself TPR-S questions aloud. Paraphrasing is another excellent self-study technique that can be used with stories. I sometimes take my iPod into the mountains or the gym, listen to a story and paraphrase the story either aloud or silently. I have found self-study to be a tension-free way to acquire and review N'syilxcn in the comfort of my home or car, often introducing a state of flow.

As learners we can create new language materials as a learning method and as a gift to future learners. As a learner I believe it is my role and responsibility to create and record new materials with Elders. In N'syilxcn we have excellent beginner to advanced curriculum and children's stories (mostly published through TPCLA); however, we lack intermediate

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[47] These textbooks are not publicly available but can be accessed through the En'owkin Centre in Penticton BC, the author Anthony Mattina, or a family member of one of the sqilx^w co-authors.

and advanced literature. I am, at the time of this writing, proud to be working with Q'iyusálxqn (Herman Edward) to record and transcribe his stories. While we worked together last year, we recorded a number of stories. I am transcribing the stories in N'syilxcn, with no English translation, as a literary record for intermediate and advanced readers and listeners. The practice of recording, transcribing, asking questions, listening and re-listening is adding to my acquisition, improving my reading, writing and listening skills, and creating a lasting document at the same time.

Motivate learners to break through the "intermediate ceiling"

Popular SLA theory alarmingly suggests that fewer than 5% of adult learners can achieve "fluency" (Asher 2009)—a statement that initially caused me great concern. The 5% concept, coupled with the statement, "it takes a lifetime to learn a language," fueled my doubts about my ability to learn N'syilxcn. However, I found this figure refers only to the 5% of students who can achieve "native-like proficiency" (Selinker 1972), a level much higher than advanced, and one not touched upon by ACTFL levels. As discussed earlier in this Chapter, researchers suggest there may be an "intermediate ceiling." However, this ceiling is found merely to reflect far too few hours studying the language.

Dwelling on doubts such as these contributed to my own politics of distraction. There will always be reasons *not* to learn N'syilxcn. However, my opinion is that adults *can* achieve advanced proficiency; it simply takes a lot of work. As discussed previously in this Chapter, 1,000 hours is a baseline for intermediate proficiency.

Extra time and effort is required to create advanced speakers; the Foreign Service Institute provides excellent suggestions for creating effective adult programs (Jackson and Kaplan 1999). Suggested approaches include: start learning early, full-time instruction, small

class sizes (six students), drills, time on task (at least four hours per day, five days a week), intensive immersion once intermediate levels have been reached, intermediate and advanced materials, summer language institutes, and comprehensive programs specifically designed to promote advanced levels (Jackson and Kaplan 1999; Rifkin *et al.* 2005:1).

Language learners must be highly motivated in order to commit to ongoing deliberate practice, as described above. Motivation is a critical component of a learner's success, and is much discussed by SLA and Indigenous SLA (ISLA) researchers (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998; Dornyei 2003; Ellis 1997; McIvor 2005). Motivation and time on-task are stronger forces than aptitude—for Indigenous learners the best learners are simply the ones that "show up," and those are the ones to focus efforts on (Richards and Maracle 2002:380). Successful students will access their own inner motivation, a quality difficult for a language teacher to imbue in students, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous (Richards and Maracle 2002). Indigenous adult language programs need to find ways to maintain high motivation.

Asher is intrigued by adult learners who succeed in becoming advanced speakers through classroom-study, and describes one such individual who constantly made up imaginary conversations and narratives while driving in his car (Asher 2009:3-62). Successful students find ways to enjoy learning languages and "play" with language problems in their spare time (Asher 2009:3-62). Richards and Maracle discuss learning strategies employed by successful Indigenous language learners who have become teachers (2002). Owennatekha, a Mohawk teacher, shares his personal learning strategies, very similar to Asher's student: watch TV, translate in your head and, "... if you're driving along on the road, try and describe what you see out the window" (Richards and Maracle 2002:375). I have found some of these techniques useful myself, as discussed below.

Learner-motivation will be a key factor in revitalizing Indigenous languages. Successful programs will find ways to motivate learners to complete the necessary 1,000 hours of second-language instruction, become teachers, and further support them to create domains of full-time language use. To break through the intermediate-ceiling, full time language domains are necessary—we learner/teachers must create these in N'syilxcn. For N'syilxcn, I believe that after completing four- or five-hundred hours of TPCLA courses, students should be partnered with an Elder in full-time language domains. Excellent partnerships can occur in immersion language nests and schools, if the apprentice teacher's learning is prioritized and immersion is maintained. I was priveleged to partner with Q'iyusálxqn as a language teacher in the 2012/2013 school year.

As well as employing SLA principles as discussed above, successful Indigenous language programs need to employ specific techniques to create *safe* learning environments, as discussed below.

Create safe Indigenous SLA environments

Creating a feeling of safety is perhaps the most important factor in language learning and is essential to the success of Indigenous language programs. With too much tension, learners cannot learn. We can nurture feelings of safety by training teachers and students in classroom safety, and using specific tools to reduce negative tension and enhance positive learning tension. Some tensions can be avoided by hosting Indigenous language programs in familiar environments like language houses (Richards and Maracle 2002:383), although in order to maintain high levels of language acquisition, tensions are unavoidable.

In the house I was surprised by the amount of stress that full immersion without a teacher entailed. I later learned that stress is implicit in second-language learning. Stress is

also created by Indigenous colonial contexts. I discuss these stresses in the following sections. It would have helped if we had known that tension was implicit in SLA and been trained in techniques to minimize tensions. In retrospect if we capsiw's had been trained together as TPCLA teachers previous to moving into the house, we would have received training in many of the second-language teaching methods that reduce tension. I later learned, through TPCLA training, how to positively support learners through positive feedback, discussed below. For this reason, I present some of my suggestions for creating a safe classroom below. I describe three behaviours to *avoid* in second language teaching: corrections, testing, and saying *no*. The first two are techniques shared by Chris Parkin while teaching, and the third is something I noticed myself in our self-taught atmosphere.

Train teachers and students in classroom safety

Teacher training (and training for parents, adult students and groups of co-learners, such as we were in the language house) will need to include classroom-safety. Part of a good teacher's job is to keep classroom stress levels low. Much has been written about the role of the teacher in maintaining an optimum level of tension; a balance between positive and negative tensions to optimize learning. A good SLA teacher will maintain a safe, low-anxiety learning environment, never criticize the student, and at the same time maintain a fast pace with comprehensible input just above the learner's level (Asher 2009; Krashen and Terrell 1988:19-20). These expectations can be difficult for beginner teachers—N'syilxcn teachers have an advantage because we can follow TPCLA's curriculum.

For Indigenous second-language learners, in contrast to learners of European languages, it is imperative to teach while still learning, which can be stressful. Teachers are called upon to teach adults older than themselves, as well as children, and may be

inexperienced in classroom management. In my experience as an Indigenous language immersion teacher, operational stress is high due to maintaing immersion at a language level barely achieved myself. Teachers need specific skills to maintain immersion, manage the classroom, keep the learning environment safe, and ensure stress levels don't get too high. This needs to be done *in* the language so as not to take away from immersion. I have found that negative stress reduces language use. I also found that language tensions increase at intermediate levels, though I have not found any discussion of this in the literature.

Indigenous language programs need to provide teacher-training workshops so teachers can be made aware of specific difficulties they may encounter and discuss and role-play ways of handling them. Teachers need to create and employ key words in the language to remind students of classroom safety. Discussions will centre around creating a safe learning environment, avoiding lateral violence (discussed below), and being kind and respectful to each other. Workshops might contain classroom scenarios including Elders, children, and adults with varying language levels and sometimes abrasive attitudes, role playing scenarios and how to handle them as an teacher. I suggest that each lesson start with a reminder about classroom-safety.

Learners may be exposed to the additional stress of *not* having a teacher present. In situations where the classroom is not controlled by a skilled second-language teacher, as in many of our Indigenous learning environments, learners need to be trained in specific skills so as not to exacerbate learner tension or perpetuate negative learning patterns. Many SLA techniques already described are designed to reduce the affective filter. In the language house we needed techniques that worked without a teacher present, and we found some TPCLA techniques to be excellent, as discussed above.

Second-language tensions: reduce the negative and enhance the positive

Second-language learning has implicit language tension, also called language anxiety; a level of discomfort created by the sense of not understanding, striving for comprehension, code switching, and difficulty connecting (Krashen and Terrell 1988; Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001). Language tension has both positive and a negative components, though the negative component is more often discussed in SLA literature (for a summary see Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001). Maximum acquisition occurs when learning tension is high but not overwhelming—when input is *slightly beyond* the learner's current level, but is for the most part, "comprehensible input" (Krashen and Terrell 1988:32). A teacher's job is to maintain an optimum level of language tension—high enough for optimum language learning but not so high as to make learners shut down, tune out, or blow up.

Language teachers have the important role and responsibility of maintaining a safe learning environment, where positive learning tension is high and negative emotional tension is low. Learners will do anything possible to dial-down the tension of language learning. Hinton *et al.* caution that learners will have a tendency to find ways to reduce the tension and thereby plateau their language learning; mainly by repeating the same activity or conversation over and over (2002:9-10). (In non-immersion situations learners use the tension-reducing standby of side-tracking the teacher with questions in English).

Tension can be unpleasant for some learners, but can result in rapid acquisition—a fair tradeoff. An intensive summer French immersion program (School of Middlebury College, Vermont), found that high levels of tension were positive, and resulted in rapid language acquisition (Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001:272). *Most* of the students responded to high tension with high marks, though when asked they did not necessarily like the tension and

some students reacted negatively and skipped classes (Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001:272). If Indigenous language learners can find ways to support each other, stay in the program, and pay *attention*, we will have high gains in a short period of time. The goal of a second-language program should not be to minimize tension, but to maximize *positive* tension and provide a balance in activities (Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001).

Most SLA techniques strive to reduce tension; however, some tension can be a good thing—it can actually raise the learner's *attention* level, and therefore the language acquisition (Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001). Anything that can increase students' *attention* can increase learning, and this includes tension as well as humour and games. A concentrated state of attention can produce a state of flow (a state of optimal experience "beyond boredom or anxiety" described by Cziksentmihaly 1990), which is an optimal state for language learning (Egbert 2003; Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001).

Acquisition depends on a low-anxiety learning situation (low affective filter), and learner self-confidence (Krashen and Terrell 1988:19-20). The affective filter, a cause of tension, is believed to be one of the greatest barriers to language learning (Krashen and Terrell 1988). One of the greatest difficulties experienced by second language learners is in experiencing their new "language ego," feeling as though one is a different person, infantilized, or unable to project their "true" personalities in the new language (Spielmann and Radnofsky 2001:267). This difficulty may be particularly pronounced for some learners, as for Syilx people "communing" is a very important part of communicating (Armstrong 2006:39).

Immersion itself is implicitly stressful. In Mi'gmaq classrooms, Sarkar and Metallic bypassed the stress of immersion by employing a lot of English discussion of grammar and

English discussion of consensus-style lesson planning (2009). Richards and Maracle (2002) admitted they were not able to employ true immersion in their Mohawk immersion adult programs (2002). Early Maori adult immersion camps encountered high stress and silence at mealtimes (Nicholson 1990), which only improved after years of language camps. As language levels improved, organizers also learned to provide the "security of a strong structure," discipline, spirituality, relationship building, and *Aroha* (loving empathy), making it easier for students and Elders to maintain immersion (Nicholson 1990).

In the house we lowered the language tension by employing silence, spending time in our rooms, chatting on our computers, and lower attendance rates in the last two months. In our interactions with our infinitely patient Elder, we lowered the tension by re-creating similar conversations each day, rather than employing activity-based learning, for example baking bread, recommended in Hinton's Master-Apprentice model (Hinton *et al.* 2002). Employing "silence" is a reaction to stress, resorted to by mid-beginner learners (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012:5 mid-beginner description). My litmus test for language tension was whether or not I was getting language-headaches (I viewed headaches as a positive symptom of effective acquisition). My headaches eased after a few weeks in the house, as we gained the ability to lower the tension, and returned briefly each time Chris Parkin visited and bumped up the level of learning.

We would have benefitted from having a full-time teacher or a dedicated facilitator. Chris Parkin was an excellent teacher, but was not available to be with us full time and we were always sad to see him go. A teacher would have had the responsibility of motivating the group, keeping us on task, performing assessments and planning daily activities with our Elder.

While we had some challenges, most importantly, learning N'syilxcn remained our priority and this kept the house together. All five capsiw's completed the five months, maintained immersion, and achieved a higher level of speaking proficiency. In the final narrative of *kʷu n'ɬəqʷcin*, X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam sums it up best, "Our work wasn't easy. It was very hard. But, I am learning to speak" (03:43).

Several tools to create *safe* Indigenous language learning environments are introduced below, including never correcting, never "testing," taking *no* out of the classroom, and incorporating regular talking circles.

Never correct beginners

One of the primary directives for TPCLA teachers is to *never correct*. Correction can be perceived as criticism; it makes learners timid, lowers self-esteem, raises learner tension, and must be avoided at all costs. This rule applies for both adults and children (Asher 2009; Cantoni 1999:56). It is very simple to discourage a learner; Leanne Hinton noted that, "it takes only one overheard negative evaluation … to make someone reject his or her language" (Hinton and Hale 2001:3). Adult Indigenous language learners face the added difficulty of learning within a community in which correction from Elders is common. Correction can be abrupt and traumatic for the learner and unwittingly passed on from Elders who are reexperiencing traumas perpetrated in residential schools (Kipp 2007). Students of Mig'maq experienced psychological blocks to speaking after feeling "humiliated" trying out their "carefully memorized sentences" and being made fun of by older speakers (Sarkar and Metallic 2009:55-56). I have seen many examples of this in N'syilxcn. I have been corrected by Elders and children in the classroom who are no doubt copying patterns learned from

Elders, and are unwittingly raising the tensions in their own classrooms. We pass criticizing behaviour on to our younger generations if we are not careful.

Supportive teachers model correct responses instead of correcting. Modelling correct responses is something adults automatically do with children. Think of this scenario: if a baby says her first word, *dag* (while pointing at the dog), most parents would never think of correcting her, and model the correct pronunciation over and over—*yes, that's our dog, he's a nice dog! Honey, come over here, the baby just said dog!*

Never "test" beginners

Another of the primary directives for TPCLA teachers is *never test*. The sensation of being tested or asked a question in front of the class can be very stressful to a student, and can result in embarrassment, shame and anxiety. Teachers must never call upon a student and ask a pointed question unless the teacher is fairly certain the student knows the answer. A skilled teacher will never point at an object such as a stapler and say *what's this*? Instead, the teacher will model the correct response before asking a question, for example, *I have a stapler in my hand—where is the stapler*? This technique employs repetition and scaffolding. It is called "ignore the question" (because it gives the answer first, and then sneaks in the question afterwards) and is outlined, along with other techniques, in the TPCLA teacher's manual (Peterson *et al.* 2007).

Take "no" out of beginner vocabularies

As teachers and beginner learners we need to do everything possible to encourage verbal interaction. Finding ways to increase the level of dialogue, even by a small amount, is the goal. How can we encourage shy learners to speak more in the classroom and in self-taught environments without a teacher? One of the ways to increase a feeling of confidence and

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generate dialogue is to take the simple word *no* out of our vocabularies. It is one of the first words we learn as beginners. It is a powerful word and can quickly shut down another learner's attempts at interaction. It is much more supportive, fun and creative to say *yes*. Adult second-language teachers can successfully incorporate the "yes and" rule (also known as the "do not negate" rule) of improv comedy, creating meaningful dialogue together through the simple rule of saying *yes,* and then building on each others' dialogue (Perone 2011). This rule encourages students to build on each others' utterances, encourage each other, and share humour and fun, and creates a safe and supportive language learning environment (Perone 2011).

For example if a student asks another to practice a sentence, new vocabulary, or a dialogue, *yes* is much more encouraging than *no* and will result in more dialogue—the goal of any language program. If two beginner speakers are attempting an immersion conversation, role play or skit, I suggest they both remove *no* from their possible responses. In a situation without a teacher present, as in the language house, I believe removing *no* would generate a more supportive emotional environment and therefore more dialogue.

Incorporate talking circles (in English)

Indigenous language learners are exposed to not only the implicit tensions of SLA, but to tensions particular to our post-residential-school colonial context (McIvor 2012:41,53). Jennifer Wemigwans coined a term "ethnostress" to refer to the stress Indigenous peoples face in academic situations and their implicit collision between worldviews (2008). Tensions arise within Indigenous community when we attempt to reverse language loss, and the complex negative outcomes from our history of colonization, oppression and residential schooling. Colonization has caused some Okanagan (Syilx) people to unknowingly

perpetuate and internalize power dynamics and racist views on our selves (Jack 2010:22-22). These power dynamics can result in "lateral violence," increasingly associated with Indigenous communities (Wingard 2010, Langton 2008), described as bullying, shaming, and isolation behaviours that can result in low-level ongoing stress, decreased self-esteem and mental illness (Langton 2008; Embree and White 2010). Lateral violence is a feature in Syilx community (anonymous Syilx personal communication December, 2012). It can be difficult to address, and Indigenous educators need to be aware of these potential forces in classrooms and communities and develop techniques to counteract them (Wingard 2010).

Because of the implicit stresses in SLA, additional stresses of Indigenous contexts, and the importance of communing for Syilx people, I recommend talking circles each week, in English. In beginner and intermediate lessons, communication is necessarily restricted to concrete, repetitive, simple vocabulary, for example talking about birds, rather than feelings or families. Being restricted from connecting about deeper subjects for too long may lead to stress for Syilx and Indigenous students. I recommend time be set aside for debriefing and communing in English at the end of each week. Talking circles, (in our words, nʕawqnwíxʷ, or en'owkinwixʷ, a group process discussed in Chapter two) allow each person to express their views and feel heard, and create a feeling of safety, support, and relationship building (Armstrong 2000, 2005b, 2006). Setting aside time for English once a week will support the priority of immersion during classroom time. We found that a women's circle was very helpful in re-establishing a sense of connection to each other and our community. Our closing ceremony, with community invited, also provided an excellent sense of connection to community.

I also recommend working with small groups—Darrell Kipp reminds us not to waste

our efforts attempting to convert anybody, simply work with those who are already committed to the language and to working together in a positive way (Kipp 2000:6).

The end goals: proficient speakers and intergenerational transmission

The sections in this chapter have dealt with creating safe and effective adult SLA environments. While you are creating an Indigenous SLA program, it is important to keep the end goal in mind: proficient speakers and intergenerational transmission. Along the way, adult SLA is a finite stage, a necessary "artificial" measure to revitalize our languages and create proficient speakers in the short term (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998; McIvor 2005:100). A generation of parent-aged proficient speakers will enable us to fulfil the true end goal for N'syilxcn and other Indigenous languages: intergenerational language transmission in the home and community. To do this, we will need to strengthen our relationships to Elder speakers and create domains of use for the language. During our adult SLA programs, we also build our capacity to learn and teach, create materials, build relationships with Elder speakers, strengthen our communities and create ongoing domains of language use. Until we, as Indigenous learners and activists, choose to turn off English in our homes, language revitalization will be incomplete. Several language activists have chosen to do this (Corn *et al.* 2013; Hallenberg 2011; Hinton 2013; Taylor 2011) Like many Indigenous language learners and teachers, I choose optimism.

In the next chapter I provide reflections and conclusions.

Chapter 8: Reflections and conclusions

Thank you for journeying this far. I honour you, your time spent here, and wish you well on your journey. Our sqəlxʷcawt encourages us to have courage to share our individual story and stand behind our views. We may sometimes need to contradict the Syilx value of quietness and find strength in our voices. This is particularly important for Indigenous language learners. Our quietness can hold us back from teaching and learning our languages (Meek 2007). Our approach in the language house was simple, and I recommend it to you: we *showed up*, gathered materials, mentors, courage and kʷu sqʷaʔqʷʔálx. We began to speak. We created a language house in order to stem the erosion of our language, create a domain of use, support each other, and improve our speaking ability. We also proved a simple point—Indigenous languages can be learned by adults studying curriculum in a classroom. During the writing of this thesis I transformed from a staunch believer that Indigenous learners must follow only traditional learning pathways, to an advocate of second-language acquisition techniques that I believe are key to revitalizing our Indigenous languages.

This is the chapter where I would like to neatly tie together my experiences and observations. However, my learning is ongoing, and as I follow my N'syilxcn learning path I continue to discover concepts that bear further attention.

What have we done so far?

When I reflect on the scrap of paper that is still affixed to my fridge—did I succeed? Did I become "fluent" and teach ten other people to become fluent enough to speak only N'syilxcn to their children? Well, yes. And no. Yes, I have become much more proficient. I have

achieved n'ɬəqʷcin proficiency—adequate to step (with humility, awkwardness and difficulty) into full-time N'syilxcn domains of use. Sadly, these domains do not yet exist. I am miles away from n'tɬɬcin, but I have a vision of how learners can get there. And yes, since the language house I have taught five other learners enough N'syilxcn that they *could* step into full-time domains of use. I taught five women at my house in Penticton, and they became nearly n'ɬəqʷcin, like my capsíw's from Grizzly's den. My commitment to the people-to-be is to continue to revitalize n'qilxʷcn in my community.

The language house created a safe, motivating space, removed from outside distractions, where we were able to and commit to an intensive period of instruction and transformation. In 420 hours of intensive immersion, we moved from k'lp'xʷínaʔ (quiet comprehension phase) to n'ɬəqʷcin (starting to make a clear noise), or in the words of international assessment benchmarks from mid-beginner to low-intermediate (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages 2012; Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006; Miller 2004). Before moving into the house, we each had at least 180 hours of intensive classroom instruction, through TPCLA courses.

We capsíw's are able to storytell and are comprehensible to Elders—a proud achievement for us. This doesn't mean we don't have a long way to go—we do. Or that we don't make hundreds of errors or that we can talk about abstract concepts—we can't. The effectiveness of our methods is demonstrated by watching *Goldilocks I* and *II*: we improved as speakers in a relatively short period of time.

We emerged from Grizzly's den into a world where we, like our Elders, are not understood. However, we have a responsibility to share our learning and bring our languages back to community. There is continuing resistance to embrace programs such as ours. Partly

due to resistance to non-traditional learning pathways, to classroom-based learning, and partly simply reflecting a resistance to the hard work of Grizzly's den and hundreds of hours involved. In five months in the language house we logged 420 intensive immersion-based study hours—approximately the same number that second-language students usually achieve in four full years of university instruction (Rifkin 2003:585).

Through teaching and studying TPCLA material, I put in over 1,000 intensive classroom hours. I can see that intensive instruction in Grizzly's den is a necessary step for individual learners' language acquisition. This step must be followed by several other steps: community engagement, creating domains of use, speaking in the home to children, and forging working partnerships and friendships with Elders. During my time in the language house I began to develop a vision of what is needed to achieve advanced proficiency, and made the following notes:

> *In all, I can see how a program like [the language house] can create competent intermediate speakers. [second-language learners] will usually top-out at the intermediate level. [To achieve higher levels, learners need to] go the extra mile and converse as much as possible ... and do extra projects like writing or filming. I think the extra mile is needed for fluency. I can see that for fluency I need to partner up with an Elder ... and make a plan* (Personal notebook, Thurs. May 19, 2011).

Where do we go from here?

As Nsyilcn learners we need to break down the walls of doubt and create a vision that includes n'tɬɬcin, or straightened (advanced) speech levels. Groups of new adult speakers are key to Indigenous language revitalization at this critical moment in our histories. Time in Grizzly's dens (in other words, 1,000 hours of classroom-based curriculum and guided immersion with Elders) is a critial period in adult Indigenous language learners' progression. For continued success of our language programs we need to embrace second-language

acquisition techniques including assessment and be embraced ourselves by the supportive network of our communities.

I humbly submit that N'syilxcn is no more difficult than any other language—all languages are complex—and excellent curriculum makes it possible to learn quickly. We and other learners have found that lesson-based instruction with comprehensive curriculum is the most effective way for adults to achieve proficiency in Indigenous languages as second-language learners. It works. I humbly suggest that our experience in Grizzly's den could be a powerful model for other Indigenous language learners to follow.

Progressing from k'lp'x^{w}ínaʔ to n'tłłcin, or true speech, will take time, courage, practice and effort on the part of the adult learner. The stresses involved in achieving even n'łəq^{w}cin can be high. It is important to support each other. We did not have the luxury of waiting until we reached intermediate to begin immersion. In retrospect, I might recommend that learners not attempt full immersion until they have achieved at least high-beginner, as the stresses of language acquisition were quite high, particularly because we were without a teacher. I highly recommend the language house model because it is essential to remove learners from the distractions of English and daily life. Our language house was operationally a classroom-style learning venue, a sort of mini N'syilxcn-university with dormitory attached. Moving into the house allowed us to maintain the momentum we gained in our first TPCLA classes and achieve an intermediate level. I highly recommend following a comprehensive curriculum such as TPCLA's, and using full immersion during lessons.

Once learners such as ourselves reach intermediate levels there is more work to be done. At intermediate levels, learners benefit more from immersion with Elders than at

beginner levels, because they are able to understand each other and engage in more meaningful dialogue during activities.

At intermediate levels it becomes possible to begin the real work of turning off English and speaking only the Indigenous language in the home. I suggest this is the ultimate role and responsibility of Indigenous language learners: to achieve intermediate proficiency and turn off English in the home. This can be a scary proposition and requires great courage and dedication, however there are many inspiring stories to encourage individual learners and language activists to do just that (Hinton 2013; Corn *et al.* 2013; Hallenberg 2011; Taylor 2011). We have seen that in the initial stages of language revitalization, efforts are often catalyzed by individuals and individual families. These individuals become the teachers in their communities. Like X̌əx̌mʕał (Fly), language activists sometimes encounter tensions and resistance but must courageously share their songs.

Sʕamícaʔ and Paul Creek's curriculum is a gift to N'syilxcn learners—it affords us up to 2,000 hours of deliberate, focused, intensive acquisition, if the learner is motivated enough to find or create ways to study and teach all six books. My cohort and I plan to continue in our quest towards n'tłłcin, or true speech. The language house demonstrated that intensive classroom-based learning can create groups of adult intermediate speakers. These speakers, including myself, now have the responsibility to create domains of use, immersion classrooms, university spheres, and homes, and in the process, become advanced speakers. To move beyond n'łəqʷcin we know what we need to do. X̌ʷnámx̌ʷnam said it perfectly, in

kʷu n'łəqʷcin (04:10):

> yaʕtmín qʷəlqʷilt nixʷ, uł nixʷ, ul nixʷ.
> *I need [to] speak more, and more, and more.*

The key to progressing from intermediate to advanced is to create domains of full-time language use, where learners are supported to continue studying intermediate to advanced lessons. Indigenous communities must build and support cohorts of adult learners to move beyond beginner levels. Teachers and learners need to embrace cutting-edge second-language acquisition techniques and incorporate them into curriculum. Language pedagogy must rest upon the three-tiered foundation of intensive curricular study, immersion with Elders, and immersion in full-time domains with other adult learners. Learning a second-language as an adult requires a serious time commitment; 1,000 hours is the equivalent of full-time university instruction for two years, or a full-time job for six months. Indigenous language cohorts will need a full year of beginner to intermediate lessons, with curriculum, to become intermediate, after which they can begin to incorporate complex cultural material. Once intermediate, learners must continue to study more advanced curriculum, converse with Elders, and teach language in community in order to fulfil their responsibility as learners to become straight or true speakers.

The Chopaka immersion house was a pilot project, and the eyes of the community were upon us, hoping for our success and continued commitment. We were the first N'syilxcn adult immersion house, but we won't be the last; in fact there is a full-time N'syilxcn language house operating in Inchelium, Washington, at the time of this writing. Switching off English in the homes will be the moment when N'syilxcn begins to live. None of the capsiw's are (yet) speaking only N'syilxcn to our children. I hope that, like Jessie Fountain of Kalispel (Taylor 2011; introduced in Chapter three), and Chris Parkin and LaRae Wiley of Spokane, more Interior-Salish learners will choose to speak only their newly

learned languages to their children and grandchildren and that these polyglot children will grow up speaking their neighbouring languages with each other.

Once an Indigenous language community has a growing population of intermediate speakers and children on their road to proficiency, learners will need to create literature, songs, media, television, creative writing, film and radio (Anonby 1999; Brand *et al*. 2002; Noori 2009). Maori language revitalizers found it critical to create adult literature for the adults to keep up with the learning rates of the children (Benton and Benton 2001:432). N'syilxcn has excellent curriculum, stories, a dictionary (Mattina 1986), and several stories collected by linguists (Mattina 1985; Mattina and deSautel 2002), but we need more literature, films, plays, fiction, non-fiction, songs and poetry.

To create n'tłłcin speakers, communities need to create full-time advanced-level domains of use. For me, this may be university level research, filmmaking, co-writing a book of short stories with Elders, teaching, curriculum development, creating a language nest, or another language house. I had hoped to defend my thesis in n'qilxʷcn, however I was only allowed to speak a portion of my presentation in my language. It remains for a future language activist to fully introduce n'qilxʷcn to the university domain. My N'syilxcn community has not considered supporting intermediate and advanced N'syilxcn courses in university; however, I believe university domains could motivate adult learners to learn and teach our language.

Margaret Noori's (2009) accounts of Anishinaabemowin university classes are inspiring; the University of Michigan hosts classes of 250 students and weekly language tables. My dream is to develop post-secondary and graduate level curriculum and enable students to pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees in Indigenous languages. My dream

is to teach courses that move beyond beginner, to content-based topics that are important to sqilxʷ people, such as salmon life cycles, plant knowledge, kinship patterns, art, history, geography and landscape studies. I envision intellectual kitchen-table discussions in N'syilxcn, outside of university contexts, like the ones in Yiddish that Joshua Fishman grew up with (Fishman, Hornberger and Putz 2006).

Since writing the goal on my fridge I am more aware of the difficulties in creating full-time language domains, as well as the necessity to do so. Language transformation will expose learners and their communities to associated stresses of transformation and to anxieties particular to our colonial context (McIvor 2012:53). The best advice I can give language learners and activists is, in Darrell Kipp's words, which bear repeating here, to "just get started" (2000:40), and bypass any resistance you encounter:

> You do not ask permission to use your language, to work with it, to revitalize it. You do not ask permission. You don't go to the school board and ask for fifteen minutes to plead your case. You don't change the entire community. You save your strength; you find the ones who want it. You look for the young couples; you work with the people who want you to work with them. You hone your skills, talent, and time. And these are precious. Take care of yourselves (Kipp 2000:6).

In your community, gather your curriculum, find a cohort of Indigenous learners (one of whom will become the teacher), and find a space, both physical and temporal to get started. Successful models have shown us that initial phases are catalyzed by motivated individuals—the Grizzly bears in community—and community needs to support these people.

There is no substitute for setting aside a large block of time to learn, following a plan, and using whatever materials you have. Once your group is confidently qʷlqʷltiʔst (making your first sounds, or mid-beginner), create an adult immersion house or full-time school and

support yourselves to stay there. Organize regular, planned, repeatable activities with Elders. The Grizzly's den will create an n'łəqʷcin speaker (starting to have a clear voice) within a year. The time in Grizzly's den will be transformational for the learners and the effects will be felt in your communities. Ideally, after initial pilot projects, such as the immersion house and language nests, have been started, the whole community will come onboard and will form a supportive network, as is the sqəlxʷcawt, and children will be raised speaking our languages.

waẏ ixíʔ put. limləmt p cyʕap. ixíʔ itlíʔ isqalwítm.

That is it. Thank you for arriving.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: N'syilxcn orthography, spelling and pronunciation

N'syilxcn writers, for the most part, use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). I invite language-revitalization activists to study the Paul Creek Language Association curriculum (TPCLA) (Peterson *et al*. 2005, 2006, 2011, 2012, 2013, in-press, and interiorsalish.com). I invite linguistically oriented readers to review Tony Mattina (1973, 1982, 1986), Mattina and Seymour (1985), Mattina and Jack (1992), Mattina and deSautel (2002), Lyon (2010a,b, 2011a,b, 2013a,d) and Interior Salish linguistic publications (Czaykowski-Higgins *et al.* 1998; Palmer 1998; Kuipers 2002).

N'syilxcn is a consonant-rich language. Spoken pronunciations can be found at www.okanaganfirstpeoples.ca/lessons.cfm and a beautiful alphabet song can be heard at www.interiorsalish.com (resources). The entire orthography takes several pages to explain (see chart below), but I would like to help you pronounce a few sounds. If you start by pronouncing N'syilxcn as *en-SEEL-h-chen*, you won't be too far off. Sʔímlaʔx^w is pronounced *s-EEM-la-xw*, where the *xw* is a puff of air. The 'c' is pronounced 'ch' as in 'chat', the 'i' is long, the 'ł' is an unvoiced, airy 'l', 'x' and 'x̌' are pronounced like a hard and harder 'h', and 'q' is like a 'k' further back in the throat. The 'ʕ' is a pharyngeal, spoken like 'ah', with a tongue depressor. A 'raised w' requires you to purse your lips upon pronouncing the letter prior, therefore 'x^w' is pronounced like a puff of air. The 'ƛ'' is a soft click, like you might make while riding a horse. Glottalizations, represented by 'ʔ' (a firm glottal stop), are pronounced like the glottal stop in the middle of the English *uh-oh*.

Nsyilxcn Alphabet Pronunciation Guide

compiled by Sʕamtíc̓aʔ (Sarah) Peterson

for The Paul Creek Language Association in 2012

a	as in the word f<u>a</u>ther- a	example:	anwí (you)
c	as in the word <u>ch</u>urch- c	example:	cʕas (crash)
c̓	as in the word ca<u>ts</u>- c̓	example:	c̓ałt (cold)
ə	as in the word <u>e</u>lephant- ə	example:	əcxʷuy (goes)
h	as in the word <u>h</u>appy- h	example:	hiw̓t (rat)
i	as in the word s<u>ee</u>- i	example:	ixíʔ (that / then)
k	as in the word <u>k</u>ite- k	example:	kilx (hand)
k̓	is pronounced as a hard k- k̓	example:	k̓ast (bad)
kʷ	as in the word <u>qu</u>een- kʷ	example:	kʷint (take)
k̓ʷ	is pronounced as a hard kʷ- k̓ʷ	example:	k̓ʷck̓ʷact (strong)
l	as in the word <u>l</u>ove- l	example:	limt (happy)
l̓	pronounced as an abrubtly stopped l- l̓	example:	sl̓ax̌t (friend)
ł	pronounced as a slurpy l- ł	example:	łtap (bounce/jump)
ƛ̓	pronounced as a click tl out of the side of your mouth- ƛ̓	example:	ƛ̓lap (stop)
m	as in the word <u>m</u>om- m	example:	mahúyaʔ (raccoon)
m̓	pronounced as an abruptly ended m- m̓	example:	stim̓ (what)
n	as in the word <u>n</u>o- n	example:	naqs (one)
n̓	pronounced as an abruptly ended n- n̓	example:	n̓ín̓wiʔs (later)
p	as in the word <u>p</u>op- p	example:	pn̓kin̓ (when)
p̓	pronounced as a popped p- p̓	example:	p̓um (brown)
q	pronounced as a k deep in the back of your throat- q	example:	qáqnaʔ (grandma)
q̓	is pronounced as a hard q- q̓	example:	q̓aʔxán (shoe)
qʷ	is pronounced q with rounded lips- qʷ	example:	qʷacqn (hat)

q̓ʷ	is pronounced as a hard q with rounded lips- q̓ʷ	example:	q̓ʷmqin (antler)
r	is rolled on your tongue- r	example:	yirncút (make itself round)
s	pronounced as in the word <u>s</u>ister- s	example:	síyaʔ (saskatoon berry)
t	as in the word <u>t</u>op- t	example:	tuṁ (mother)
t̓	pronounced as a hard t- t	example:	t̓inaʔ (ear)
u	as in the word s<u>oo</u>n- u	example:	uɬ (and)
w	as in the word <u>w</u>alk- w	example:	wikn (I saw)
w̓	an abruptly ended w- w	example:	sw̓aw̓ásaʔ (auntie)
x	pronounced as a soft h in the back of the throat- x	example:	xixəw̓tm (girl)
x̌	pronounced as a gutteral h deep in the back of throat- x̌	example:	x̌ast (good)
xʷ	pronounced as a h with rounded lips in the back of the throat- xʷ	example:	xʷuy (go)
x̌ʷ	pronounced as a gutteral h with rounded lips in the back of the throat- x̌ʷ	example:	x̌ʷus (foam)
y	as in the word <u>y</u>ellow- y	example:	yus (dark / purple)
y̓	an abruptly ended y- y	example:	c̓sy̓aqn (head)
ʕ	pronounced like a short a deep in the back of the throat- ʕ	example:	ʕaymt (angry)
ʕ̓	pronounced as an abruptly ended ʕ- ʕ	example:	ʕ̓ac̓nt (look)
ʕʷ	pronounced as a nasally "ow" back in the throat- ʕʷ	example:	kaʕʷm (pray)
ʔ	is a breath stop in the back of the throat as in the word "uh-oh"- ʔ	example:	ʔaʔúsaʔ (egg)

Different spellings abound within N'syilxcn writings, reflecting the newness of our spelling system as well as dialectical differences within our large language territory. In TPCLA publications, apostrophes deviate somewhat from IPA usage. Rather than always indicating a glottalization, they indicate whether the voiced consonants (l, m, n, w, y) receive their voice prior to or after the consonant. For example, *n* is pronounced *nə* and *n'* is pronounced *ən*. My spelling falls somewhere in between IPA and TPCLA usage.

N'syilxcn writers do not capitalize initial letters of words except proper names. I choose to capitalize Syilx, N'syilxcn, and people's proper names. I, and many Indigenous academic writers, choose not to italicize our words. I am not a linguist, but an active language learner. I follow both IPA and TPCLA writing conventions to the best of my ability. My learner's spelling and grammatical mistakes are my own, reflecting my intermediate proficiency.

Appendix 2: First Nations language benchmarks[48]

SPEAKING	STAGE ONE:	**BEGINNER**	PROFICIENCY

LOW BEGINNER:

- learner can speak very little; can respond to basic questions about simple personal information
- learner may be able introduce themself, and say up to 50 words
- learner speaks in single words, yes/no answers, or strings of two or three words
- learner demonstrates very limited vocabulary
- learner makes very long pauses, often speaks words spoken
- learner often switches to English
- pronunciation difficulties restrict communication
- learner needs considerable assistance, and depends on gestures for communication

MID BEGINNER:

- learner can communicate in a limited way, some immediate and personal needs,
- learner is not able to use the phone
- learner can ask and answer simple questions, ie WH questions, from a teacher
- learner is still not well understood by Elders, only teachers and other learners
- uses single words and short 2-5 word sentences
- learner knows up to 500 words; can recognize, if not say all of them properly
- learner demonstrates limited vocabulary and a few simple phrases
- learner demonstrates some use of very basic grammar (for example, can use simple present/past tense for I/you forms of simple action verbs)
- learner makes long pauses and depends on gestures to express meaning
- learner demonstrates use of vocabulary which is quite limited
- classroom training to reach this stage: approximately 100 intensive hours

HIGH BEGINNER:

- learner can take part in short routine conversations about simple, familiar subjects, can tell a simple story
- learner can communicate basic needs, ask and respond to simple familiar questions, and can describe things using short sentences
- learner knows approximately 1,000 words and can say most of them (at least the root word), though often not pronounced properly or with proper grammar
- learner demonstrates use of basic grammar, uses correct past tense
- learner demonstrates adequate use of vocabulary for basic communication
- pronunciation difficulties often restrict communication; needs a little assistance to understand/be understood
- Learner can deliver beginner material to adult students
- classroom training to reach this stage: approximately 200 to 400 intensive hours

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[48] Adapted from benchmarks in John (Jack) Miller's EdD Dissertation (2004:163-165), which are adapted from Canadian and American benchmarks (CLB 2006; ACTFL 2012). Miller provides checklists for Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing; only Speaking is reproduced here. I added several points based on CLB (2006) and my own experience. For simplicity, I changed Miller's *basic* to *beginner*, and sub-benchmarks from *developmental, progression, accomplished* to *low, mid, high*. I recommend Indigenous teachers and planners adopt task-based benchmarks similar to these and to read their full descriptions in CLB (2006).

LOW INTERMEDIATE:

- learner can participate with effort in routine social conversations and can talk about needs and familiar topics of personal relevance
- learner can give a simple speech, narrate an event, or storytell for 5 minutes
- learner is able to communicate simple information on the phone
- learner is able to teach beginner material to adult students
- learner can teach beginner material to children in an immersion (nest) situation, though with considerable difficulty, due to the difficulty of immersion classroom management, and is unable to deliver more complex material (ie geography, animal habitats, etc.)
- learner can use a variety of simple structures and some complex ones. Grammar and pronunciation errors are frequent and sometimes impede communication
- at this stage, learner becomes understood by Elders (not just teachers and other learners)
- learner demonstrates a range of common everyday vocabulary; may avoid topics with unfamiliar vocabulary
- learner can speak using connectives (and, but, first, next, then, because)
- learner speaks with many hesitations and pauses
- classroom training to reach this stage: approximately 400-600 intensive hours

MID INTERMEDIATE:

- learner can communicate comfortably in most common daily situations with Elders and other learners. grammar and pronunciation errors are still frequent, but rarely impede communication—learner is understood by Elders
- learner is able to teach in an immersion situation, (i.e. a nest), though still challenging
- learner can participate in formal and informal conversations, involving problem solving and decision making situations in the classroom or home
- learner can speak on familiar concrete topics at a descriptive level
- can demonstrate a range of everyday vocabulary, including many common phrases
- learner can express all the simple grammar for present, past and future tense.
- learner can not yet create complex grammar such as complex compound words with transitive and intransitive word endings.
- learner can pray formally, and is able to learn the high grammar used in prayer
- classroom training to reach this stage: approximately 1,000 intensive hours

HIGH INTERMEDIATE:

- learner can communicate effectively in most daily and social situations, including work
- learner can work more easily in an immersion setting, i.e. teaching in a nest
- learner can communicate more complex information over the phone
- learner can participate in conversations with Elders with confidence; grammar and pronunciation errors rarely impede communication
- learner can provide descriptions, opinions, and explanations about most topics
- in social interaction, the learner demonstrates an increased ability to respond appropriately to the formality level of the situation
- learner can use a variety of sentence structures
- learner can synthesize abstract concepts and provide a hypothesis (can speak about hypothetical situations)

LOW ADVANCED:

- learner can obtain, provide, and exchange key information for important tasks in complex situations
- learner can deal with complaints politely
- learner can give a presentation, speech, or storytell for 30 minutes
- learner can actively and effectively participate in 30 minute formal exchanges (debates) with a group of debaters about complex, abstract, and detailed information
- learner's grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation errors very rarely impede communication
- learner can use the full range of transitive and intransitive verb structures, and can create compound words with complex verb structures easily (for example: "we (plural) went hunting for you-all" is expressed as one word in Okanagan)
- learner's speech is mostly accurate in form, but may be slightly rigid in its structure

MID ADVANCED:

- learner can satisfy social or school-related expectations for competent communication
- learner can actively participate in meetings and interviews which are complex, abstract, academic, and detailed
- learner can lead meetings and manage interactions in a small, familiar group session
- learner can contribute to extended 60 min. discussions which are complex, abstract, academic, and detailed
- learner's grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation errors do not impede communication

HIGH ADVANCED:

- learner can create or contribute to discussions in a broad range (all) of complex situations
- learner can deliver public presentations to audiences, using complex, accurate language
- learner can lead large, formal group discussions on complex topics
- learner can explain complex ideas to diverse groups, debate on complex topics, teach, negotiate and resolve conflicts, including workplace sarcasm, in a variety of situations
- learner can create and co-create complex technical, high-level oral discourse in their specialized field of study

Appendix 3: Five month and daily schedule at the immersion house

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kłyanqx̌ó snm̓am̓áy̓aʔtn

Intensive Live-in N'syilxcn Program, Winter/Spring 2011

Guaranteed resources:

1. house w/ all utilities paid

2. Sʕamtíc̓aʔ 5 hrs / week immersion

3. curriculum plan and assessments from TPCLA

4. teaching materials and supplies from TPCLA

Schedule:

January 10 through May 19, 2011 (19 weeks)

Monday-Thursday, 1:00 - 6:00 pm

4 hrs facilitated study time

1 hr immersion

Nsəlxcin 2 (1 lesson per day)

40 days

Captík̫ł 2 (1 story every 2 days)

30 days

75 days

Daily Schedule: January 10 - May 19, 2011, Mon.-Thurs. (19 weeks)

11:00 am.-7:00 pm.	strict immersion time	
12:00-1:30 pm.	immersion with Sʕamtíc'aʔ:	1.5 hrs
2:00-6:00 pm.	TPCLA curriculum study:	4 hrs
Total	(1.5 + 4) * 4 days/week * 19 weeks = 418 hrs	

Living in the Language
Nsyilxcən Immersion House
Chopaka BC Canada

We are (iʔ sn'qilxʷskʷistət): (L to R, top row) P'ip'qs, Xʷənamxʷnm, Prasát, (front row) C'ərtups, Sʕamtíc'aʔ, and SʔímlaʔXʷ,

Way'!

For eight hours a day, we speak nsyilcən, NO ENGLISH. We live in a five bedroom house in Chopaka BC, and we fundraise every month to raise the rent. We are doing what many said couldn't be done. We will live together for five months (at least), complete the 2nd year of Paul Creek Curriculum, and document and film our successes and challenges. We come from five communities in the nsyilxcən speaking territory (one of the seven Interior Salish languages, also called Syilx, Okanagan, Colville, snʔaycstx, Arrow Lakes), on both sides of the Canada/U.S. border. We all feel that it is possible to reach past the unknown and succeed. We hope that other immersion houses will start in each community and we will form a vibrant speaking community.

Our Schedule

- Five women, one house, one Elder, five months
- January 10-May 19, 2011, four days a week
- 8 hours a day immersion
- one fundraiser a month
- 11am-7pm   nsyilxcən immersion time (no English!)
- 11am-noon   *nsəlxcin 1* (review) and other projects
- noon-2pm   immersion activity with Sʕamtícaʔ (Sarah Peterson)
- either games, cooking, baking, crafts, or visiting
- 2-5pm   *nsəlxcin 2* curriculum: 1 lesson per day
- 5-6pm   dinner (still immersed in nsyilxcən)
- 6-7pm   *captikʷɬ 1* (review 1 story/day with questions)
- 7-7:15   Listen to and sing songs from *nsəlxcin 1 & 2 songbooks*
- 8pm   free time/study your butts off

What are we studying?

Our foundation is immersion methods, activities, and exercises from the Paul Creek textbooks. Before moving into the house we had all completed first year Paul Creek curriculum (*nsəlxcin 1* & *captikʷɬ 1*). In five months, we will complete the second year Paul Creek Curriculum (*nsəlxcin 2* & *captikʷɬ 2)* and review the entire first year curriculum. The textbooks are designed to be self-taught, and we are powering through them without a teacher. Sʕamtícaʔ spends two hours a day with us of focused immersion time with a fluent speaker. We are working on the songs from the *nsəlxcin 1 & 2* songbooks. We are also lucky to have fluent neighbours that drop in from time to time.

Sample/Demo Lesson

Each day we learn new Vocabulary, then we practice creating original sample sentences, this exercise is approximately 10-20 minutes.

Lesson 18: Nsəlxcin Animals 2

phrases 1

ha iʔ scmíɬčaʔ kɬq̓ʷmq̓ʷmqin ?	Does a mountain sheep have horns?
ki, iʔ scmíɬčaʔ kɬq̓ʷmq̓ʷmqin.	Yes, a mountain sheep has horns.
ha iʔ pus kɬq̓ʷmq̓ʷmqin ?	Does cat have horns?
lut iʔ pus t̓a kɬq̓ʷmq̓ʷmqin .	No, a cat does not have horns.

ha iʔ pk̓am ċiɬsts iʔ sɬiqʷ?	Does a bobcat eat meat?
ki, iʔ pk̓am ċiɬsts iʔ sɬiqʷ.	Yes, a bobcat eats meat.
ha iʔ sin̓t̓anwáya ċiɬsts iʔ sɬiqʷ?	Does a bat eat meat?
lut iʔ sin̓t̓anwáya t̓a ċiɬsts iʔ sɬiqʷ.	No, a bat does not eat meat.

ha iʔ q̓ʷɬtmin nx̌ʷix̌ʷíys?	Does a wolverine have sharp teeth?
ki, iʔ q̓ʷɬtmin nx̌ʷix̌ʷíys.	Yes, a wolverine has sharp teeth.
ha iʔ stmʕalt̓ nx̌ʷix̌ʷíys?	Does a cow have sharp teeth?
lut iʔ stmʕalt̓ t̓a nx̌ʷix̌ʷíys.	No, a cow doesn't have sharp teeth.

ha kɬq̓ʷx̌ʷqinkst iʔ púpaʔs?	Does a kitten have claws?
ki, kɬq̓ʷx̌ʷqinkst iʔ púpaʔs.	Yes, a kitten has claws.
ha iʔ kʷɫkʷɬaɫxʷ kɬq̓ʷx̌ʷqinkst?	Does a calf have claws?
lut iʔ kʷɫkʷɬaɫxʷ t̓a kɬq̓ʷx̌ʷqinkst.	No, a calf does not have claws.

From: Peterson *et al. 2011:162:* Nsəlxcin 2, revised 2/15/11 Salish School of Spokane

Who are we?

Sʔímlaʔxʷ (Michele K Johnson)

I am related to the Simla family from Vernon, I live in Penticton and grew up in Northern B.C. I am halfway through a PhD program at UBC-Okanagan, in Kelowna BC; my thesis and documentary film will be called *kʷu sqʷaqʷaʔálx: a journey to fluency in nsyilxcən*. When I became aware of the importance of the language, I felt a responsibility to do my best to become fluent and to encourage others to do the same. I feel very lucky that the immersion house is happening, and that I have four other women to travel on the path to fluency with. The ongoing successes outweigh the challenges—I think because our curriculum and schedule are so well organized. After two months, I can already speak at the level of a three year old, and sometimes as a group we get talking like a house on fire.

X̌ʷənámx̌ʷnam (Brandy Baptiste)

I was raised in the Similkameen, BC. I have family all throughout the Syilx territory and am very happy and honoured to be learning nsyilxcən. As a sqilxʷ woman I feel it is my responsibility to learn my language for all the generations, past, present, and future. Our identity is in the language.

I am part of this language program by chance, and through good networking and years of relationship building with my Elders and community. It has been fun, great learning and yes, challenging. Funding can be hard, but we manage. People in one space over time have moods, which is natural and to be expected. Also balancing other work and things. Regardless of challenges it is all worth it. The success is in knowing each day our language skills grow and develop, especially so when we visit with our Elders and relatives. We can maybe help them feel less lonely for the language and happier to use it. Also being able to share it with kids is very exciting.

Prasát (Shelly Boyd)

Waý, I am a member of the the Colville Tribe, Snʔaycstx (Arrow Lakes Band). I grew up in the Kewa/Inchelium area of the Colville Reservation. As a young girl our large family lived in Kewa with our Mother Eva Farris, Grandparents Geri Toulou Clark and Jack Wyncoop and Great Grandmother (Túpaʔ) Helen Toulou. I always felt our language was very important because of the way my Tupaʔ spoke and the great respect I had for her. I believe anyone at any age can learn our language; hard work and dedication can get a person where they want to be no matter how difficult the challenge. For me the greatest challenges have lived within me. It has been difficult to get past my own thinking that I cannot learn to read our language or the thought that my lips and mouth will not speak correctly. It is a process and takes time; my pronunciation as well as my reading improves each day. My other challenge is the time I am spending away from my beautiful family, my wonderful husband, children and grandchildren, not to mention my mom, who lives in Spokane. I believe it is our generation right now that has the responsibility to learn as much as we can for our future generations.

Cʼerʼtups (Carmella Alexis)

iskwist Cʼertups, inmistəm Paul Alexis, intum Gloria Alexis, kn kɬ ktaqtaqmkst iʔ ɬcəcʼups. kn tʼl nkmapəlqs. wayʼ, my name is Carmella Alexis and I am Okanagan from Head of the Lake, Vernon BC. I am currently in my 2ⁿᵈ year of a Masters in Indigenous Health at the University of British Columbia Okanagan. I'm living in the language house to help my sisters learn the language and to better understand what Syilx health encompasses. My goals are to complete Nsəlxcin 2 and Captikwl 2 this year. Challenges have been working full time while completing the coursework at the immersion house. Moments when I speak first in nsyilxcən and think in English second are happening more frequently.

Pʼipʼqʼs (Hailey Causton)

I am from Westbank BC, Canada (staqʷniwt) and currently live in Penticton (snʼpinktn). My momʼs name is Sandy Alexander and my dadʼs name is Grouse Barnes. My grandparents are Marilyn and Frank Causton and Emily Michele and Dennis Barnes. I am 18 years old. My goal is to learn as much as I can, while I can, so that one day I may be able to raise my future children in the language. I also aim to work in the communities Iʼm involved in, and teach. My greatest success is that as of January 2010, I only understood limləmt. My first word was ɬumən (spoon).

With the language there is *no time to waste*.
Learn your language. If *you* don't, *who* will?

What have we learned from this?

♦ Excellent curriculum has made it possible to be immersed all day

♦ Having a committed Elder (Sʔamtiċa) has been a blessing

♦ Having previous experience learning nsyilxcən is a must

♦ Having a comfortable house is awesome

♦ Living together with no distractions and full immersion is important

♦ We have already improved more than we could ever imagine, and we will continue to do so

♦ You can do this with little or no funding (and fundraising can be fun)

♦ It takes one to two years of full time study and hard work to become fluent

♦ For the first few weeks, you may have headaches

♦ You need to have a full schedule, so that you will interact more

♦ Yes, second language learners *can* teach themselves

♦ To become a fluent speaker you need to work hard, you need to talk a lot–it doesn't just happen–but it can be done

♦ It is a myth that a person cannot learn our language as an adult!

Appendix 5: Interview script

1. swit askwíst? swit asnəqsílxʷ? Personal introduction.

2. Tell Goldilocks story.

3. ha kʷ ntils, anwí, kʷ qʷəlqʷilt mis xast ʕapná? ? səxkinx ? Do you think you are a better speaker now than before? Why?

4. ha kʷ ntils, anwí, naqs sxəlxaʕlt, kʷ ks n'tłłcína?x? Do you think you will be an n'tłłcin (straightened, true, advanced speaker) one day?

5. stim' a? ckistət i? l' citxʷtət? Explain what we did in the house.

6. ha anxmínk tə cuntxʷ limləmt? Do you want to thank anyone?

7. Do you think the language is important? What would you recommend or change about the house? what are your plans to continue learning? (in English)

In January 2011 all five capsíw's completed the first interview and initial language assessment, answering questions 1 and 2. We completed a second interview and assessment, May 2011, answering 1-6. The interview was conducted entirely in N'syilxcn and repeated in English, adding question 7. Four capsíw's completed the second interview and assessment. Sʕamtíc'a? was interviewed May 2011, answering 1, 3, and 5. All interviews were filmed. N'syilxcn answers are transcribed in this dissertation, other than Prasát's answer to Question 7, provided in the Introduction.

Appendix 6: Kathy Michel's summary diagrams: *How to Reclaim your Language*, **and** *How to Keep Your Language Program Alive*

How to Reclaim Your Language

Understand how the Colonial Trickster Claimed Possession of the Four Language Territories

- By claiming a position of authority over the Territory of the Body
- By proclaiming the superiority of the 'Colonial Story' over the Territory of the Spirit
- By programming First Nations children through the reproduction of the 'Colonial Story' in education to claim the Territory of the Mind
- By pacifying First Nations through a system that rewards assimilative programs and practices, thereby, advancing the Colonial Trickster's claim to the Territory of the Heart

Trickster P's to Language Action

Steps to reclaiming the four language territories

Possibility
- Collective Vision
- Stay optimistic
- Reclaim the rights to your language, the oral tradition, and Indigenous Knowledges

Plan
- Mobilize community and reactivate traditional modes of knowledge transfer
- Evaluate and assess; keep moving forward
- Reach out to other immersion sites for ideas and support

Pursuit
- Actively pursue language immersion as an avenue for language regeneration
- Take risks and learn from your mistakes

Passion
- Learn to work past differences and hegemonic beliefs in order to keep focused on a common vision
- Develop support networks
- Remember to have fun, laugh, and celebrate

Reproduced from: Kathy Michel's EdD Dissertation (2012:239)

How to Keep Your Language Program Alive

Understand how the Colonial Trickster Tries to Regain Possession of the Four Language Territories

- By infiltrating language initiatives with pessimism and negative hegemonic beliefs that First Nations languages are obsolete, inferior, or disruptive to a child's education
- By inciting panic when politics, personality differences, and funding scarcity causes people to lose sight of their language vision
- By causing widespread paralysis when the reality sinks in that saving a language is a momumental, overwhelming task
- By encouraging an atmosphere of blaming, shaming,and pointing fingers

Transformer P's to Language Resiliency

Steps to maintaining your language program

Possession
- Revisit and recommit to the Vision
- Foster individual roles and responsibilities
- Practice collective decision making

Potential
- Maximize local resources through integrating indigenous knowledge in core content courses
- Regular group planning sessions
- Try new language teaching methodologies; search for innovative ideas

Persistence
- Be adapt and responsive to change
- Search for creative solutions to problems
- Keep trying and keep positive

Place
- Remember to help and support each other
- Honour the role each member plays
- Welcome new members into the group

Reproduced from: Kathy Michel's EdD Dissertation (2012:240)

Appendix 7: UBC-O Ethics certificate of approval
March 7, 2011

The University of British Columbia Okanagan
Research Services
Behavioural Research Ethics Board
3333 University Way
Kelowna, BC V1V 1V7

Phone: 250-807-8832
Fax: 250-807-8438

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - FULL BOARD

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Christine Schreyer	INSTITUTION / DEPARTMENT: UBC/UBCO IKE Barber School of Arts & Sci/UBCO Admin Unit 1 Arts & Sci/UBCO Anthropology	UBC BREB NUMBER: H11-00084

INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:		
Institution		Site
N/A	N/A	

CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):
Michele Johnson

SPONSORING AGENCIES:
N/A

PROJECT TITLE:
k'wu sqYaqYaq'ntik: A Journey to Fluency in an Endangered Language

REB MEETING DATE: February 21, 2011	CERTIFICATE EXPIRY DATE: February 21, 2012

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:	DATE APPROVED: March 7, 2011

Document Name	Version	Date
Protocol:		
Research Proposal	N/A	January 7, 2011
Consent Forms:		
Letter of Informed Consent - cohort members	N/A	January 30, 2011
Letter of Informed Consent - non cohort members	N/A	January 31, 2011
Questionnaire, Questionnaire Cover Letter, Tests:		
Interview Script	N/A	January 7, 2011
Letter of Initial Contact:		
Letter to Okanagan Language Authority (Maxine Baptiste)	N/A	January 7, 2011
Other Documents:		
ONA additional information letter	N/A	January 28, 2011
Paul Creek Language Association Letter of Approval	N/A	January 7, 2011
Okanagan Nation Alliance Letter of Approval	N/A	January 7, 2011

The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board Okanagan and signed electronically by:

Dr. Daniel Salhani, Chair